

# The best of what's to come in '08: a monster, a joker, and *Macbeth*

PAUL  
BLINOVA&E  
Commentary

Although we're just ten days into 2008, it's already shaping up to be a pretty good year in the world of arts and entertainment. Not only is our usually strong theatre community raising its own bar with a revamped 2007 hit and some classic Shakespeare, but it looks like we're getting a hefty helping of good touring bands, too. There's even a number of exciting movies, which is great, given last year's over-stuffed platter of sequels and crap. Here's what's tickling our fancy so far in the next twelve months:

## THEATRE

### FRANKENSTEIN (2-24 FEBRUARY, CATALYST THEATRE SOCIETY)

After a year of awards and massive critical acclaim, it seems only natural that the cast and crew of *Frankenstein* would want to take the show out for a victory lap. Based on the 1818 Mary Shelly novel, *Frankenstein* follows the title character's monster—often mistakenly referred to Frankenstein itself—as it's artificially brought to life on the haunting, dreamlike set.

This touring production managed to score eight Sterling Awards, so if you missed it the first time around, now's your chance to say you caught one of the best shows to hit

Edmonton in recent years.

### WHILE WE'RE YOUNG (7-16 FEBRUARY, TIMMS CENTRE)

Penned specifically for the 2008 BFA class by Don Hannah, the U of A's inaugural Lee Playwright-in-Residence, *While We're Young* explores the transition from youth to adulthood.

Spread across more than a century of time and numerous locations, the script laces six threads of plot together into one interconnecting ensemble piece that celebrates adulthood in the centennial year of the University itself.

### MACBETH (9 February-2 March, Citadel Theatre)

Don't ask for it by name, at least not in a theatre—it's bad luck. Shakespeare's immortal script is being put on at the Citadel, tracing the Icarus-like downfall of Macbeth and his wife as they plot to murder their way into royal power.

Under the watchful eye of Peter Hinton, the National Art Centre English Theatre Company's artistic director, *Macbeth* seeks to keep the age-old script fresh. Plus, the poster has three really creepy looking children in matching clothes and haircuts. Unsettling.

## MOVIES

### CLOVERFIELD (18 JANUARY)

PR companies looking for ways to market new movies need to remember the age-old mantra of "less is more."

JJ Abrams remembered: *Cloverfield* created a ravenous amount of publicity with the unexplained, nameless trailer that first appeared this summer.

Of course, more details have emerged since then, aside from the title; it's a Godzilla-style monster movie shot with a hand-held camera, detailing an underwater beast's assault on New York through the eyes of a group of friends. Sounds badass.

### BE KIND, REWIND (FEBRUARY)

Jack Black plays a junkyard worker who erases every video in a local store while unknowingly charged with a magnetic field. In an attempt to cover it up, he makes low-budget versions of the movies with his video store employee friend (played by Mos Def). The knock-offs are a hit, but attract unwanted attention for violating copyright laws.

Michael Gondry wrote and directed the picture himself, and anyone who thinks the plot is too outlandish needs to direct their attention to both *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and the White Stripes' lego-infused video for "Fell in Love with a Girl"—both of which belong to Gondry. He can dream up and handle these extremes, people.

### THE DARK KNIGHT (SUMMER)

After *Batman Begins* saved the entire franchise from the overly campy waste of time it had become, its sequel is looking to set the bar even higher. Christian Bale reprises the role of caped crusader, while Aaron Eckhart picks up Two Face, and Heath Ledger



embodies the Joker.

To prepare for the role, Ledger spent a month alone in a hotel room developing the mind, body, and voice of his twisted character, and there's already a growing buzz that his twisted performance more than trumps Jack Nicholson's 1989 Joker.

## MUSIC

### WINTERSLEEP (15 FEBRUARY, STARLITE ROOM)

Who cares if they were here just a few months ago; to paraphrase the immortal words of *Zoolander's* Mugatu: "Wintersleep's so hot right now."

The Halifax-born six-piece have been more than making a name for themselves since the release of their third album, *Welcome to the Night Sky*. Plus the constant touring—and opening up for Pearl Jam—probably haven't hurt their popularity, either.

### HAWKSLEY WORKMAN (24 MARCH, WINSPEAR CENTRE)

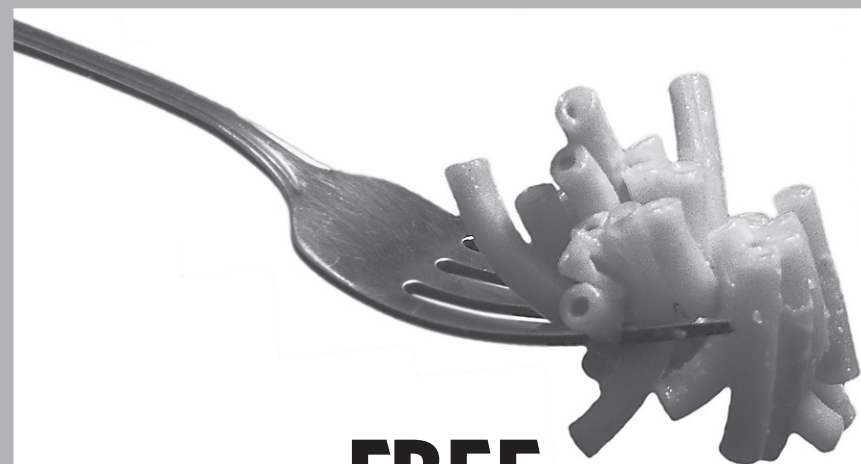
Last time Edmonton saw Mr Workman, it was in McDougall United Church—just him, guitar, and Mr Lonely on piano accompaniment. The appearance wasn't part of a tour—he just wanted to do a show.

This time around, however, Hawksley's coming to town in support of a fresh spread of tunes: January will see the release of his latest album, *Between the Beautifuls*.

### FOO FIGHTERS (28 MARCH, REXALL PLACE)

Dave Grohl just won't die; hell, he'll barely slow down. It's almost sad that the Foo Fighter's younger generation of fans probably don't even realize that the guy drummed in a little band called Nirvana first. Oh well.

Grohl will lead his enduring pop-rock band through new songs, some old classics, and almost certainly a sing-along rendition of "Everlong."



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