



Psychology faculty member visits Afghanistan

Imagine having to wear over 10 kilograms of body armour every time you set foot outside. Or, having to watch for land mines with every step you took, or traveling in a windowless armoured personnel carrier. These are some of the memories U of R professor Richard MacLennan brought back from his recent visit to Afghanistan where he was one of 10 Canadian academics invited to take a one-week tour of the country by the Department of National Defence (DND).

"I was probably selected because I've done extensive research on personnel issues for the DND," says MacLennan, an associate professor of psychology and the coordinator of the police studies program at the U of R.

Among his research interests MacLennan lists aviation, military and police psychology, and occupational stress. Afghanistan would seem to be fertile ground for all these research interests.

"Three United Nations workers were kidnapped a week before we arrived. On landing and takeoff at Kabul, our Hercules aircraft engaged in evasive manoeuvring to avoid any missile attack," says MacLennan. "Whenever we left Camp Julien we had to wear fragmentation jackets and helmets. The frag jackets have a ceramic plate in the front and back to protect vital organs."

The purpose of the trip was to inform the academic community and raise public awareness of Canada's contribution to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan. Canada is one of several countries participating in the International Security Assistance Force, based in Kabul.

"Canada is taking a 3-D approach to helping Afghanistan," MacLennan explains. "That's defence, diplomacy and development. On the diplomacy side, Canada played a major role in the recent Afghan elections, and has made it a priority to help rebuild their education system."

"We also had the unique opportunity to meet with world-renowned human rights activist Dr. Semá Samar. She is famous for taking a great personal risk by running a woman's medical clinic and schools for girls during the Taliban rule. Both were illegal at the time," MacLennan explains.

"The Canadian Forces also has a civilian-military cooperation unit that provides humanitarian relief, helping to rebuild roads and schools, digging water wells and supplying orphanages," he adds. "We went on patrol with the unit, where they delivered desks to a girls' school and inspected a site to dig a well for a local village. For the military, the unit also serves as eyes and ears with the local civilian population," says MacLennan who recently edited a special issue on behavioural science research in the Canadian military for the Canadian Journal of Police and Security Services, which is published at the University of Regina.

While the intent of the trip was primarily to inform the public about the work of Canada's military in Afghanistan, MacLennan says some academically-relevant issues did come up during a briefing with the Canadian ambassador, Christopher Alexander. These include helping to rebuild the education system and training Afghanistan's national police in human rights. "I also met the Canadian military



University of Regina professor Richard MacLennan stands outside the mausoleum of former King Nadir Shah on a recent trip to Kabul, Afghanistan.

U of R photo courtesy of Richard MacLennan

psychologist working on site," MacLennan says. "She is conducting research on human dimensions of military operations, which is similar to previous research on operational stress that I had collaborated on with the Canadian military. We also had discussions on post-traumatic stress disorder with the chief medical health officer and the mental health nurse.

"One of the things that most impressed me, and bears repeating, is the quality of our men and women serving in Afghanistan. They have tremendous enthusiasm, and are dedicated to helping the Afghan people. You have to admire them for the personal sacrifices that they and their families are making," MacLennan concludes.

CAMPUS LIFE CALENDAR

Thurs., Jan. 27 - 1:15 p.m.
Chemistry seminar
"What's an Ionic Liquid? How Novel Are They? Are They Really GREEN?"
Speaker: Keith Johnson
Rm. 408, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4146

Thurs., Jan. 27 - 7:30 p.m.
Coffee House Controversies series
"Angels and Reason"
Speaker: George Marshall
Chapters
Info: 585-4226

Fri., Jan. 28 - Noon
Art for Lunch series
An informal hour spent talking about images and stories
Speaker: Kenneth Lochhead
Rm. 050, Riddell Centre
Info: 585-5554

Fri., Jan. 28 - 3:30 p.m.
Biology seminar
"Mercury in Canada's Arctic: Processes Leading to Methylation"
Speaker: Steve Siciliano
Rm. 126, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4146

Jan. 28-Feb. 5 - Noon and Evening performances
5th Annual Student Infringement Festival
Five days of one-act plays written, directed and acted by students.
Schmitchter Open Stage, Riddell Centre
Tickets/Info: 585-5500

Sun., Jan. 30 - 3 p.m.
Fine Arts Subscription Series
Classical guitar concert
Musician: Daniel Bolshoy
University Theatre
Info: 585-5532

Mon., Jan. 31 - 3:30 p.m.
Centre for Social Justice lecture
"What Makes Our Teaching Anti-Oppressive? A Critical Overview of Research and Practice"
Speaker: Kevin Kumashiro
Speaker: Institute Theatre
Info: 585-5147

Tues., Feb 1 - 4 p.m.
Humanities Research Institute lecture
"Exploring New Possibilities for Collaborative Research"
Various presenters
University club
Info: 585-4304

Wed., Feb 2 - 4 p.m.
Sociology seminar
"Finding God on Mars: Religious Narratives in Space Exploration"
Speaker: Bill Stahl
Rm. 420, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4443

Fri., Feb 4 - 3:30 p.m.
Biology seminar
"Tails of temperature, thermoregulation and torpor from the land down under"
Speaker: Mark Brigham
Rm. 126, Classroom Bldg.
Info: 585-4146

For a complete Calendar of Events at the University of Regina visit our Web site at www.uregina.ca



Are you ready to fringe?

Since the first Fringe Festival in North America began in Edmonton more than 20 years ago, festivals have become a dramatic phenomenon, popping up across the continent. While most of these are summertime events, the annual Student Infringement Festival at the University of Regina is more like a mid-winter break for theatre buffs looking for something outside the ordinary.

In fact, the very name "Infringement" tells a story. The U of R's Student Infringement Festival operates outside the box (so to speak) inside the Stu-Box Theatre on campus. The festival runs from January 28 to February 5.

"Faculty members were tossing around ideas, thinking of ways to put as many students as possible on stage," says Bill Hales, festival coordinator and faculty member in the Department of Theatre in the University's Faculty of Fine Arts. "So, we tried a Fringe type of festival, and the students went nuts," says Hales, recalling the first event five years ago.

What's the attraction? Fringe festivals encourage direct links between performers and their audiences. For audiences, the performances are affordable and informal. Fringe-goers know they are going to be exposed to productions that are exploratory and experimental, and that is part of the appeal.

By keeping it simple, emerging and established artists can produce plays with few technical requirements. They can write and perform plays that explore themes and ideas that are important to them, in their own voices. Artists have also discovered that the Fringe circuit can be profitable.

"You can load your entire production into one minivan and go across the country all summer being Fringe performers," Hales says. In fact, some U of R students who performed in previous festivals have taken their shows on the road to other parts of Canada. All of them benefit from the experience of writing, directing and performing.

"Right from the start we had a nice mix of existing and student-written plays, with faculty members doing some directing," says Hales.



On January 24, the University's Student Employment Services and the Faculty of Education hosted the Education Career Expo in the foyer of the Centre for Kinesiology, Health and Sport. Now in its sixth year, the event provides school divisions throughout Western Canada with an opportunity to attract U of R education graduates that will soon enter the job market. Among those taking part in the event were (from left to right) Lew Taylor from the Swan Valley School Division in Swan River, Manitoba and education student Amanda Leonard.

U of R photo by A/V Services

"Now, the plays are mostly student-written and directed."

This year's festival features six plays, ranging from the one-woman production of Madame Mao's Memories to Education is Our Right, which requires a ten-member cast, some of whom do double and triple-duty playing different characters. The other plays being presented this year include The Golem Effect, Canada's Wedding, Believer and Safety Home.

Theatre student Maki Yi will play Madame Mao in Madame Mao's Memories, written by Los Angeles-based playwright Henry Ong. He was ecstatic when he learned that the play was being performed in Canada.

"This is the first time it's being performed in Canada," says Ong. "and I'm thrilled that the role is being performed by an Asian Canadian (U of R student Maki Yi, who is also co-directing the play). As this is a one-person play, I hope there will be many more actors, regardless of gender, age or colour, who will meet the challenge of capturing the essence of Madame Mao as I saw it. I firmly believe that art transcends all barriers," says Ong, who is traveling to Regina to see his play performed. As its title suggests, the play presents the memories of Mao Zedong's wife, Jiang Qing, an actress and political leader who led the Cultural Revolution in communist China from 1966 to 1976. After Mao's death she was imprisoned by his successor for her role in the Cultural Revolution.

Looking at the festival from its inception five years ago, Hales believes it is achieving its purpose to give theatre students vital hands-on experience. He hopes that experience will translate into a show in Regina's first-ever fringe festival this summer. "Our students have the ability to work the Fringe. The Student Infringement Festival tells them 'You can produce theatre,'" says Hales.

Performance schedules and ticket information for the Student Infringement Festival can be downloaded as a pdf at www.uregina.ca/finearts/uofrusp.pdf

U of R Faculty of Fine Arts Presents
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