

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

The Omega Theory

With Guests
22 September at 8pm
Starlite Room
\$8 at door

The Omega Point is a mathematical theory that is said to prove the existence of both God and Heaven. Proposed by physicist Frank Tipler, it argues that the evolution of man is exponential and will thus give rise to an infinitely powerful artificial intelligence, allowing a virtual reality to be created where our history can be relived and the dead can be artificially simulated. What does this have to do with the progressive funk-rock quartet from Edmonton? Nothing! But it sure makes for a kick-ass band name!



Amy Millan

With The Wheat Pool and Mayor McGa
22 September at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$10 advance, \$12 door

Amy Millan from prominent Canadian rock group Stars will be venturing out solo to promote her recent debut, *Honey From the Tombs*. The singer-songwriter combines her vocal abilities from her work with Stars and Broken Social Scene with a pop-tinged country sound that will please all the soft-rock connoisseurs out there. She's touring with The Wheat Pool and Mayor McGa, who as far as we know has no relation to Mayor McCheese, mayor of McDondland.

Cuff The Duke

With The Hylozoists and Storyboard
23 September at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$12 advance

Cuff the Duke will hit the Sidetrack Saturday night, bringing more country-flavoured rock to the Café to promote their self-titled sophomore album. But wait: how exactly does one cuff a duke? Go to the show to find out! Note: It's highly likely that you won't actually find out this information by attending the concert.

Spread Eagle

With the Fat Dave Crime Wave and LDF
23 September at 8pm
Starlite Room (18+ only show)
\$8 at the door

The hardcore punk-metal band Spread Eagle will be busting heads and taking names in the Starlite Room this Saturday. The group has referred to their music as "sleazy," "devil-fuelled" and "kick-ass." In fact, they have a half-naked woman on the cover of their album, leaving little to the imagination of what to expect from Spread Eagle. My guess: Rachmaninov and Stravinsky covers.

5th Annual Leonard Cohen Night

23 September at 8pm
La Cité, 8627 - 91 St.
\$22 from TIX on the Square tickets

Hosted by the Cohenights Arts Society and the first Edmonton Poetry Festival, Leonard Cohen Night will feature several acts from local singers and poets to celebrate the famed Canadian troubadour's 72nd birthday. When the night's over, it's highly likely that many of the lyricists, wordsmiths and *artistes* from this cultural staple will overflow into the Starlite Room to catch the climax of the Spread Eagle concert.

JOHN KMECH
Thinks he's so funny



PHOTOS LEFT AND RIGHT: PHIL HEAD CENTRE PHOTO: MERCURY GUO

THE POWER OF THE PEN Camilla Gibb's residency will allow her to churn out another novel, and at the same time, assist aspiring writers at the U of A.

The writing's on the wall

For Camilla Gibb, this year's Writer-in-Residence, becoming a novelist was in her blood all along

ELIZABETH VAIL
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Camilla Gibb, the author of *Mouthing the Words*, *The Petty Details of So-and-So's Life* and *Sweetness in the Belly* is having a fine time settling into her post as the University of Alberta's newest Writer-in-Residence. Although she's a bit wary of Alberta's famously frigid weather, the 38-year-old novelist is eager to listen to the stories about the province during her semester-long stay.

"I imagine a lot of students [at the University] come from Alberta, and they'll have a world of stories to tell," Gibb says. "It's such a young province, and in terms of our national literature, it's under-represented. I'm interested to see what kind of stories come up."

Having previously worn the Writer-In-Residence cap at the University of Toronto, Gibb now has an experienced method of helping budding novelists discover their inner Hemingway.

"My first act is one of encouragement and of applauding anyone who's got the guts to put their words to the page, because writing is a reflection of some kind of interior universe, and it's hard to reveal that to the public," she explains. "Then I work at giving feedback that's constructive. I think if anyone's coming to see me it's because they're looking for ways to improve what they're trying to say. My job is not to tell them what to say, but to enable them to find the tools, find the confidence to say what it is they hope to say."

Gibb has nursed dreams of being a writer

since childhood, but she was discouraged from it in high school. "I actually remember my high school English teacher saying to me, 'That's all fine and good, but what are you going to write about? You're 18; go and get a life,'" she laughs. "It was patronizing, but at the same time, it almost gave me permission to do other things because he said, 'Ultimately, you'll have more to bring to the page.'"

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CAMILLA GIBB

Gibb found herself pursuing social anthropology instead, eventually getting her PhD at Oxford University in 1997. However, her desire to write couldn't be so easily swept under the rug. "I took the academic life really seriously," she insists. "I thought that was what I was going to do, but this writing bug just kept biting at me. It kept getting noisier and noisier. I had to pay attention to it."

Finally, one summer, she sat down to write, and what started as a short story grew and grew until it became *Mouthing the Words*, her first novel. "I didn't even know it was novel, I had to ask if it was a novel," she admits. "I'd never met

a writer, I didn't know anybody in publishing, so I went to a friend, and the first question I asked was, 'Do you think this is a novel?' It was that rudimentary. Then once she assured me it was a novel, I thought, 'Well, where do novels go? Hopefully one publishes a novel.' So I went to a very small press, and that was the first time I worked with an editor, and that small press published my first novel."

Thomas Wharton, a professor of Creative Writing at the University of Alberta, is pleased that Gibb was the next author chosen for the mentoring position.

"I see her in [*Sweetness in the Belly*] taking on all sorts of big themes about history and so on, and telling a story about these people caught up in these bigger historical events, which I always think is a very ambitious thing to do. She pulls it off very well," he enthuses. "I think she seems to be a very easy person to talk to. I'm going to be encouraging people, especially students, to go and talk to her because her story is very fascinating. It's a wonderful story for student writers and beginning writers to hear, that somebody just kind of launched into writing, they wanted to do it and they pursued it, and I think she makes a good role model."

When she's not mentoring, Gibb will be working on the first draft of her next novel, about a group of people sent into exile for falling victim to a mysterious disease. During the next few months, though, she's open to whatever comes her way. "[Writing's] not an easy life and it's not a sensible one," she explains. "I don't think sensible people choose to be writers, I think writing chooses them."