

Hillary Lindsay on disappearing protesters ¶ Janna Graham and Max Liboiron on sound art ¶ Susan Thompson interviews Fair Vote Canada's Larry Gordon ¶ Comics by Heather Meek >>

The Dominion

CANADA'S GRASSROOTS NATIONAL NEWSPAPER • AUGUST 9, 2003 • DOMINIONPAPER.CA

AIDS Relief on Back Burner

Just months after pledging \$15 billion dollars in support, the Bush Administration seems to be losing its interest on the fight against HIV / AIDS in Africa. Little mention of the initiative is brought up at daily White House and State Department press briefings, where the declared War on Terrorism continues to occupy Washington.

According to recent statistics, almost 29 million of the 42 million people infected worldwide live in Africa. In South Africa alone, some 5 million people are either HIV or AIDS positive and hundreds die each day. Cemeteries are being overloaded with corpses as one funeral follows another.

On May 27th, President George Bush signed the H.R. 1298 US Leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003. Some \$15 billion had been pledged to fight disease but the Act ran into controversy when it was learned that as much as one third of the money was to be spent on abstinence-based prevention and faith-based organizations. Critics of the plan argue that the monies should be used to purchase Antiretroviral drugs and pursue similar initiatives. Others say that the Bush Administration should apply greater pressure on pharmaceutical companies to give up their monopolies and allow cheaper generic versions of the life prolonging, life saving drugs to be made available to those who can least afford them.

—Michael Hunter



A grandmother with her AIDS-orphaned grandchildren. UNICEF

China, Russia, US Partners on North Korea

Despite their many differences, the national governments of China, Russia and the United States have found common ground when dealing with the thorny issue of North Korea's nuclear capabilities. The Chinese and Russians have been instrumental in encouraging North Korea to accept multilateral, multinational discussions and now it would appear that their efforts have paid off.

On Friday, August 1st, 2003 North Korean government indicated it will accept such discussions, something the country has previously rejected preferring instead to have direct talks with Washington. Senior State Department Official John Bolton said the move was, "very encouraging". However, Bolton called the North's leader Kim Jong-Il a "tyrannical dictator" and warned that talks alone

could not resolve the issue. One of the key issues is how to create a verifiable inspections program in one of the world's most secretive nations.

The crisis heated up in October of 2002 when the North withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (for nuclear weapons) and began reprocessing spent nuclear fuel rods to make weapons-grade plutonium. Since then all UN Weapons Inspectors have been required to leave the country. (BBC, US State Dept., North Korean Government)

—MH

Fight Looms over EU Constitution

According to sources quoted by the BBC, the countries of Finland, Austria and Lithuania are set to fight Italy's desire to begin full Constitutional negotiations this October with an eye towards wrapping things up by the end of next year. All three nations insist

that there is too much at stake for such a rushed timetable. Other issues that need to be addressed include the future role and power of the EU Presidency, as well as foreign policy and military alliances.

Kirsty Hughes, a senior fellow of the Center for European Policies in Brussels, argues that many of the smaller countries who joined the EU did so with the idea that they would get a chance to serve in the presidential capacity. The new proposal for a streamlined 15 member voting structure leaves it unclear how much influence the less populated countries will have. Meanwhile, Britain is concerned about mutual defense guarantees made outside of the NATO alliance and having to accept foreign policies that may be contrary to their individual needs and wishes.

Italy's Prime Minister Berlusconi, who serves as the current president of the EU, promises "gentle violence" to ensure that no radical changes are made to the text of the Constitution as it now stands. (BBC)

—MH

Taiwan Straits Report Alters Travel Plans

Just days after the US Department of Defense reported to Congress on the state of China-Taiwan relations, a planned US trip by Taiwanese Vice President Annette Lu is said to be up in the air. Lu had planned to travel to the United States later this month and stop in four cities including

**International News, continued
from page 1:**

New York. However, according to reports filed by the Washington Post, the New York visit has been scrubbed and the other stops are in jeopardy. State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher said he was "not aware" of any plans to block the visit.

The controversy follows close on the heels of the FY99 Appropriations Bill Report which noted China was increasing its readiness and ability to take back what China considers to be the renegade province. The report highlighted Beijing's plans to emphasize a campaign of "surprise, deception and shock" against Taiwan. The US Defense Department estimates that China plans to spend as much as \$65 billion to purchase long range missiles and other equipment which would assist a military incursion.

The report to Congress has been required under the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) since April 10, 1979. At that time the Congress established the Act and its subsequent reports in order to demonstrate US commitment to Taiwan's state security. The US has angered the Chinese national government many times since 1949 by placing American warships in the Taiwan Straits in order to deter an aggressive takeover of the runaway province. Past reports have noted concern over the ease with which Chinese Nationals can obtain visas to the United States and the relative ease with which they are allowed to travel once in the country.

Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian said that "the Government will press ahead to cast off the diplomatic isolation Beijing has imposed". Taiwan was expelled from the United Nations in 1971 and its place was given to the People's Republic of China. (*Washington Times*, US Dept. of Defense)

—Leslie Buckle



Iqaluit: 26.1° C this summer. Nunavut Planning Commission

Arctic Heat Breaks Records in Nunavut

Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, has experienced record-breaking temperatures this summer. According to a report by CBC North, the city's temperature showed 26.1C, over five degrees higher than the previous record of 20.8C, set in 2001. Baker Lake, Nunavut's only inland community, also experienced record temperatures this summer; a high of 31.5C beat the previous record of 29.7C, set in 1991.

After one of the coldest winters in recent memory, record temperatures in the Arctic seem to be part of a global heat wave. In some parts of Europe, temperatures have been consistently five degrees higher than average, resulting in major problems for farmers. In some Indian states, temperatures have reached as high as 49 degrees, resulting in a reported 1,500 deaths as a direct result. Monsoon rains in Asia have been among the most extreme on record. Earlier this summer, over 400,000 people in the Indian state of Assam were forced to relocate due to monsoon flooding. Near-record temperatures have also been experienced in the US, China and Russia.

Recent weather has provoked concern from some corners of the scientific community that climate change is occurring much more rapidly than was previously expected. Dr. John Schellnhuber, who heads a leading group of British climate scientists, was quoted as saying: "What we are seeing is absolutely unusual, we know that global warming is proceeding apace, but most of us were thinking that in 20 to 30 years' time we would be seeing hot spells [like this]. But it's happening now. Clearly extreme weather events will increase."

Since 2000, most climate scientists have been in agreement that the global climate is getting warmer. The scientific debate in recent years has focused on the degree to which human activity is responsible for changes in the weather. Many scientists now say that it is impossible to explain climate change based on "natural causes"—such as sunspots or volcanoes—alone. Dr. Peter Stott of the British Government's Hadley Centre was quoted as saying, "Once we factor in the effects of human activity, we find we can explain the warming that is observed." (CBC North, *Independent*, *The Age*)

—Dru Oja Jay

The Dominion is a not for profit free newspaper covering topics of interest to Canadians. We aim to provide a progressive counterpoint to the mainstream papers, direct attention to quality work published on the internet, and establish a venue where alternative forms of journalism can be practiced.

The Dominion is published bi-weekly in print and web formats.

For more information, visit our web site:

dominionpaper.ca

Coordinating Editor

Dru Oja Jay

Environment Editors

Hillary Lindsay

Yuill Herbert

Arts Editor

Amanda Jernigan

Canadian News Editor

Noel Baldwin

Features Editor

Susan Thompson

International News Guest Editor

Michael Hunter

Guest Copy Editor

Mark Parker

Economic benefits from GMO Crops? Not for Farmers.

Squeezed by falling incomes, farmers look to technologies that claim higher returns or reduced costs. Over the past decades, however, farmers have embraced a wide range of technologies, only to watch net farm incomes fall. Between 1974 and 2000, gross farm income tripled. Net farm income, however, fell. Input suppliers were able to capture 100% of farmers' increased gross returns. Because fertilizers, chemicals, and other technologies failed to fulfill their promises of farm profitability, many farmers rightly question the economic benefits of genetically modifying crops and livestock.

—From the **National Farmer's Union Policy on Genetically Modified Foods**

Disclosure on Paul Martin's Canada Steamship Lines

For example, the CSL "Innovator" had a labour agreement, a Bahamanian flag and an Indian crew. But when CSL pooled some of its ships with a German company, it sold them the Innovator as part of the deal.

The Germans gave it a new name, a Liberian flag, and a Filipino crew. CSL then leased the ship right back – and its labour agreement no longer applied.

That's when Halifax union shipping inspector John Parsons heard about eight Filipino sailors complaining about their working conditions:

"They're only getting paid like \$2.20 an hour or something like that. And you know, they weren't getting paid properly for their overtime, so we put in a complaint."

Even with ships covered by labour agreements, Parsons says an able seaman's contract includes over 100 hours of overtime per month, at less than a

quarter of the wage a Canadian would make. For that, he blames ship owners like Paul Martin:

"It's no different than dealing with sweatshops, he uses sweatships – same thing. He applies the same kind of rules –he may not apply them but he knows what they are– that is why he goes offshore with his vessels."

—From "Anchors Away", a TV/web feature by **CBC's Disclosure**

WTO: Carefully Considered Lawlessness?

Those who marched and protested opposed globalization but they did not necessarily oppose internationalization of trade. Economist Herman Daly has long made the distinction between the two. Internationalization means trade between nations. Globalization refers to a system where there are uniform rules for the entire world, a

means for people to set their own policy, to influence decisions, and determine their future. Globalization supercedes the nation, the state, the region, and the village. While eliminating nations may indeed be a good idea, the elimination of sovereignty is not.

One recent example is that of Chiquita Brands, which recently made a large donation to the Clinton administration after the United States filed a complaint with the WTO against the European Union because European import policies favored bananas coming from small Caribbean growers. There was no question about the policies: they restricted imports from large multinational companies in Central America (plantations whose lands were secured by US military force during the past century), and favored small family farmers who used fewer chemicals. It seemed like a decent thing to do, and everyone thought the bananas tasted better. For the banana giants,

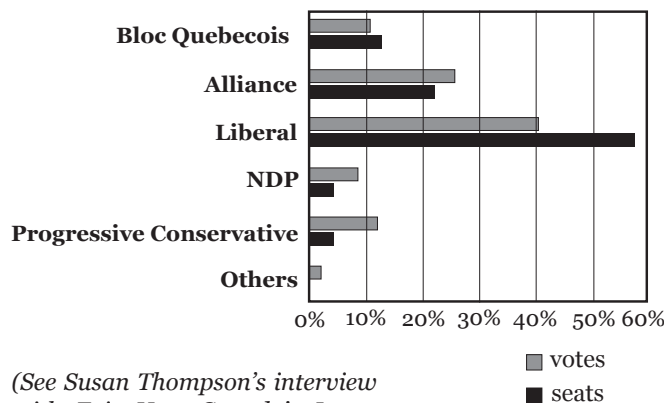
the use of Dibromochloropropane on the banana plantations. Ask the mothers whose children have birth defects from pesticide poisoning. Did the shareholders of Chiquita win? At the end of 1999, Chiquita Brands was losing money because it was selling bananas under cost to muscle their way into the European market. Their stock was at a 13 year low, the shareholders were angry, the company was up for sale, but the prices of bananas in Europe are really cheap. Who lost? Caribbean farmers who could formerly make a living and send their kids to school can no longer do so because of low prices and demand. [...]

It's not inapt to compare the carefully considered lawlessness of the anarchists with the equally carefully considered flouting of other laws by the WTO. When The Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations was enacted April 15th, 1994 in Marrakech, it was recorded as a 550-page agreement that was then sent to Congress for passage. Ralph Nader offered to donate \$10,000 to any charity of a congressman's choice if any of them signed an affidavit saying they had read it and could answer several questions about it. Only one congressman -- Sen. Hank Brown, a Colorado Republican -- took him up on it. After reading the document, Brown changed his opinion and voted against the Agreement. There were no public hearings, dialogue, or education. What passed is an Agreement that gives the WTO the ability to overrule prior US conventions, acts, treaties, and agreements.

—Environmentalist, Economist, and writer **Paul Hawken**, "What Skeleton Woman Told the WTO in Seattle", November 2000.

For links to full articles:
dominionpaper.ca/reading

Share of Vote and Seats, 2000 Election



(See Susan Thompson's interview with Fair Vote Canada's Larry Gordon, in this issue.)

world in which capital and goods move at will without the rule of individual nations. Nations, for all their faults, set trade standards. Those who are willing to meet those standards can do business with them. Do nations abuse this? Always and constantly, the US being the worst offender. But it does provide, where democracies prevail, a

this was untenable. The United States prevailed in this WTO-arbitrated case. So who really won, and who lost? The self-sufficient farmers who were making a decent living prior to the decision didn't win. Did the Central American employees at Chiquita Brands win? Ask the hundreds of workers in Honduras who were made infertile by

One Citizen, One Vote: Towards Proportional Representation

An interview with Larry Gordon, Executive Director of Fair Vote Canada

by Susan Thompson

Fair Vote Canada (FVC) was formed in August of 2000 as a multi-partisan citizen's campaign to reform Canada's voting system. FVC promotes the adoption of a system that is proportional, uses positive, effective votes, and results in a stable and accountable government. The organization does not recommend a specific type of proportional representation, but calls for a public process which will allow Canadians to learn about voting system alternatives and choose a new one.

In keeping with its multi-partisan mandate, FVC had left-wing feminist Judy Rebick and Walter Robinson of the right-wing Canadian Taxpayers Federation co-write an op-ed article on fair voting for the Globe and Mail after the last federal election. They both continue to serve on Fair Vote Canada's National Advisory Board along with many other prominent Canadians such as David Suzuki, Karen Kain, and Pierre Berton. FVC also maintains regional chapters across the country as well as several special interest caucuses. The organization's web site was recently revamped to include more information and a new online petition.

* * *

Why is fair voting important?

The heart of the political system in a representative democracy is the voting system because that's the tool we citizens use to create government in our own image. Unfortunately, Canada has one of the most widely discredited and ridiculed voting systems among major democracies. We are one of the few industrialized democracies still using the first-past-the-post voting system which most major countries scrapped between 50 and 100 years ago.

Could you explain briefly what that means? What are the characteristics of the first-past-the-post or winner-take-all system?

A winner-take-all voting system is just what it says. Some people win the right to have their voices represented and everybody else loses. In a single riding, who-

ever has the most popular partisan viewpoint as expressed at the ballot box wins the right to be represented by parliament. Everybody else who voted--equal citizens, with equally legitimate viewpoints under the law--loses the right to be represented in parliament. And that basically subverts the whole idea of democracy. Representative democracy is a system in which every citizen wins the right to be represented and then we agree that the majority wins the right to make decisions until the next election. Our voting system does neither. Many of us do not win representation at voting time because of the winner-takes-all system, and we seldom actually have legitimate majority governments.

How many legitimate majority governments have we had?

Since WW I we've had exactly four legitimate majority govern-

ments. It's a very rare occasion. Currently, we have a government that controls 57% of the seats in parliament, which is a significant majority--but they were voted in by only 41% of the voters participating in that election. That is a dramatic distortion of what voters said at the ballot box and created yet another phony majority government. So we have minority rule in a parliament that is not representative of the people of this country. That isn't tolerable in a democracy.

According to Fair Vote Canada, a large number of votes are wasted as well--and your organization recently did a study which found that a majority of votes in Nova Scotia are wasted--is that right?

That's right. Wasted votes are defined by political scientists as votes cast that do not pro-

duce representation for voters. So anybody who cast a vote in our current system for a losing candidate has cast a wasted vote. They might as well have stayed home or destroyed their ballot.

Is that contributing to voter apathy in Canada?

Yes, exactly. This all follows a very common sense logic. If you have a voting system where many people understand at a gut level that they do not get representation, that really decreases the motivation--it's frankly not logical for many people to vote in many ridings across the country. So it's not surprising that countries that use the winner-take-all voter systems have lower voter turnout and more voter disgruntlement than countries that use fair voting systems.

How does the current system exaggerate regional differences, at least



Fair Vote Canada's Larry Gordon advocating proportional representation.

Fair Vote Canada

according to Fair Vote Canada?

There *are* some regional differences in Canada, but the voting system has dramatically blown them out of proportion. If you look at an electoral map, you could be forgiven for drawing the conclusion that everybody west of Ontario votes Alliance. In every MP's office you'll see this electoral map that has the country coloured by what party controls what riding. There are these great big blocks of colour across the country, showing that everybody in the West is an Alliance supporter, that everybody in Ontario is a Liberal, everybody in Quebec votes Bloc. But in the last election, and I was surprised at this because I kind of fell into this myth also, half as many people voted Liberal as Alliance in the four Western provinces. But the Alliance got five times as many seats, so you can see the distortion there. In my home province here in Ontario, 50% of Ontarians voted for the Liberals, but the Liberals got virtually every seat. People like Preston Manning and Stephen Harper have been lambasted for no breakthrough in Ontario--well, a million people in the last election in Ontario voted for the Canadian Alliance. *A million people.* They should have about 20 - 25 Alliance MPs. So in a fair voting system, the Alliance wouldn't be a western party. In a fair voting system, the Liberals would not be the party of Ontario. [P]roportional representation wouldn't stop regional parties from being formed or represented, but it would open up political space for other parties that right now cannot participate in the voting system because their support is scattered across the country.

But isn't that one of the arguments against fair voting, that the parties could actually get so small that very few would have a national scope and then that would somehow damage our political process?

Critics of proportional voting systems will often point to a place like Israel where there are 30 or 40 parties and all of them represent 5% and 2% of the country and so on. Proportional representation does allow more parties to be formed, and essentially allows whatever political viewpoints there are to be represented. So if you had a very diverse, fragmented society that could be represented in the

“in a fair voting system, the Alliance wouldn't be a western party. In a fair voting system, the Liberals would not be the party of Ontario.”

political system. Now, why don't more countries go down that path? Why don't you have Germany in utter chaos? Why is Switzerland not in chaos?

Yes, and I think the question is, how do we make sure that Canada doesn't become a worst-case scenario?

Well there's a certain common sense logic to a political system. Voters and citizens are not, on the whole, stupid. Unfortunately, because we have bad voting systems and sometimes archaic political institutions and people have become disgruntled, there's a kind of "blame voters" attitude. The argument becomes "Oh My God, what would happen if everyone had a free and equal vote. Imagine the chaos it would raise." And that's an argument that has been used against allowing people without property to vote; it was an argument used against giving women the vote; it was an argument against lowering the voting ages to let younger people vote. And sometimes people use that argu-

ment against PR. But as history has shown, give people a good voting system, and a good society where there is education and dialogue and so on, and you will usually end up with a society where there are good decisions. I don't fear a system where everybody has an equal vote. I fear continuing with a system that is so obviously anti-democratic and contrary to the values Canadians believe in.

Do you think it's mainly that kind of conflict between maintaining the status quo and trying something new, i.e. the fear of change, that's prevented proportional representation from taking hold in Canada thus far?

There are two dilemmas that you face with this sort of change. One is that often the people who have gotten into power through the current voting system don't see a problem with it. The second dilemma is that citizens are not aware of just how fundamentally important the voting system is, or that there are choices. In Europe it's easy to look across the border and see that there are other countries doing things different ways, but in Canada you look across the border and you see the US. Although they have a different political system, they're using the same voting system as us. So many Canadians are simply unaware that there are other ways to organize the system.

But doesn't that raise the question of whether it's realistic to expect change? If the Liberals for example, are in power, and benefit from the current system because they're in power, what are the chances of building a new system?

I would say that the situation has never been better in Canada's history for reform to happen in the very near future. As a matter of fact it is definitely going to happen, that's already clear. It's just amazing what's

going on right now. In Quebec the minister (and this is reaffirming what Charest said in his initial speech to the national assembly) has said that the next election in Quebec is going to be with a more proportional voting system.

And that's a move supported by all three of the parties there as well.

Exactly. And in British Colum-

“As a matter of fact it is definitely going to happen, that's already clear. It's just amazing what's going on right now.”

bia there's the formation of the citizen's assembly which will look at bringing forward a recommendation to a referendum to be held at the next provincial election, on bringing a new voting system into B.C. Here in Ontario we're about to have a provincial election, and both of the opposition parties, the Liberals and the NDP support a voting system reform process. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals are now leading in the polls in Ontario and he is committed to having a binding referendum on voting system reform in our province. It's also being examined in P.E.I. and New Brunswick. It really is only a matter of time now. As soon as one province changes it's going to be like dominoes.

What about at the federal level?

It will be interesting to see how the federal level develops because quite often in Canada the provinces are laboratories

Anti-Globalization's Disappearing Act

Hundreds of "Green Zone" protesters arrested during WTO ministerial in Montreal



Arrested protesters in Montreal, bound and guarded by police: activists worry about an "abyss of court dates and clouds of tear gas." CMAQ

by Hillary Lindsay

From July 28th to 30th, finance ministers from 25 countries and the European Union, gathered in Montreal for a 'mini-ministerial' of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Despite the declaration of Canada's Trade Minister, Pierre Pettigrew, that "the anti-globalization" movement had "completely disappeared," thousands gathered in Montreal to express their opposition to the WTO. A day later, it seemed that Pierre Pettigrew had been right; hundreds of activists had indeed 'disappeared' from the city's streets. Over the course of two days, police arrested 342 people, many through what NDP leader Jack Layton called "indiscriminate" mass arrests.

If the aim of the protests was to "Shut Down the WTO," as the central web site proclaimed, then the demonstrations were a clear failure. "The march had been dispersed by rushes of riot police and arrests before the WTO masterminds had even begun drinking their morning coffee," said street medic Lynne Hood. And although organizers of the protests held public teach-ins and other outreach events, the mainstream media's focus on windows broken at a local Burger King and Gap also called the protests' educational success into question.

Taken at face value, the anti-WTO protests in Montreal could be seen as an appalling failure, perhaps signaling the end of a movement that fire-cracked onto the North American scene in Seattle, 1999. As one article in the Montreal Gazette, titled "Weak Protests are Good News," gleefully proclaimed "...the public, in Canada at least, seems to be coming to accept globalization holds more promise than menace."

Many participants in the Montreal protests would argue, however, that the 'menace' of corporate globalization and their opposition to it, remains unchanged. The change lies in the increasing 'menace' of the justice system and the criminalization of protest in Canada.

The vast majority of arrests in Montreal took place in the "green zone." Miles from the marches and security perimeter, this space was being used to distribute free food, hold workshops and provide a place for people to learn and hang out together. On July 28th, at 10 a.m., over 200 people, who were gathered in the green zone, were ordered by police to disperse. The group attempted to leave, only to find themselves already surrounded by riot police and arrested en masse.

Rob Maguire, who had been talking with friends in the green zone before he was corralled by

police and arrested, found that his experience in jail did little to restore his faith in the justice system. "The notion that you are presumed innocent until proven guilty is nothing but a myth, a political prisoner's pipe dream. Your rights are not only continually denied, but you are laughed at, threatened and punished by cops for daring to assert them. My refusal to provide personal information other than the mandatory name, address and date of birth was met with threats of indefinite incarceration ('you'll never get out of jail unless you tell us'), while my insistence on reading my release conditions before I signed them led them to throw me back behind bars for a few hours ('we don't have time for games... you're going to the back of the line')."

In order to be released, those arrested had to sign a list of conditions to be followed until a court date several months away. The list of ten conditions includes, "You shall not protest on any public land or property unless the protest should be legal and peaceful." The conditions are disconcerting for protesters arrested for participating in something they did not see to be illegal or violent to begin with. Hood still feels conflicted over whether or not she should have signed the contract. "The conditions for my release made me feel as though I had given

into the idea of having committed a crime."

For many protesters, their experience in Montreal was an eye-opening one. "I learned that we are not innocent before proven guilty but guilty in the eyes of the police...I did not commit any crime by speaking out and taking to the streets," said Hood. Yet by arresting protesters in a random and indiscriminate manner, by treating those people with little respect in jail, and by releasing them only upon the signing of a list of conditions, police led many in Montreal to believe that the simple act of protesting had become a crime.

This is nothing new. Hundreds were arrested during the FTAA protests in Quebec city in 2001, and over 300 in Montreal during a march against police brutality in 2002. Mass arrests, not to mention tear gas and pepper spray, are becoming the norm at protests in Canada, making demonstrating a right that some people cannot afford to risk claiming. According to activist Leigh Herbert, "the issue of police accountability will have to become an integral part of the whole [anti-corporate globalization] campaign--or else the movement may 'disappear' into an abyss of court dates and clouds of tear gas." •••

Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller: Recent Works Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, UK

Canada's current Big Shots in the international art world, Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, have brought credit, fame and funding to the previously "suspect" genre of sound art. Why? Because they're so dang good. An exhibit of "Recent Works" is running at the illustrious Whitechapel Gallery in London, June 7 to August 24, 2003.

While the exhibit has four pieces, two lag behind as more typical of sound and video art ("House Burning", 2001 and "The Berlin Files", 2003). The other two are strictly audio, and are of the variety that put Cardiff and Miller on the map. "The Missing Voice [Case Study B]" (1999) is an "audio walk": you put on headphones and take a walk as directed to you by the recorded voice, turning left when told to, looking right when told to. Sometimes you even see the people the narrator is describing ("there is a man in a suit in front of you now"), which is both spooky and satisfying. The headphones make street sounds that blend with those in your actual environment. "Forty Part Motet" (2001) is an indoor audio piece billed as a "re-working of Spem in Alium Nunquam habui, 1575, by Thomas Tallis".

Janet Cardiff is the creative force behind the pieces, while her husband, Miller, is the technician. (He is also the person wearing the woman's clickity-clack high heels on the audio walks.) Describing their audio work does not do the experience justice; it would be akin to reviewing an orgasm as "really good". But I can endeavour to describe how the experience comes about.

At the most basic level, art is not about getting it, but about getting "you" in "it." In other words, art doesn't work unless there is a viewer interacting with it. The magic of Cardiff and Mill-

er's work is that they take the effort out of that interaction; actively experiencing sound is much easier than actively experiencing a painting. The work is also temporal. (The audio walk at the Whitechapel is forty minutes long. When was the last time you spent forty minutes on an art piece and still liked it at the end?) The strength that the audio pieces have over the video pieces is that with music or street sounds, you are *in* the piece, while with video, you are watching something *else*.

Especially in the audio walk, your reality is blended with Cardiff's. The street sounds on the headphones are difficult to differentiate from the street sounds coming from around you. (On my walk, the police station was playing Arabic festival music.) The narrative the artist/character spins may or may not tickle your fancy, but the experience of following *directly* in someone else's footsteps, in her experience, is a momentous feeling.

"Forty Part Motet" is by far the most powerful piece in the show. At Whitechapel, speakers are arranged in a circle around the room on stands. (In the Venice Biennial, the speakers were in a chapel.) Each speaker plays the recorded voice of one singer performing "Spem in Alium". You can walk around the room experiencing different aspects of the song. It's a simple concept, but either due to the actual music or due to the intimacy that develops as you stand beside each singer's "mouth", the piece is phenomenal. When the singing ends, the voices begin to clear their throats or gossip about the organist, subtly turning the singers into people

continued on page 8 »

Sound Art on the Rise in Sackville, NB

Canadian radio is like loveless sex. It's predictable, unimaginative and over in five minutes. With the exception of campus and community stations, we don't expect Canadian contemporary radio to broadcast sound art. It just doesn't fit into the rigidly formatted program schedule of the CBC, and it certainly isn't safe enough for commercial radio.

nity-based/campus radio station at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, is hosting the camp from August 17 to 23, and will broadcast performances from the camp throughout the week. Radio-maker Chris Brooks of St. John's, Newfoundland, will be returning for a second year as Full Moon artist-in-residence, and audio-installation and performance artist



Janna Graham

Yet, Canada has a rich tradition of innovative sound and radio artists. Because sound art is often an isolated affair lacking the same training opportunities the visual art world affords, the Canadian Society for Independent Radio Production has brought together emerging and established sound artists since 1999, dubbing this expanding community of audio artists "Full Moon". The gathering takes the form of a week long camp in which 20 participants take technical and creative workshops, go on sound-walks at local sonically significant sites, and work on their independent sound pieces. Established artists facilitate the camp and are on hand to mentor younger artists. The camp is sponsored by the Canada Council for the Arts.

This marks the first year the project will take place in an Atlantic Canadian sound-scape. CHMA Radio, a small commu-

Rita McKeough of Halifax, NS, will be a second artist-in-residence. Past artists-in-residence have included Hildgaard Westerkamp, Michael Waterman, Andra McCartney and Darren Copeland.

Imagine turning on the radio to hear the sound a box of crickets makes when thrown from a rowboat, or the scratchiness in a music teacher's throat after she's belted out a raucous version of "What A Wonderful World". What makes sound art so compelling is that it forces us to abandon the known.

For information on participating in Full Moon 2004 (spaces are full for this year), visit the web site www.radiosite.ca/fullmoon

Janna Graham is currently station manager at CHMA. She will be leaving in the fall to devote time to artistic projects.



“Proportional Representation,” continued from page 5 »

for political change. A reform is brought forward first at the provincial level then it's adopted at the federal level. That's certainly one scenario. There might be more of a parallel movement for reform happening at the federal level. The Law Commission of Canada, which is an independent federal agency, just wrapped up a one and a half year public consultation and research project on whether Canada needs a new voting system and they're going to be tabling a report with parliament sometime next year with their recommendations. It's unsure how far they'll go but they've certainly got a tremendous amount of input both from experts and the public about the need for a new voting system. Also, the NDP is bringing forward a votable motion this fall, which I'm

pretty sure will get voted on, calling for a referendum on proportional representation. That'll be the first time since 1923 that the parliament has voted on the issue of proportional representation. Jack Layton has also announced that if there is a minority government in the future that calls on the NDP for support, one of the conditions of support would be a national referendum on proportional representation.

What sort of support has your organization received so far?

Our national advisory board is just an illustration of the breadth and depth of support for [fair voting]. This is not about left versus right or east versus west or urban versus rural Canadi-

ans. This about the fundamentals of democracy. This is about one citizen, one vote, one value. And it's about a level playing field in the political arena. We're all a part of this.

For more information on Fair Vote Canada, or to sign the petition, visit: www.fairvotecanada.org
 Or contact Fair Vote Canada by email at info@fairvotecanada.org, by phone at 416-410-4034, by fax at 416-686-4929, or by mail at Fair Vote Canada, 26 Maryland Blvd., Toronto, ON M4C 5C9.

For an extended version of this interview, as well as links to further reading about PR, visit dominionpaper.ca ...

Recent Works, continued from page 7

who are singing (again, a simple but profound achievement), increasing the sense of intimacy.

It's no small wonder Cardiff and Miller were chosen, new genre and all, to represent Canada in the 2001 Venice Biennial.

Max Liboiron is a visual artist and critic. She has been working and living in Ireland for the past year; in the fall, she will be studying in New York.

