

## In This Issue

Jennifer Keesmaat and Claire Messud compare neighbourhoods

Lisa Moore's Speed Interview

Kyle Buckley reviews *The Daisy Theatre*

Stacey May Fowles and Damian Rogers on music technologies

Dan Daley gets off at the ground floor

... and much more

## Today @ Luminato Festival

Time	Event	Location
All Day	Luminato Portraits: An Art on the Move Project	Festival Hub
10AM	Canadian Citizenship Ceremony at Luminato	Festival Hub
10AM	Dolls by Viktor&Rolf	Thorsell Spirit House
11AM	Stockpile	Allen Lambert Galleria
Noon	Lunchtime Illumination: New Beginnings	Festival Hub
Noon	MAI - Prototype	Trinity Bellwoods Park
6PM	Evening Illumination: A Gala Reading	Toronto Reference Library, The Bram & Bluma Appel Salon
8PM	Feng Yi Ting	MacMillan Theatre
8PM	H'Sao, Patrick Watson	Festival Hub
9:30PM	The Daisy Theatre	Berkeley Street Theatre
11PM	Super Night Shot	Festival Hub
11:30PM	The Courtyard Revue	Berkeley Street Theatre



## On the QT

Feist and Hydra made yet another surprise appearance at Jason Collett's Courtyard Revue last night. I tell you, it is really the place to be. And if you hear any rumors who is playing tonight, you'd better believe them. 'Cause rumors seem to be the truth at Luminato.

The big rumor of course was that Joni Mitchell was going to perform at the tribute concert at Massey Hall and boy did she perform. She told the author of this piece that she had not played with a band on a stage in fourteen years. It was a lovefest and several people fainted in the audience. But a ten-year-old girl stayed very calm and notated every song of the set list and their arrangements and she is planning to put a tribute concert together only with kids now.

And there was more fainting and supernatural experiences at Luminato on Wednesday. People come out of the Marina Abramovic Institute Prototype claiming they have seen auras around people; the audience at Marina's lecture insisted that she continue her long durational performance *The Artist is Present* and Air Canada has agreed to change her flight without a rebooking fee to the 27th of September.

A twelve-year-old girl yesterday brought her favorite doll—that her mother claimed she would never ever let out of her hands—to the VIKTOR&ROLF DOLLS and insisted it be placed on the runway among the other creations of the Dutch duo. We are just trying to get clearance from them for a temporary picture to make the doll and the girl happy. It seems V&R were so inspired by the dress the little girl made, that they are now going to create a life size version of it that will walk the runway of their next fashion show in Paris.

—Jorn Weisbrodt

## Hotter than NXNE?

Toronto music fans have been rolling in it the last couple of weeks. The smorgasbord of NXNE has lead directly into Luminato, which although not nearly as extensive as NXNE, musically, can certainly lay some claim to being as seismic a musical experience.

Wednesday night saw this reporter in the audience at Massey Hall, where the audience delivered ovation after ovation as some of the best voices in the business paid tribute to Joni Mitchell on her seventieth birthday. And then the doyenne of folk took to the stage herself at the end of the second act and read a poem to the audience that took its inspiration from rain and Emily Carr. This was followed, to the awed shock of the gathered masses, by three numbers. Most in attendance understood that Joni would not sing—in fact, has not sung in public for more than a decade—but then the band started into "Furry Sings the Blues". At first, the celebrant spoke more than sang, but she eased herself into it like she was getting into a hot bath and then there it was: the Voice. Just about as it had always been. The Festival audience drowned her out with applause after each number, and by the time the evening ended with a full-cast rendering of "Woodstock," there were a considerable number of raw hands and wet eyes in the house.

Meanwhile, although this edition of Luminato will be remarked on for this tribute, its new music offerings have also brought audiences out in droves. The Festival began with an astonishing, uncategorizable concert by Kid Koala at the Hub—where free, live acts like Carolina Chocolate Drops, Serena Ryder, and Maxi Priest have been filling the square all week—and reached their apogee on Wednesday night with the first of three performances by Hydra. The buzz had been building for days that this new supergroup—a mash-up of Snowblink, AroarA and Lesley Feist—would be playing the Courtyard Revue, and when they took the stage on Wednesday night, a mesmerized gathering was treated a seminal moment. Daniela Gesundheit, Ariel Engle, and Feist stood across the front of the stage and delivered a tight set made up of each other's songs, arranged for three voices, and designed to drop your jaw. Although some comments were made from stage about whether the three rows of people who were sitting in arcs across the open lobby of the Berkeley Street Theatre might want to stand, it was quite clear that those patrons on the floor couldn't have stood if they wanted to. They were stupid with joy, bathing in the luscious sound that went over them in waves. Of course, they were the ones in the house best capable of delivering the standing ovation Hydra earned from their astonishing set. Many present—for what was only the second time Hydra has played together as a band—remarked afterwards in the open courtyard that the set had had the feeling of history being made.

—Staff

## Pro & Con

Fowles vs. Rogers; LPs vs. iTunes

If there's one thing I am sure of about in my relationship with music, it is that I am what you might call "A Repeater." Yes, I'm a tactile romantic who at times loves sliding a record out of the sleeve and giving it a long, crackly, start-to-finish spin, but at the end of the day, I need a song, and I need it to be a mere click away. I need to play it over and over again in a frantic, obsessive loop until I'm done with it.

The world so often asks us to wait, but my iTunes playcount creeps into the dozens during a day, until I'm done with whatever song was feeding a feeling. It is a beautiful model of compulsion, a high-tech homage to the immediacy of satiating a need. It is not a tool of deep experience, but rather of gratification, satisfying an urge until it is worn out. It doesn't ask for patience, or to have the listener revel in a drawn out journey one side before the other.



Joni and friends, Massey Hall, June 18

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The romance of the record still charms me, of course, but sometimes—most times—I need a quick and dirty repetitive.

—Stacey May Fowles

The greatest advantages of iTunes—convenience, portability, and the fact that MP3s don't add to the clutter in your rec room—are directly linked to what I see as the format's ultimate inferiority to LPs. I love old records the way I love old books. I enjoy them as objects, I appreciate them as cultural artifacts. I like it when a used record has someone's name written on the back in bold black-marker capitals. I love liner notes. I love the ritual of sitting down to listen to a record and paying real attention to it, rather than making music the aural background to multitasking. I prefer the warmth of the sound, the drop of the needle on vinyl, the pause before the music starts. My estranged father recently offered me his record collection as a means to reconnect—I'm excited to paw through the crates, to hold and consider his past in my hands.

—Damian Rogers

## Speed Interview

Lisa Moore submits from her home in Newfoundland. 12m43s

- 1 | What is the last book you didn't finish? *The Spot* by David Means—but still reading it.
- 2 | What is your mother's favourite colour? *Powder blue, like the tuxedos in the 70s.*
- 3 | Who would play you in the movie of your life? *Emily Watson*
- 4 | Who would you like to play in the movie about your life? *My daughter*
- 5 | What was the first concert you attended? *April Wine*
- 6 | What was your favourite childhood book? *Harriet the Spy*
- 7 | Favorite painter? *Monet*
- 8 | What do you wear to bed? *Oh Goddd ... Socks.*
- 9 | Have you ever been arrested? *No. Sadly. A great embarrassment.*
- 10 | What would be your last meal? *Tiramisu*
- 11 | Are you afraid of snakes? *No*
- 12 | Name a country still on your bucket-list. *Thailand*
- 13 | On dance: ballroom, ballet, or modern? *Modern*
- 14 | Your favorite comedian of all time? *Trent McClellan*
- 15 | What was the meanest thing you ever did to someone in school? *I cut off someone's hair, long hair—I cut off a ponytail!*
- 16 | How would you describe Twitter, in three words or less? *Don't do it*
- 17 | E-Readers: pro or con? *Pro. I don't have one. But I want one.*
- 18 | Do you believe there is anything after death? *No*
- 19 | Would you rather spend the rest of your days in the city or the country? *In the country*

- 20 | What historical figure would you like to have dinner with? *Jesus*
- 21 | What's your idea of a perfect Saturday night? *Big house party with a band.*
- 22 | What would you whisper into the ear of your 16-yr-old self? *Don't get into that transport truck that picked you up between Gander and Cornerbrook.*
- 23 | Would you hate or enjoy being offline for a whole month? *Hate*
- 24 | Why? *I write long emails to my friends every day.*
- 25 | What is your pet peeve? *Electronic noises from domestic appliances.*
- 26 | Where would you like to go on a shopping spree? *Value Village*
- 27 | If you hadn't become a writer, what do you think you'd be right now? *A painter*
- 28 | What don't you get at all? *Competitive sports for young children.*
- 29 | Which alcoholic beverage can you never drink again? *Martinis*
- 30 | Which instrument do you wish you played like an angel? *Theramin*
- 31 | If you could take any character from any book or movie to bed, who would it be? *Vronsky*
- 32 | Have you lied at all while answering these questions? *No ... Oh oh ... I didn't know that was an option!*
- 33 | Can you do any impressions? *I can do a good Newfoundland accent!*
- 34 | In one word: the meaning of life is ... *Adventure*

## Artists on a Blind Date

A writer and a city planner walk into a bar ... Claire Messud and Jennifer Keesmat go on a blind date.

Claire | Hey,

I was recently on a long plane trip, in the course of which I watched—and enjoyed—three pretty different films from the airline's selection: *Amour*, *The Hangover*, and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Have you seen any of them? If so, what thoughts? If not, what films might you choose for a fifteen hour flight?

all the best,

—“W”

Jennifer | Hi!

This is so embarrassing, but I haven't seen any of them—I've, um, been working too hard lately, I think. But, I love relatively mindless movies as a counterpoint to my work. I've never watched three movies in a row—even on a long flight, I'd mix it up with reading, writing, working (and sleeping!). Where were you coming from? Why were you there? I know I am peppering you with questions, but I would love to know where in the City you live. I just think neighborhoods are such a big clue to personalities...

—“D”

Continues over,

## Dear: Diary

Dan Daley counts his blessings from behind the scenes at Luminato

A recurring theme at this year's Luminato Festival, which our staff now fully appreciates, is the lack of accessible services that we often take for granted. The offices of the Festival, situated in the elegantly restored Queen & Richmond Centre (once the Robertson Building Wholesale Confectioner, now the headquarters of St. Joseph Media), offer a convenient downtown location for our operations. We occupy one humble corner of the fourth floor, which isn't an important detail, but when there is not a functioning elevator to be found, well, it is another "story" entirely.

Since my time working with the Festival—March of this year—the south elevator has been out of service. At first, I didn't pay it much attention as I'm a relatively fit young man (I'm usually the one to be found bounding up the stairs in the subway past the parallel escalator), but there were some indications that this out-of-service elevator wasn't a thing of the recent past. For instance, the out-of-service sign isn't just some piece of paper stuck on the operating panel, but is a mounted plaque firmly secured to the elevator doors at each level. It reads, "Temporarily out of service. We are working hard to resolve the issue." Someone had gone through considerable effort to have those plaques printed and mounted, I'm sure of it. That someone must know a little more than the rest of us about just how long it will take for that south elevator to function again, if ever...

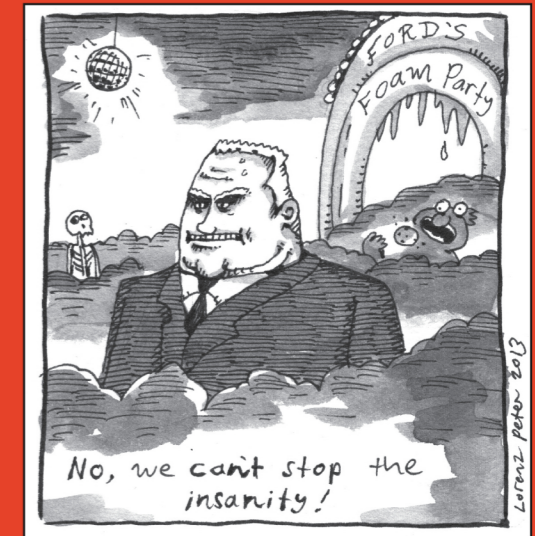
At one point, I did see a man with the doors propped open on the ground floor. He seemed to be repairing it, and I thought to myself: "...excellent, we'll have it back soon enough!" Sadly: no, not at all. And, to really make matters better, the north elevator went down last week only days before the Festival opened. I forgot to mention: "Locked in a collective bargaining dispute with four of the biggest elevator companies, the International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC) across Ontario went on strike last week. Some 1,400 elevator workers—800 of whom work in the GTA—are now on the picket line." —*Toronto Star*, May 10, 2013.

We began the Festival with an abundance of gear: cases of water, printed materials and other paraphernalia that needed to be schlepped up and down those now-daunting four storeys (more specifically: eight flights of stairs).

I write about this because our problems are petty compared to the city-wide crisis that our minor example demonstrates. Our elevator woes pale in comparison to the numerous brown-brick, high-rise apartments, which pepper our city limits. A 2010 documentary entitled *1000TH Tower*, presented by the National Film Board of Canada, collected the stories of Toronto residents, both families and individuals whose lives are severely crippled by inoperable lifts. In most cases their stories contained the inevitable subplots of poor building management and un-safe common areas. Who were many of the people interviewed? Low-income, first and second generation Canadians. They offer bleak stories of being trapped in elevators for hours, unable to get to work on time, climbing thirty stories and feeling severely isolated.

If a multi-million dollar media group can't get a building with a functioning elevator, what hope do these suburban residents have? As for some humour on the issue, next to that mounted plaque is another sign which reads: "Take the stairs, it's good for the heart." It feels like a cruel joke, but it reminds me not to dwell on my inconveniences when so many others dwell in the squalor of disrepair. If only we could raise the funds to raze these buildings and re-establish communities for the ones who need it most—then would I laugh with ease at that conspicuous plaque.

## Comix by Lorenz Peter



lorenzpeter.blogspot.ca

## From the LightNews Archives

June 20 1912

D. W. GRIFFITHS ON HAND FOR WORLD PREMIERE

By Michael Redhill

Director D. W. Griffiths, with his leading lady Dorothy Bernard on his arm, made a brief appearance in front of Luminato Cinematic Society patrons at the world premiere of his romance *The Girl and Her Trust* at the Bay Theatre last night. This reporter, normally a stalwart girl, is still so emotional after seeing this work of unerring emotional accuracy that all she can say is bravo maestro and reach for a freshly laundered kerchief.

—Staff

## Contributors

**Rafael Benetar** is a musician and magician. His show, *Compositions*, plays June 21-23  
**Kyle Buckley**, **Stacey May Fowles**, **Deborah Kerbel**, **Damian Rogers**, and **Hilary Scharper** are all Ontario authors. They will appear on the stages of A Literary Picnic on June 22 (rain date June 23)  
**Dan Daley** is and arts producer and creative writer.  
**Jennifer Keesmaat** is the chief city planner of the City of Toronto.  
**Claire Messud** is the author of *The Woman Upstairs*. She appears at A Gala Reading on June 20.  
**Lisa Moore** is a writer from Newfoundland. Her latest novel is *Caught*. She appears at A Gala Reading on June 20.  
**Jorn Weisbrodt** is the Artistic Director of the Luminato Festival.

For tickets and more information, please visit [www.luminatofestival.com](http://www.luminatofestival.com)

## Golden Key Found

Alack, there are no more clues! Why? Because we have our winners! Congrats to **Andrew Ng** and **Marie Lim**, who put their heads together and found the key on a mannikin in the window at Malabar yesterday morning. They win a pair of tickets to every Luminato show in 2014 and congratulations to them both!

## Masthead

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*LightNews* Vol 1. No 7. *LightNews* is an independent program of Luminato Festival. The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and artists and may not reflect the views and opinions of Luminato Festival or its sponsors. Prediction: By 2035, the downward-faced attitude of subway- and bus-riders and pedestrians, caused by cellphone use, will result in homo sapiens evolving to find the tops of people's heads sexually attractive, thereby ensuring the survival of the species.





One of Ronnie Burkett's muses

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## Review

**Kyle Buckley** on who controls the strings. A review of Ronnie Burkett's *The Daisy Theatre*

Edna Rural, wrinkled and bejewelled, reclines on a settee and instructs the audience on how to treat a diva. Step one is unbridled adoration. Gesturing to the riches that surround her—symbolized by the silk velvet curtain upstage—Edna bemoans a long and intricate sexual history, her voice rasping nostalgically, her head cast back for dramatic effect. It makes you think of Joan Rivers, but in 1940s Prague.

The Daisy Theatre, a company of dissident puppeteers, has historical origins in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia. Growing a daisy in the dark was conceived as a metaphor for making art under political oppression. Ronnie Burkett, the show's creator, references these Czech artists as the original bad boys of puppetry and as a notable sidebar in the history of twentieth-century subversive theatre.

In true vaudevillian spirit, little of the show is set in stone. Using character monologues as a starting point, Burkett allows his puppets to interact with audience members and improvise accordingly, even talking back to himself as the puppeteer. Every night also sees the incorporation of at least one short play for his characters, from a series of scripts contributed by notable Canadian playwrights such as Daniel McIvor, Brad Fraser, Morris Panych, and others.

Burkett's puppets are mercurial, coursing easily from old world playhouses to contemporary Parkdale and offering political quips along the way. Of course, jokes about Rob Ford or Olivia 'Holier Than' Chow aren't going have the resonance of political revolt in World

War II; instead, the strength of Burkett's *Daisy Theatre* lies in his mastery of his discipline. The puppets move with a sinewy dexterity, climbing up curtains, crawling over furniture or simply shaking from the wrist with a delicate authenticity. Breaking down the fourth wall, Burkett addresses the audience at one point to draw attention to a particularly deft technique. "You know, this part is very good," he says. "If anyone here actually likes puppetry."

Judging by the standing ovation at the end of show, Burkett must have made a few converts.

*Blind Date, continued from front page*

**Claire** | Sounds a busy time at your end—what are you working on just now? Are you someone who works in bursts, or consistently, all the time? Do you work at home or have an office or studio?

The flight I took was very long—close to fifteen hours—so there was time for all the things you mention. I read, I slept, tho' I confess I didn't work, except insofar as the reading was work—& three movies in the bargain. I went to Sydney, Australia for just a week. It was a great trip. I lived there as a child and although I'd been back before, I hadn't been for ages, so it was a bit like stepping into a dream. All sorts of things that exist always in my imagination, suddenly there in front of me. It's simultaneously thrilling & disconcerting to find your imaginary world is in fact real, both the same as and different from the world in your head.

Did you grow up where you live now? Or somewhere else? If somewhere else, do you return to that place? Do you still have family there?

And which city are we talking about? Toronto?

Or another one? What's your neighborhood?

If you like mindless movies, *The Hangover* would be the one to choose. It's impressively mindless. *Amour* is the recent Michael Haneke film about what happens to an ageing couple when one of them has a stroke. Emmanuelle Riva puts in a phenomenal performance. Amazing movie, not many laughs .... And *Picnic At Hanging Rock* is an early Peter Weir film from the mid-70s—set in rural Australia in 1900, very spooky. A tad heavy-handed, but great on atmospheric, & captures some things about Australia that are still detectable today—eg, the peculiar, even absurd, juxtaposition of constraining British colonialism and wild, untamed nature.

Other than films, what might you do for pleasure when you're not working quite so hard? Best,

—W

**Jennifer** | Dear W,

Wonderful to hear from you. It is busy on my end; I can't really pretend otherwise. I am building something. Something very very large, and it demands a ton of collaboration and, well, it's rather political. I feel like I am in the throes of what will become my life's work, so all cylinders are firing, every day. I work in an office, but I think of the city as my studio. Having spent my life in design professions, I am not really an office type (and as an entrepreneur have always worked in studios), but my current job has made me feel, ironically, more corporate than ever: an office, lots of policy and procedures. And you? Office or studio? That's almost as good as knowing which neighbourhood someone comes from.

Are you a poet? A movie critic? An academic? Or a writer? Your comment about the thrilling and disconcerting nature of memory and imagination took me right back to the first time I went back to the street I lived on until I was five. I had memories of skateboarding (I was a bit of a tomboy) down a "big hill" which as an adult translated into a very gentle slope. My memory was a five year old memory in an adult body. Disconcerting.

I live fairly close to where I grew up, and I now live at Yonge and Eglinton in Toronto. So the GTA, as a region, is very much home to me. I did live in Vancouver for a few years but I have decided, despite how breathtaking it can be, that I prefer cold and sun over grey and mild, any day of the year. I just could not take the rain.

Do you live in Toronto? I jumped right to asking about neighbourhoods, assuming that you are from Toronto, but that's pretty unfair. How do you get around? Are you a walker, transit rider, biker? Do you like busy places with lots of energy or peaceful places, away from the noise and crowds?

Thanks for the movie tips! Looking forward to hearing more,

—D

**Claire** | Dear D—

How exciting your project sounds. Are you an architect? Or an urban planner? Or something completely other?

I'm a fiction writer & although I have the thrill of putting onto paper the worlds that are in my head, I marvel at the tangible translation of a vision into something made of bricks and mortar. It seems almost miraculous, and intensely satisfying. How large is "very very large"? And how long will you be working on this project?

I'm not an office type either. Luckily I don't have to deal with politics very much in my line of work. I do teach, one semester a year, but that's largely a pleasure. I have an office to write in, in a building with other writers/composers/academics, & it's ideal. We gather for lunch once a month, & that's plenty of interaction for me. I have a family—husband, two children. They take up a good deal of time, in a wonderful way.

It's been a long time since I lived in Toronto. I grew up on Heath Street, near Avenue Rd. I seemed to spend a great deal of my youth on the Avenue Road 5 bus. After we moved away, I came back often to see my grandmother, a West End woman through and through; and after her death, my parents kept an apartment near High Park. We sold it a couple of years ago, after my father died. It's strange to me now to come to the city with nowhere to call home. I suppose it should be a liberation; but mostly it feels sad.

I live in Cambridge, Massachusetts these days. Just yesterday I went for a long walk with a friend and we were struck by how beautiful it is: this is a great season for this town, with everything in bloom. The air was full of honeysuckle and jasmine and roses, great gusts of it in unexpected moments; and the gardens along Brattle Street and in the overgrown cul de sacs off it were magnificent—kousa dogwoods, clematis, irises, lavender, peonies still in profusion, & climbing roses on walls and fences. It's sort of the best of both worlds: I'm absolutely urban at heart, & while Cambridge isn't super-lively, Boston has enough going on to keep one busy. And Cambridge does have a lot of smart, interesting people, and a lot of people passing through. But it also has the *rus in urbe* quality—you can wander down a lane & think you're in rural England. And still be only half a mile from a coffee shop & a host of great bookstores.

Are you a walker or biker? A public transport person? And do you prefer urban energetic spaces or quiet ones? Will you be at the festival later this week? I'm looking forward to meeting you ...

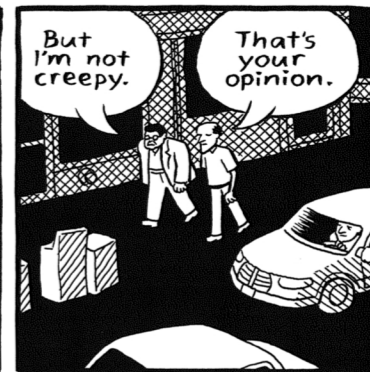
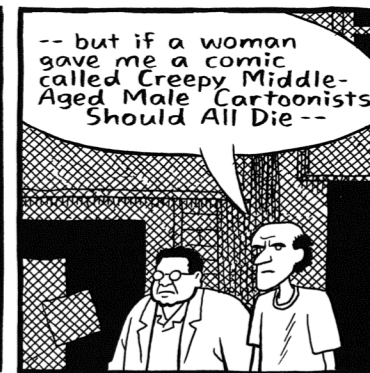
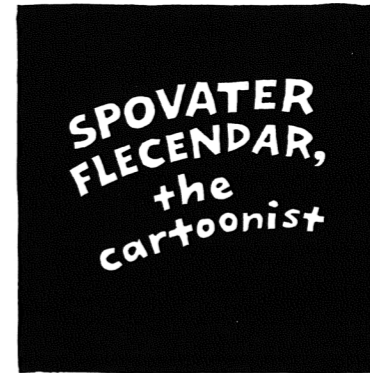
Warmly,

—W

## Everyday Heroes

**Rafael Benatar** is aced by his hero.

Rod Laver became a childhood tennis hero through newspapers, magazines, and from hearing about him at the tennis club. I thought he could do anything, that there was no ball he couldn't reach. Years later, when I first saw him on vintage film, I couldn't believe that I had not seen him before, and began to realize he was human. I recently enjoyed his autobiographical book, *The Education of a Tennis Player*.



To be continued...

Chester Brown

## Reverse Proust Questionnaire

We gave **Deborah Kerbel** twenty answers. She wrote the questions.

- 1 | **Black pumps.** What is your idea of a love/hate relationship?
- 2 | **Quantum physics.** If not literature, what would you have studied at university?
- 3 | **Root canal.** What's the cruelest way to punish an evil character?
- 4 | **Caviar in Cleveland.** What's the next meal your protagonist will eat?
- 5 | **My cellphone.** What is something you rarely, if ever, pay attention to?
- 6 | **As often as possible.** How many times a day do you sneak off to write?
- 7 | **My grandmother's cooking.** What's the one food you'd like to try but never had the chance?
- 8 | **Turkish coffee.** Where do find the energy to write and raise two young children?
- 9 | **Man's best friend.** How does your husband describe you?
- 10 | **Catherine Zeta Jones.** Which actress will not be starring in the film adaptation of your new novel?
- 11 | **Never in leotards.** . What's the opposite of "Forever in Blue Jeans"?
- 12 | **Rickshaws.** If you had to commute to work, how would you get there?

- 13 | **Rob Ford's feet.** What is your greatest fear?
- 14 | **A dozen boa constrictors.** What is your second greatest fear?
- 15 | **Only in the dark.** How and where do you plot your novels?
- 16 | **Unscrupulous.** What's the title of your next book?
- 17 | **My ankles.** Where do your book ideas come from?
- 18 | **The laundromat.** Where's the best place to write a grant application?
- 19 | **Oblivion.** What do you dream about at night?
- 20 | **Shark attack.** How will you kill off the bad guy in your next book?

## Square One

**By Hilary Sharper**

Frankly I was stuck. I pulled book after book off my shelves, scrutinizing how other writers had solved the problem of beginning a novel. Then one night I woke up out of deep sleep—I had been dreaming about writing and some words were clinging feebly to my consciousness. I would lose them if I didn't get up and write them down: "*I was about to knock, when I heard someone talking on the other side of the door.*"

Only seventeen words, but I had the opening to Perdita. They conveyed the essence of what I wanted: suspended action, with the central characters caught in that seemingly innocuous but nevertheless extraordinary moment before lives intersect and then change forever. . . .

THE TWEETS OF EMILY DICKENSON | "Hope" is the thing with feathers—That perches and Swings with Style—And with a pair of giant Tongues—picks a toy from the Stockpile

A JOKE | Did you hear about the man with five penises? His underwear fit him like a glove.