

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Mump and Smoot in *Something*

Runs 7-17 February
Starring Michael Kennard and John Turner
TransAlta Arts Barns (10330 84 Avenue),

Clowns have always provided adults with an innocent way of pretending to entertain children, when their real motivation is scaring the living hell out of them, often to hilarious and potentially life-altering effect. Performers Michael Kennard and John Turner transcend the line between horror and humour further than simply squirting children in the eye with the flower on their lapel or causing them to jar awake at night in a cold sweat. This adults-only clown performance features the stars' return after a six-year hiatus in *Something*, a former Fringe Festival show where they portrayed the "clowns of horror" Mump and Smoot.

Smoothride CD Release Party

With My Sister Ocean and Seventh Rain
Saturday, 9 February at 7:30pm
Dinwoodie Lounge

While their motto may be to try to get listeners to think, to act, and to love, Smoothride isn't some kind of hippy collective, but an alternative rock band from Edmonton. Having spent a good portion of the last few years touring Alberta and the Northwest Territories building a reputation, the band is finally releasing its debut album, the *Land and Honour EP*, and has already received critical acclaim based on their live performances and avid enthusiasm for fedoras of a variety of monochromatic colours.

Imagining WOW

Saturday, 9 February from 11am-4pm
The Art Gallery of Alberta (100 10230 Jasper Avenue)

For the art connoisseur who prefers an interactive exhibit in which to create, explore, and experience a variety of different emoticons and experiences, Imagining WOW at the Art Gallery of Alberta will push the boundaries of what the human mind can imagine. GENERATION artist Demian Petryshyn hosts this exquisite event that invites attendees to play *World of Warcraft* together at the gallery. This masterpiece of abstract expressionism transports patrons into a fictional world where different classes struggle to coexist among economic disparity and a culture of fear, forging a powerful statement on class conflict and race relations between human and orc.

The creators of the WOW exhibit used moving three dimensional images of fanciful creatures to symbolize, like Picasso's "Guernica," the futility and perpetuity of war, as well as the increased militarization and imperialistic tendencies of the walking dead. In a novel twist, the gallery viewers become part of the exhibit itself, showcasing the strength of the human spirit to endure countless hours of levelling and questing, with only pizza, potato chips, and soda as sustenance.

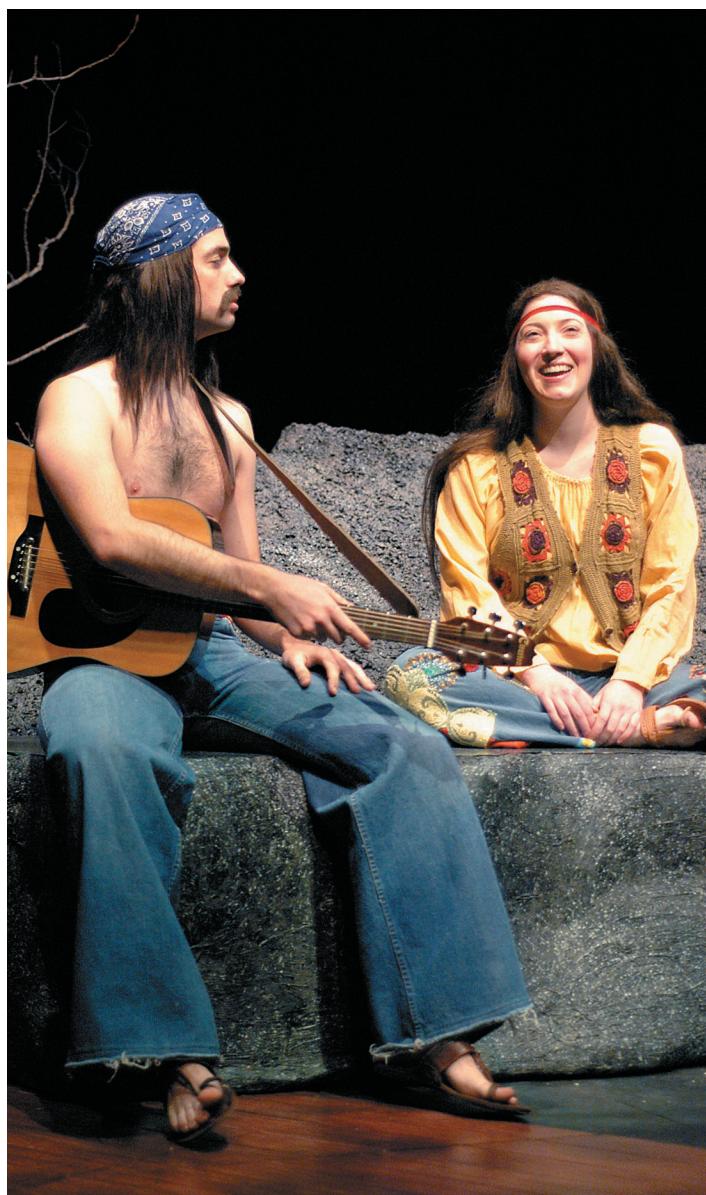
Newtube: The Eighth Annual New Works Festival

Runs 12-16 February at 7:30pm
Second Playing Space, Timms Centre

A twist on the "Broadcast Yourself" YouTube motto, the Drama department is producing six one-act plays which it will send out into space. The event features play readings as well as performances such as Scott Garland's *Half a League*, where three children create a world out of trash that is interrupted by an outsider, providing aliens with an interesting *Lord of the Flies*-like view on human child rearing. The festival will be the most entertaining media that the denizens of Alpha Centauri will receive since the shocking series finale of *Just Shoot Me* that reached them last week.

JONN KMECH

I won't admit to his face that I'm glad he's back



LAURA STIEGLITZ

THE YOUNG AND THE TIMELESS Spanning time and space, Studio Theatre's *While We're Young* explores the turning points in young people's lives.

Eligible young U of A bachelors

While We're Young was tailored for the 2008 BFA class by playwright-in-res Don Hannah

theatre preview

While We're Young

Runs 7-16 February
Written by Don Hannah
Directed by Kim McCaw
Starring the 2008 BFA acting class
Timms Centre

EDMON ROTEA
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Like the centenary history of the University of Alberta, playwright Don Hannah's latest ensemble work, *While We're Young*, spans many decades, eras, and generations. Hannah, the U of A's inaugural Lee Playwright-in-Residence, was commissioned to write the play for the Department of Drama's bachelor of Fine Arts acting class of 2008.

While Hannah remains secretive about the plot, he describes *While We're Young* as a play that spans over a hundred years, from 1870 to the present, with events occurring in six different historical periods. From a farmhouse in Nova Scotia during the late 19th century to the trenches of World War I to modern day Edmonton, Hannah attempts to capture and convey the experience of being young throughout Canadian history.

"I also wanted to counterpoint the First World War and the war in Afghanistan, just in terms of looking at very young people—21 and 22-year-old kids—going off to war," Hannah says. "I developed the stories within each time frame and built the action of the scene around those characters."

While We're Young features a cast of a dozen performers, most of whom are in their early 20s. Some cast members even play more than one character. While writing the script, Hannah, a middle-age man, attempted to have the

youth-driven play take place in the present-day period, but found that his age made it difficult to write from a modern perspective.

"There's a dozen actors in that class, so I wanted to write a play and use all of them. I wanted it to be an ensemble piece so they would all have equal parts, and it wouldn't be just one or two nice, fat, juicy roles while everyone else is just stuck carrying spears in the background. Then I thought, 'I can't really write a play set now with that many people. I don't have enough to say about being young in 2007 or 2008.' I decided to play with time, and look at being 21-24 in various times in the last 120 years, just to see what things were the same, what things were different, and to tell a kind of a bigger story of being that age," Hannah says.

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DON HANNAH
WHILE WE'RE YOUNG PLAYWRIGHT

The play's director, Kim McCaw, also noted the many themes and emotions that the youthful characters experience in the play.

"It's really dealing with the things that young people face: those major kind of turning points in their lives when suddenly they are adults and

are facing really hard problems and [ask] 'What are we going to do about it? What does the future mean to us?'" McCaw says.

Characters include Presbyterian Scotsmen in the 1870s arguing about an interfaith marriage and 1960s hippies contemplating moving into a house located in Edmonton's Garneau area. One actor, Cole Humeny, found his experience playing a World War I Canadian soldier to be exciting.

"I connected to his character the first time I read for him. I was excited to explore and live his journey of being here faced with this awful situation—of wishing he could be back home with his sweetie."

Humeny, who previously played the king of Thebes in last season's Studio Theatre production of *Antigone*, found himself doing research to get into the mindset of his character.

"My friend Brian told me to read *The Wars* by Timothy Findley. I read that and a few other novels, just to get the feel of the atmosphere and climate of communities and how they dealt with sending their boys off to war," Humeny explained while wearing a replica of a World War I Canadian army uniform.

Character is central to the play's premise of being young, especially with themes that concern the challenges and responsibilities of adulthood.

"The characters in this play get various things thrown at them, such as pregnancy, war, or falling in love. It's not all unpleasant, but sort of the big things in their lives," Hannah explains. "The plot of the play is how these stories are told in six different time periods which also become [part of] one bigger story. It basically started as a kind of puzzle for me to solve. You have to figure out how this is all going to fit together, and then there is this satisfaction of having it all fit together."

"It's very much a play about youth, but it's also a very intelligent play—and a very adult play. I think it should be of interest to twenty-something things because they will be seeing themselves on stage."