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Arts & Media NEWS

A newsletter dedicated to the alumni and students of the Schulich School of Business MBA in Arts & Media Administration

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“engage. enrich. enlighten.” When Art Meets Technology

Prasanthi Vasanthakumar

Only a few years ago, critics cautioned against the virtual museum. Cyber galleries were described as “difficult to navigate,” “devoid of passion,” and “boring.” Today, interactive Web sites engage the audience in a different experience of viewing and dialogue that is not possible in the actual physical space itself. On my quest to explore this phenomenon, I decided to start with an award-winning new media company.

When I first entered the office of *ecentricarts inc.*, I felt pleasantly displaced. An inviting, colourful, and cozy space with a design that is best captured by the word “cool,” just minutes away from the austere suits of Bay Street? I was instantly intrigued.

I was here to interview Keith Durrant, a graduate of the Arts and Media program and currently, the bizman/president of *ecentricarts*, a Canadian company that has gained international recognition for Web design excellence. *ecentricarts* specializes in interactive strategy, design and development to create “engaging, enriching, enlightening” Internet solutions for a variety of corporate, cultural and non-profit organizations.

At a coffee shop down the street, I posed my burning question: “What effect does the Web have on arts organizations?” As Keith explained, the Web is first and foremost a marketing vehicle for arts organizations. It is the primary way that people (especially younger people) now find information. Therefore, every arts organization should ideally have a professional, up-to-date Web site as part of its marketing mix. Keith describes Web sites as “living things” which need to be replenished and updated, a need which can be costly in an environment in which arts and cultural organizations are pressed for funds.

The Web offers other important creative opportunities for the cultural sector. *ecentricarts*’ award-winning Art2LIFE project for the McMichael Canadian Art Collection took seven years from conception to completion due to funding challenges. Yet, the Art2Life Web site (www.art2life.ca) has played a key role in enabling this Kleinburg gallery to fulfill its provincial mandate, particularly its education and outreach requirements. Art2LIFE showcases a multitude of images, stories, audio and video clips

from hundreds of different content providers and spans 100 years of Canadian history. The site won the Best of Show award at the 2002 International New Media Awards and the Best in e-culture at the 2004 World Summit Awards.

ecentricarts’ redesign of the Toronto Public Library’s Web site led to a 44% increase in page views, primarily because it was well laid out and easier to navigate. Their work on the “Horizons: Canadian and Russian Landscape Painting 1860 - 1940” exhibit for the Virtual Museum of Canada (www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Horizons), launched in March 2004, was an international co-production between Canada and Russia, seeking to deepen cultural understanding between the two countries.

ecentricarts’ interactive Web work illustrates how arts organizations can benefit from the Internet. In today’s society, where people are as likely to chat with friends online as to see them in person, the Internet becomes an essential marketing tool. It offers the possibility of engaging in stimulating experiences from the comfort of one’s home. It is clear that every arts organization should have a quality Web site which represents its work.

ecentricarts’ Art2LIFE Web Site Recognized by World Summit Award

ecentricarts inc. has been recognized for excellence in e-culture by the World Summit Award for its work on the Web site Art2LIFE: The Canadian Century (www.art2life.ca). Art2LIFE is an interactive timeline that presents 100 years of Canadian art, people and events. Created for the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, it was chosen for its “innovation, utilization of best practices, and the quality of its design and functionality.”

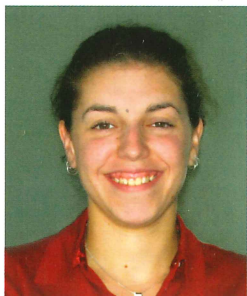
The World Summit Award (WSA) is a part of the Geneva World Summit on the Information Society 2003-2005. 136 countries participated in the contest, and each country could submit one Web site per category. Art2LIFE, the official Canadian e-culture entry, was selected by an expert panel of judges as being one of the top 5 Web sites in this category, worldwide.

Arts & Media Internship Scholarship Recipients



Laurie Biderman, Imasco Internship Award

My internship at Alcina Pictures was a valuable bridge linking my previous work experiences with my new-found skills and knowledge of business. Prior to attending Schulich, I worked for 3 years in film and television production. At Alcina, I was able to take this experience and expand upon it, assuming greater responsibilities in the realm of film development and financing. I am especially thankful to Imasco for their support in my endeavours.



Rebecca Chesley, Imasco Internship Award

My undergraduate degree is in Theatre from Concordia University in Montreal, where I specialized in Stage Management. After completing my degree I worked as a Stage Manager, which I enjoyed very much; however, as member of the production team I was rarely involved in the higher-level management decisions.

After completing the first year of my MBA, I was excited to have the chance to try out some of my new skills in a practical setting. I secured an internship with the Famous PEOPLE Players, a special theatre company here in Toronto, as an assistant to the Marketing & Development Associate. It was a great opportunity; I was given my own projects to oversee, as well as the chance to participate in the day-to-day operations of the company. It was a great experience and a really rewarding 3 months. I would like to extend my thanks to Imasco for their support in the form of the Imasco Internship Award.



Keith Gordon, Bickell Internship Award, Imasco Internship Award

I have a BA in History from the University of Winnipeg and an Honours Diploma in sound engineering from the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology in London. I worked for nine years as the Recording Supervisor of the Manitoba Legislature while simultaneously running my own business as an audio technician doing everything from live audio to sound for film. These two relatively disparate careers combined to bring me to the MBA, but it was the Arts & Media program that was a prime factor in my decision to attend Schulich.

During the summer of 2003 I had the opportunity to pursue an internship with SoundArt Toronto which enabled me to apply my new found MBA skills to the needs of a growing business in a new market. I am especially grateful to Imasco Ltd. and the Bickell Foundation for their generous support of the internship awards and for this amazing opportunity, which has allowed me to further develop my skills in this field that I love so much.



Alison Larrea, Onex Award in Arts & Media, Bickell Internship Award

During my internship, I worked as a Special Events Consultant at Women in Film & Television - Toronto (WIFT), a leading organization that provides training and awards for women and men in Canadian screen-based media. I was involved in three main programs: the Crystal Awards, Fall Programming Slate and WIFT's major national research study, "Statistical Profile 2004: Employment in Screen Based Media." These programs were quite different from one another and allowed me to use and further develop a variety of skills learned during the MBA.

My accomplishments include developing sponsorship deals to increase annual revenue, recommending marketing and communications strategies to increase the membership base, developing and implementing systems for budget tracking, streamlining some operational procedures to further improve productivity, and assisting in the organization of major events such as "The Crystal Awards" Gala.

The experience of working at WIFT was very rewarding. Being a small not-for-profit organization, its resources are very scarce but the willingness to get the job done is overwhelming. The team at WIFT is exceptional and they quickly embraced me as one of them, valuing my contribution. I not only had the opportunity to develop great contacts in the industry, but I also learned the daily struggle that a not-for-profit organization goes through, trying to ensure it provides exceptional benefits to its membership base and to remain financially stable.

WIFT has helped make important changes in the role of women in the television, film, and new media industries. I was extremely honoured to do my internship with them to be a part of this change.



Fangyi Pan, George Gardiner Award in Arts & Media

I was an editor and journalist at a newspaper in China for almost eight years before I came to Canada. I earned my BA in Trade Economics but had little previous management experience. My MBA study at Schulich has been a wonderful challenge and I appreciate the encouragement I have received in the Arts and Media Administration Program.

Last summer I interned in the Marketing and Public Relations Department of World Journal, a Chinese newspaper in Toronto. I helped organize promotional events and designed a special business advertising supplement. The management staff at the company wanted me to work for them after my internship had ended. This internship was extremely beneficial as it enabled me to make contacts with media companies in Toronto and gave me excellent work experience. I am grateful for the support of the Gardiner Internship Award during this invaluable internship experience in Canada.



Christopher Whitney, Imasco Internship Award

My academic background is in music theory and musicology, and I'm still an active composer and saxophonist. I have taught music at the University of Ottawa and the University of Toronto, and worked as an analyst in financial services at Interac.

This past summer, the Imasco Internship Award enabled me to complete a 4-month internship at the Chicago International Film Festival. This event is North America's oldest competitive film festival and draws an audience of over 55,000. I worked closely with the Artistic and Managing Directors in the day-to-day management and long-term planning of the festival, and ultimately took responsibility for individual and foundation fundraising.

Living and working in Chicago was fantastic and I gained a great deal of practical experience in development. I would like to express my gratitude to Imasco for their generous support of the Arts & Media internship program.

Tanna H. Schulich Entrance Scholarship



Tamar Huberman is a January recipient of the Tanna H. Schulich Entrance Scholarship (value \$20,000) which recognizes academic excellence, merit, community service and demonstrated leadership qualities.

Tamar received her honours BA in 1999 from Queen's University. She has worked in both for-profit and non-profit

organizations including the Agnes Etherington Art Gallery, the Continuing Legal Education Society of BC, CHUM Television and most recently as the Development Assistant at the Ontario College of Art and Design.

Tamar is one of the unique students to enter the combined MBA/MA program at York. She is registered as a student in both the Graduate Program in Art History and the MBA Program in Arts and Media Administration at Schulich.

Tamar chose Schulich because of its diverse program offerings, and its long history of arts management education.

Schulich Alumni Shine at the Pfizer Awards

Schulich alumni, Abishek Mathur and Jason van Eyk, were proud winners at this year's 2nd Annual Pfizer Awards for Emerging Arts Managers in November 2003.

Abishek Mathur, class of 1998, is an arts entrepreneur and founder of Magic Feet Canada which promotes South Asian culture in Canada and Canadian culture in India. He has enjoyed enormous success including the Masala! Mehndi! Masti! Festival at the Harbourfront Centre which attracted over 80,000 people last summer. Abishek was the recipient of the Pfizer Award for Emerging Arts Managers.

Jason van Eyk, class of 2000, the Ontario Regional Director of the Canadian Music Centre, was the recipient of a Pfizer Special Commendation, the Pfizer Appreciation Award.

The Pfizer Awards, sponsored by Pfizer Consumer Group, a division of Pfizer Canada Inc., recognize the efforts of individuals who have graduated from an arts and cultural management program in Canada and who have only 2 to 5 years experience in the field.

If you would like to nominate one of your colleagues for this award for the fall of 2004, please contact Kathleen Welsby at (416) 736-5217.

Fall Arts & Media Administration Workshops

Tom Alexander

by Jeremy Prober

I never knew that the Canadian film industry was that complex. All this time I had been under the impression that the major film companies like Miramax and Warner Brothers dominated the film landscape. My impression changed when I heard Tom Alexander of Mongrel Media describe what he does to earn a living.

Tom opened his presentation by talking about the Canadian film landscape, which has been evolving over the years in response to the changing tastes of the Canadian population. Even though big budget films produced by the large Hollywood corporations still command the lion's share of the Canadian market, the scene has changed to provide a niche market for those wishing to make their stamp on the Canadian motion picture industry. This is where Mongrel Media comes into play, specializing in distributing art house/independent films to movie theatres across Canada. This past year Mongrel Media distributed over thirty films to the Canadian market.

Tom spoke about his role in the company. His job essentially involves selling a film to individual theatres and ensuring that the film is given the right forum. He stressed the importance of cultivating a relationship with his customer: the movie theatre owner. Most of the independent films that Mongrel distributes play in only a few theatres at a time. As a result, Tom needs to feel confident that the movie will strike a chord with the public, and that the theatre owner will be committed enough to keep it in the theatre for at least a week.

There is no tried and true formula for film distribution, and there are no multi-million dollar marketing budgets for small films, making the success of recent Mongrel releases such as "My Architect" and "The Corporation" that much more important. Small distribution companies like Mongrel Media look to these success stories to help sustain their less commercially successful but equally important slate of independent and art house films.

Heather Clark

by Laurie Biderman

Heather Clark's workshop on March 6 was a valuable opportunity for students interested in the non-profit arts to learn about fundraising and development from a professional with extensive experience in the field. The all-day workshop covered such topics as the history of Canadian philanthropy, individual giving vs. corporate giving, sponsorship, and "what you need to know to work in development." Heather's insights into the philanthropic sector in Canada addressed both the current and future trends. Of particular interest to students was her description of roles and careers in fundraising and development, with further acknowledgment of expected salaries. Heather's knowledge, experience, and willingness to share with the students was appreciated and valued by all who attended.

Trina McQueen

by Laurie Biderman

The final workshop of the year was led by one of Canada's foremost leaders in television broadcasting, Trina McQueen. Her "Five Story" format of discussion was an exciting and welcome chance for students to hear stories from the trenches that Trina had collected throughout her many years in Canadian television. Engaging and often humorous, Trina also reflected upon many issues impacting the broadcasting environment including viewer expectations, Canadian content, and Canadian dramatic programming. Trina spoke to a packed room of eager listeners. Students were excited about the new course in Broadcast Management that Trina will teach in the fall of 2004. Her discussion rounded off a well-attended series of informative, motivating, and valuable workshops for Arts and Media students and alumni.

Dean of the Year



The Academy of International Business has announced that this year's recipient of the International Dean of the Year Award was Schulich's Dean Dezső Horvath. The award was established in 1959 by the Academy of International Business and is given in recognition of "outstanding leadership in various aspects of internationalization, including program, research and curriculum development and outreach".

Dean Horvath is currently serving an unprecedented fourth, five-year term. Announcing the award, Donald Lessard, Dean of the AIB Fellows and a Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said "Dezső Horvath has played a significant role in transforming Schulich into a truly global business school."

The announcement comes on the heels of numerous recent strong placings in international business surveys including: 22nd in top 100 Business schools, Financial Times of London and "among the world's top 10" international business schools, BusinessWeek.

Schulich Students Set the Stage



Rhino in Love, a Chinese play about the lengths a young man will go to win the love of a mysterious stranger, was produced, performed and crewed largely by Schulich MBAs who hail from China. The August 10th, 2003 performance in the Joseph G. Green Studio Theatre was received with laughter, tears and great applause.

Director, producer and lead actor Feng Wang (2nd year MBA) extends thanks to everyone who made the performance possible. Special thanks go to: Ms. Rita Tsang, Ms. Fangyi Pan, Prof. Wendy Reid and Prof. Joyce Zemans.