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The Western Academy of Photography | 2010

CONTACT

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Contact Magazine was produced
by the 2009-10 Written Image class

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| Garry Dodds |

By Jessica Marshall and Kelsey Verboom

Garry Dodds is no stranger to change. As the owner and manager of the Western Academy of Photography for the past 10 years, he has helped the school adapt to the rapidly shifting world of digital media.

Technology is changing so fast. It's hard to keep up and see what's coming next, he says. My goal is to keep the school as modern as possible, and to keep it moving forward.

Dodds recognizes the increasing demand for photographers to be able to shoot video media in addition to still photography, and he's making changes at the school to reflect the transition.

Next year, all the students will be encouraged to have cameras with video capabilities, he says.

For Dodds, the change is an exciting one. He looks forward to the work students will produce with still photography, video, and multimedia at

their fingertips, *taking students from novices to a level where they are producing fabulous work is one of the real thrills.*

Wherever their time at school leads them, Dodds' advice for students is simple.

Follow your passion, he says. If it's something you really enjoy, go after it.

Photograph: Gunnar Steinsson / Pro Photo



Coming Events

'The Number 8' Exhibition

April 15-21, 2010
The Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria Gallery. Exhibit will feature recent works from students of this year's AVC program.

'Light Sensitive' Exhibition

May 6-12, 2010
The Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria Gallery. Exhibit will feature work from students in both first-year programs.

Student Portfolio Exhibition

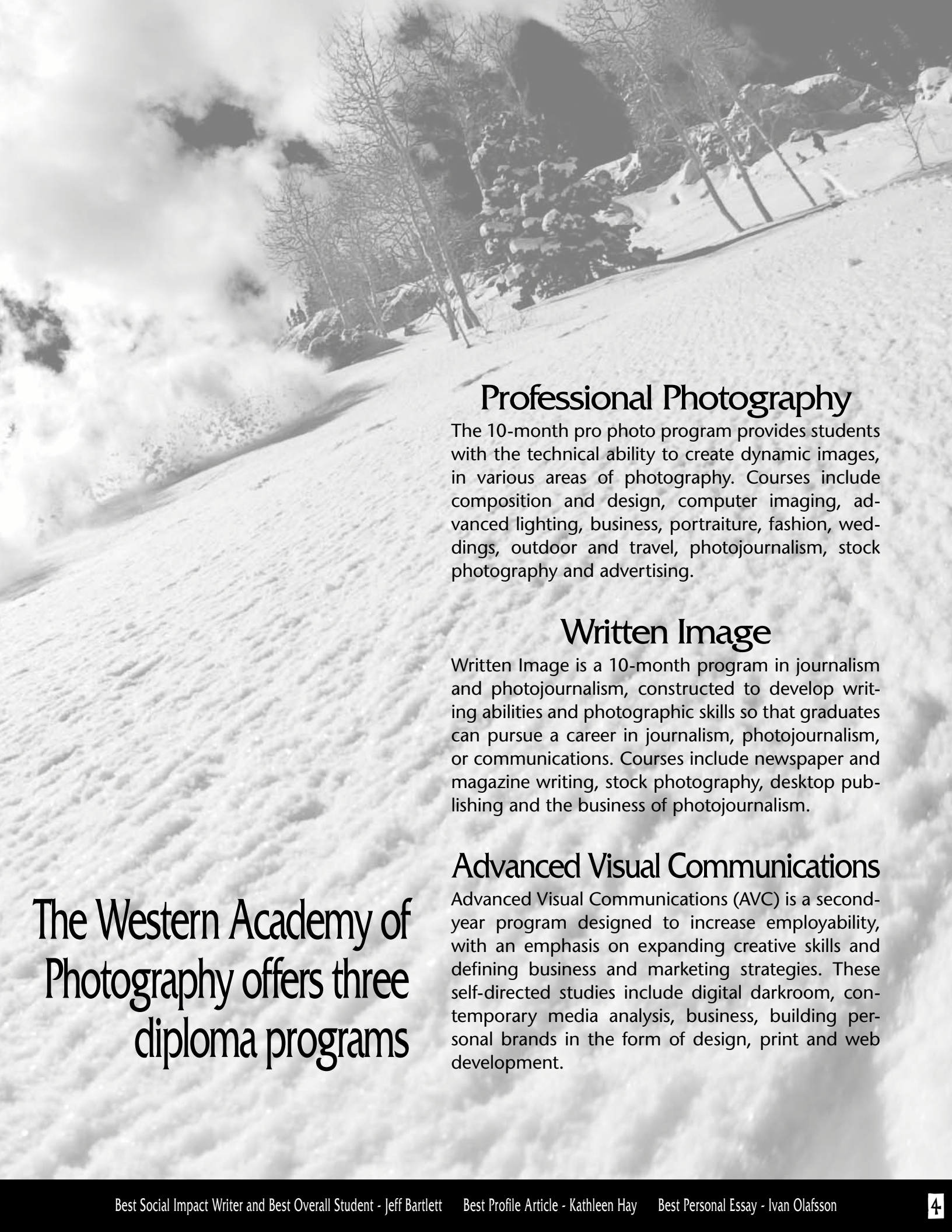
June 16 (6-9 p.m.), June 17 (10-4 p.m.)
Comfort Inn & Suites, 3020 Blanshard St.
Graduating students in all three programs will display their portfolios to the public.

Graduation Ceremony

June 17 (7-10 p.m.)
Comfort Inn & Suites, 3020 Blanshard St.
Graduation ceremonies for all three WAP programs.



Photograph: Chris Glickman / Pro Photo



The Western Academy of Photography offers three diploma programs

Professional Photography

The 10-month pro photo program provides students with the technical ability to create dynamic images, in various areas of photography. Courses include composition and design, computer imaging, advanced lighting, business, portraiture, fashion, weddings, outdoor and travel, photojournalism, stock photography and advertising.

Written Image

Written Image is a 10-month program in journalism and photojournalism, constructed to develop writing abilities and photographic skills so that graduates can pursue a career in journalism, photojournalism, or communications. Courses include newspaper and magazine writing, stock photography, desktop publishing and the business of photojournalism.

Advanced Visual Communications

Advanced Visual Communications (AVC) is a second-year program designed to increase employability, with an emphasis on expanding creative skills and defining business and marketing strategies. These self-directed studies include digital darkroom, contemporary media analysis, business, building personal brands in the form of design, print and web development.



| Ted Kuzemski |

By Kelsey Verboom

This may be Ted Kuzemski's first year teaching at the Western Academy of Photography, but it certainly isn't his first year behind a camera.

For more than 20 years Kuzemski has worked as a cinematographer for film and television, and a photographer for print and film media. If Kuzemski's extensive list of experience and high-profile clients were a criminal record, his lengthy rap sheet would be the envy of every law-breaker in town. He has shot for, amongst others, Global Television's national advertising campaign, CFCN News, Victoria's CHEK News, and even for high-end car dealerships, to name only a handful.

Four years ago he started his own business, Ted Kuzemski Photography, and this year joined the teaching team at WAP as an instructor in multimedia.

Kuzemski's penchant for creative expression is in his DNA: his mother is an artist, and his father worked for years as a sign painter.

Photography has become my form of painting, he says. It gives me an artistic outlet.

Whether shooting photos of lemon slices, lip-stick-garnished pinup girls, or towering skyscrapers, he approaches each subject with a similar philosophy.

I pay close attention to lighting quality and

angles, he says. I also try to have a fairly light approach. This business should be fun, but you should be professional in every respect.

Years of experience have taught Kuzemski that to be successful in the photography business, it is beneficial to be well versed in more than one discipline. With the ever-advancing march of digital media pushing the boundaries of traditional photography, there is an unstoppable merging of mediums.

For years, still photography and video were two completely separate things. Now, with the ability to combine both with a single camera, it's becoming the norm for still photographers to be asked to shoot video as well.

Regardless of where students choose to take their careers, Kuzemski recommends learning as much as possible about all mediums.

The more you can do, the more valuable you are to a client, he says. It's a whole other knowledge base to learn, but it's still creating images. A lot of things from video transfer to still photography and vice versa. A good composition is a good composition, whether it's moving or not.



| Cheryl McBride |

By Jessica Marshall

WAP students need to find their place in this industry, explains Cheryl McBride. Their understanding of the value of branding and marketing will enable them best to compete.

Teaching AVC students branding and marketing skills will help them do just that. McBride's course covers a lot of ground, from computer programs such as Adobe Illustrator, InDesign and DreamWeaver, to helping students to produce their own visual identity.

McBride has a lot of professional experience to bring to the table and pass on to her students. After finishing a fine arts degree at the University of Manitoba, she entered the industry as a graphic designer. After a decade, she moved on to production management. With strong organizational skills and an understanding of the creative process, McBride was a natural. By 2004, she made the decision to work strictly on a contract basis to free up time for other pursuits.

I wanted to find a better balance in my life, and get back to my passion of painting while still earning an income, says McBride.

Years of experience have left her with a good understanding of what is required to be a success in this industry, and McBride plans to pass it on to her students at WAP.

Not everyone understands how key it is to have professional photography... It's a significant element in much of what is created in advertising, and I bring an appreciation for that.

Photograph: Caity McCulloch



Photograph: Milos Tosic



| Ryan MacDonald |

By Kelsey Verboom

Hand Ryan MacDonald a set of bagpipes and she'll play them like a pro. Pass her a camera, and she'll do an even better job of photographing them.

Originally from Cape Breton, N.S., herself a piper since the age of 11, MacDonald has been busy documenting bagpipers from all over the world, photographing scads of the kilted musicians in surprising places.

They're meant to be portraits of pipers in bizarre places that you wouldn't expect to see them, she explains.

MacDonald's piper portraits are only one of the ways she's been transforming her creative passions into a full-time career since graduating from WAP's Advanced Visual Communications program in 2007. An homage to her hometown roots, she recently completed a three-year project filming and recording Cape Breton Gaelic speakers in their wallpapered kitchens and wood-paneled living rooms.

Their environment is just as important, she says. It tells even more of a story than the person themselves.

Whether she's shooting on the East or West coast, MacDonald's photographs always aim to convey a story.

My photography has been described as having a melancholy feel to it, she says. I'm not a very well-spoken person, so I let my photography do all the talking. It can tell the story for me. I've always been a people watcher. I just can't stop doing that. Photographing people allows me to record details – their hands and the creases in their faces.

MacDonald lives and works in Victoria, shooting weddings and portraits. She credits WAP's AVC program with building her confidence as an entrepreneur.

It was the one little nudge that forced me to get out there and start my own business, she admits.

She encourages future WAP grads to take the risk and follow their own interests and ideas when it comes to their professional lives.

Don't hesitate. Don't have any regrets, she says. Don't not do it because there may be an obstacle in your way.



| Erin Froese |

By Kelsey Verboom

You won't find a screwdriver or hammer in Erin Froese's toolbox. Instead, her case is filled with contoured makeup brushes, rectangular palettes of creamy browns and cool pinks, tweezers, and tubes of shiny lip gloss.

Froese is a freelance makeup artist who brings her talents to the Western Academy of Photography each year during Fashion Week, a flurry of fast-paced fashion photography. Froese helps students understand how makeup interacts with their cameras and lighting choices, accompanying them on location to provide makeup and hair support.

I love being with the students and offering a bit more of a diverse look, she says. I like teaching them how important it is to have teamwork between the photographer and stylist.

Given only three words, Froese describes her style as *clean, precise, and beautiful*. She draws inspiration mainly from the realm of fashion, but she looks for ideas in everyday life.

I like beautiful things, she says, anything that catches my attention.

Froese stresses the importance of constantly refreshing one's imagination.

Be creative outside of work, she advises. Experiment a lot. Make sure you take time to explore what you're truly interested in.

Froese has also had the chance to stretch her creativity with special effects makeup through her annual work on a variety of movie sets. Giving actors slash marks, bullet holes, and black eyes is an opportunity for her to test her abilities creating realistic wounds.

You really do get to be creative with it. It's a fine art, it truly is.

Painting the face of fashion photography as a freelancer has been challenging at times, but Froese urges students not to get discouraged as they forge their way into the business of being creative.

The professional art industry can be discouraging at times, but as long as you keep your vision in sight for what you want to achieve, it's possible.

| Veronique da Silva |

By Jessica Marshall

Co-hosting a two-part, 11-hour, back-to-back photo shoot event to raise funds for Haiti with the Canadian Red Cross is only one piece of the picture that makes up Veronique da Silva.

Volunteering her time along with photographer Michael Tourigny, the pair raised \$12,000 for the important cause. The event, which was organized in only a few days, included burlesque dancers, a barbershop quartet and silent auction.

Using her talents not only as a photographer but also as a business-minded individual seems to come second nature to da Silva. Along with running her own successful photography business, which focuses on portrait and lifestyle photography, da Silva has been running a side business called Girls Night for over a year. Girls Night brings women together for four events a year to socialize and network. With events selling out within 24 hours, business is booming.

It's very informal, women come together to mix and find empowerment, says da Silva.

Starting out in Montreal, Que., da Silva and her family moved to Victoria four years ago, and found that Victoria felt like home.

We love it here. It's totally grown on us, says da Silva. It's a beautiful place to raise a child.

Lucky for the pro-photo students at WAP da Silva decided to stay. Even with all her undertakings, she still finds time to share her expertise in portraiture and business, inspiring students to work hard for their own success in reflection of her.

Eunice Montenegro

By Jessica Marshall

From her very first day at the Western Academy of Photography, Eunice Montenegro wanted to become a wedding photographer. While she was in the program she experimented with many aspects of the craft.

During that time I fell in love with lighting and all its possibilities, Montenegro recalls.

On top of taking her classes at WAP, Montenegro also found the time to shoot many of those weddings she loves, and became the first student who did an entire portfolio of them. At the same time, she was focusing on

her goal of running a business as a full-time photographer.

After graduating in 2007, she opened Montenegro Studios, specializing in weddings and portraits, but eventually deciding to join businesses with her fellow WAP grad Christina Craft. In 2008, the pair opened FunkyTown Photography Studio in Victoria, finding quick success shooting more than 70 weddings last year. Montenegro also taught a weddings and portrait photography course at Camosun College.

Montenegro's husband's work has recently

moved the couple to Nova Scotia, which meant leaving FunkyTown. Concentrating now on her own business, Eunice Montenegro Photography, she is expanding her interests to photo fusion (video and photography).

The market is always changing and, as photographers, we have to think ahead to be ready for the future market.



S. Berkowitz Self-Portrait

Seth Berkowitz

By Kelsey Verboom

Exposure to Expression. This is the title of the course fine art photographer Seth Berkowitz has taught for the past four years at the Western Academy of Photography. If you're not quite sure what the title means, one look at Berkowitz's artwork should answer your questions.

He creates layered pieces of art by digitally combining a number of his photographs at once. He plays with each photograph's colour, opacity, and shape, cropping, enlarging, and layering until he finds the effect he's looking for, then digitally fuses the individual images together.

I decide on a theme, and choose a number of images based on a geographic location or time frame. I pick the strongest image and go from there, he says.

Recently, Berkowitz has been exploring how pixels relate to photography.

I've been looking at pixels the same way art-

ists talk about their brushes and paints, he says.

He occasionally displays his artwork at Galileons Lap, the gallery he owns and runs on Salt Spring Island, B.C.

Each year, Berkowitz ferries to the mainland from his Salt Spring home to share his artistic viewpoint with students at the school.

I like that I am able to open students' eyes to a different way of looking, but that at the same time they open up my eyes to how they see the world, he says.

He urges students to push themselves and to constantly challenge why they are doing something.

Try asking, why am I taking this picture? Then answer the question. The question is almost always the most difficult to answer.



Photograph: Clere Ocello / AVC



Photograph: Jessica Marshall / Written Image



Instructor | Achievements |

The i2i Faculty Show was held in November 2009, displaying works by Dave Aharonian, Seth Berkowitz, Tony Boun-sall, Christina Craft, Veronique da Silva, Don Denton, Gregg Eligh, Kevin House, Tim Kearney, Samantha King, Andrea Kucherawy, Ted Kuzemski, Cheryl Mc-Bride, Josh McCulloch, Felicity Perry-man, Mitch Stringer, Alice Young, and Terry Zlot.

Christina Craft was accepted by a jury to join the International Society of Pro-fessional Wedding Photographers and has won a Top 10 placement in the Wed-ding Photojournalist Association *Bride's* Magazine photo contest. She has wed-ding bookings in 10 different countries and five Canadian cities in 2010. She also runs the Nature Stock Photography Li-brary (www.naturestocklibrary.com).

Don Denton received an honourable mention in the 'People's Choice' cat-egory of *Editor & Publisher* magazine's Photos of the Year competition in 2009. He also finished in second place in the Suburban Newspapers of America's 'Best Feature Photo' competition.

Frances Backhouse received a fellow-ship from the Institutes for Journalism and Natural Resources, attending their Puget Sound organization. Her latest book, *Children of the Klondike*, will be published by Whitecap Books in March 2010. She won an International Re-gional Magazines Association Award of Merit in the 'Nature Feature' category for her article "Grizzlies in Paradise", published in *British Columbia Magazine*.

Garth Lenz was named a fellow (one of 60 worldwide) of the International League of Conservation Photogra-phemers. He was invited to write a series for Livebooks blog about his work with Environmental Non-Governmental Or-ganizations. It was edited by former *American Photo* editor Miki Johnson.

Mike Devlin acted as roundtable fa-cilitator for an audience of 150 interna-tional delegates at the *Transmission* mu-sic and high-tech conference, as a part of Victoria's Rifflandia Festival. He was also a juror for the Juno awards and the Polaris Music Prize.



| What Past AVC Grads Are Doing Now |

By Jessica Marshall & Kelsey Verboom

Joel Dufresne (2007) has been carving his mark in skateboard photography. For Dufresne, major highlights have been shooting an ad for Expedition Skateboards, and landing one of his photos on the cover of *Color Magazine*. His work has appeared in *Transworld Skateboarding*, *Thrasher*, *Concrete*, and a handful of other publications. On the side, Dufresne has been photographing recording artists and working on the production of *Color Magazine*.

Bianca Filser (2005) started Out There Photography, a successful wedding and portrait business, with fellow photographer Erin Cennon. Filser has recently moved on from that venture to concentrate her creativity on real estate and fine art photography.

Ashley Ohtsijah Hall (2008) has been busy combining her talents as a mother and a photographer by focusing on shooting maternity portraits, babies, and weddings. She also finds time to volunteer her photography skills at her son's school.

Rachele Marineau (2008) moved back to her hometown of Ottawa and has been busy shooting fashion, glamour, and pin-up photography. In addition to working with the Ottawa-based fashion magazine, *The Dinner Jacket*, she has also photographed corporate events for Audi and Porsche. Marineau currently has her hands full building a home studio and is attending a business management program in the fall.

Chris Marquardt (2005) has worked as a freelance photo assistant for commercial and editorial photographers in Toronto.

It was a great experience, he says. I learned a lot.

Most recently, Marquardt has taken his camera overseas, travelling in New Zealand.

Ian Baird (2009) has been expanding his portfolio, photographing whatever comes his way. His award-winning architectural photography has been featured in a marketing campaign for Buildex Vancouver. Baird is thankful for his time at WAP and encourages students to take advantage of what little time they have to be around so many creative minds.



YEARS OF EXPOSURE
25
WESTERN
ACADEMY OF
PHOTOGRAPHY

