

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

The Plain Dealers

With Guests
Friday, 21 September at 7pm
Starlite Room

The Plain Dealers claim a wide variety of influences, from Johnny Cash to Iron Maiden. Their music, however, seems to be significantly more Man in Black and considerably less Eddie. Having released their self-titled EP at the beginning of the summer, this Edmonton quintet is taking their roots rock to the Starlite stage for their first show after the summer. But if you're lucky, they may switch things up a bit and play a little "Number of the Beast" or "Die With Your Boots On"—particularly if you yell "Play some Maiden!" loudly between songs. That always works.

The Whyte Movie

Saturday, 22 September at 8:30pm
Sir Winston Churchill Square
Free Screening

Billed as "the greatest film ever made about Edmonton and Edmontonians," *The Whyte Movie* uses the Oilers' 2006 playoff run to tell the tale of the people in the City of Champions. In a change of direction, the film focuses on the positive aspects of the city as it supported its team, rather than the flaming phone booths and vandalism that dominated headlines. The film claims to be "stunning" and "historical," and the engrossing cinematic overture, trumpeted by those who have witnessed it, will allow you to truly capture a realistic and stylized look at the experience of being an Edmontonian.



Jethro Tull

Tuesday, 25 September at 6:30pm
Jubilee Auditorium

The best band ever named after the inventor of a mechanical planting device, music legends Jethro Tull come to town this week to sow the seeds of classic rock at the Jubilee. Everyone and their dad—especially their dad—loves Ian Anderson's whimsical electric flute-playing and the band's progressive rock sensibilities. While you may be thinking, "My God, they're still alive?", the group is indeed still going strong after 40 years, with Anderson not yet singing "Aqualung" from an iron lung.

The Toasters

With Saint Alivia Cartel, The Peacocks, and The Flatliners
Tuesday, 25 September at 8pm
Starlite Room, 18+

There are a lot of crappy toasters out there. You know, the ones where you have to push your toast down, like, three times before it turns brown. Just like toasters, there are a lot of bad ska bands out there, and you have to sift through a lot of junk before you find the band that will turn your toast brown, or something ska-like.

That band is, without coincidence, The Toasters, who were part of the initial rush of third wave ska bands back in the early '80s. Celebrating their 25th anniversary, the New York-based band just released *One More Bullet*, and bill themselves as the "Longest Running US Ska Band"—though it's uncertain as to what other country's ska band has been around longer than a quarter-century.

JOHN KMECH
Note the double 'n'



The Maids sweep through social identity

theatrepreview

The Maids

Runs 20–29 September
Written by Jean Genet
Directed by Ian Leung
Starring Garrett Ross, Rylan Wilkie, and Nick Green
Timms Centre

MARIA KOTOVYCH
Arts & Entertainment Staff

In blood-stained situations of murder most foul, some people are quick to place blame squarely on the butler's shoulders. Sometimes it isn't the butler. Sometimes, the maids might be at fault.

Jean Genet's play *The Maids* is loosely based on the true story of the Papin sisters: in the play, maids Solange and Claire are very unhappy living under the servitude of their mistress, Madame, whose feelings towards them is ambiguous throughout. As a coping mechanism to deal with their hatred towards Madame, the maids take turns role-playing Madame in her absence.

"In the ritual they perform, the mistress that they create is a much more horrible mistress than the one we actually see," Ian Leung, the MFA Directing candidate in charge of *The Maids* says. "They resort to this imaginary exercise to get at their very real frustrations, but things have been building and building for them, and a lot of their fantasies may come true in real life."

But as their fantasies get more violent, and the lines dividing them from reality start to fade, Solange and Claire decide to murder their mistress. While Leung emphasizes that *The Maids* can be interpreted in many ways, he himself looks to the play's themes regarding social identities.

"All [Genet's] plays deal with relationships of power between those oppressed, or those who are ruled over or constrained by the system, and those who wield the power."

IAN LEUNG
MFA DIRECTING CANDIDATE

"For me, [the play] is chipping away at the idea of social identities as being fixed," Leung says. "We choose them; we have them imposed on us. They're coping mechanisms, but in a lot of ways, they're arbitrary—they're not real."

"The maids are so entrapped by their identity as maids that they'll never be able to overcome their condition because they have no idea how to be anything other than maids," he continues. "If they were ever put in a position of power, they would be waiting for somebody to give them orders."

Leung also emphasizes the importance of mystery and rituals inherent in *The Maids*. The play intertwines the ideas of theatre and social identity—Genet wanted to bring back

the idea of theatre-based in ritual. He was writing at a time when everything in the world was explained by science, and, according to Leung, he wanted to bring mystery back into people's lives. With an ambiguous ending and rampant symbolism, *The Maids* presses a mystery on to audiences, leaving them with something to discuss afterwards.

"[Genet] wanted theatre to be the opposite of life," Leung explains. "He wanted to point out the fact that theatre is fake, not real, [which is] what he thought was wonderful about it."

Additionally, this play contains an undercurrent of subversive political themes, particularly those regarding power, dominance, and subjugation. Leung explains that the play depicts power roles as being about theatre; for instance, the maids deal with rising in status to embody Madame, performing her upper-class role and trained, proper gestures for each other's enjoyment.

"Genet was very much an outsider, and he identified with oppressed people, and he wanted the play to be about more than just maids," Leung says. "The maids were a metaphor for other things. All his plays deal with relationships of power between the oppressed, or those who are ruled over or constrained by the system, and those who wield the power."

However, Leung stresses that despite the heady themes presented in *The Maids*, the performance also has another side to it.

"I do also want the play to be an entertainingly presented story, and that's one of the things that I'm shooting for. I want the audience to come and have fun—while they're being disturbed."

STEFFI ROSSKOPF