

Vancouver, Canada's golden city, needs to give itself a shine

The city set to host winter games, as well as Juno awards. But with home-grown artists like Nickelback, maybe the viewer should wait another year

By **Whitney Bysterveldt**
Panther Post

It seems as though Vancouver is Canada's golden city lately, playing host not only to the winter games but also the upcoming Juno awards.

Of course the former is a much more esteemed event, and with the announcement of the nominees on Feb. 3 that statement couldn't be any more true.

Leading the pack with five nominations is the marketable yet insipid Nickelback, followed by Canada's most congenial rock star Sam Roberts with four noms.

Rounding out the multiple nominations are veteran Celine Dion and the inane ensemble known as Hedley, both tied with three nominations.

It seems as though the selection in Canada's awards for outstanding achievement in the record industry is as diverse and inspiring as an Abercrombie and Fitch catalogue.

The lacklustre array of artists doesn't end with the front runners as those up for international album of the year include AC/DC, Coldplay, Guns N' Roses, Jack Johnson and Metallica.

It's strange how a country with such a vast range of musical talent is continuously paying homage to those artists who produce the most pallid work.

Granted, the nominations for general categories such as album of the year are determined by sales but genre-specific categories are chosen by a panel. For this we should be grateful as it is in the panel chosen categories that the nominations look a little more promising.

Take the alternative album of the year, for example, as artists such as Chad VanGaalen, Plants and Animals, The Stills, Black Mountain and Fucked Up are in contention. Even a few East Coast bands snuck

in as The Trews, Sloan and Matt Mays and El Torpedo are all up for Rock Album of the Year and Gordie Sampson is once again up for Songwriter of the Year.

It's strange that the majority of categories are congested with male artists when it is the females that appeared to be in strong standing this year. Artists such as Alanis Morissette, Sarah Slean, Serena Ryder, Feist, Lights, Tara Oram, Molly Johnson and Ariane Moffatt.

Mundane nominations aside, the airing of the awards should prove to be no more rousing as performances include the likes of Nickelback and Simple Plan. Perhaps the most entertaining aspect of the awards show will be the return of comedic host Russell Peters. So unless you're interested in watching a nationally televised Nickelback gala you may be better off waiting for next year's awards.

lists...

Music to hear

Malajube- Arguably one of the finest francophone rock bands of all time, Montreal's Malajube has released their third album, *Labyrinthes*, this month. Although these guys are loyal to their linguistic roots their music is pure ear candy regardless of the listener's dialect.

Peter Bjorn and John- This Swedish trio follow up their critically acclaimed album *Writer's Block* with *Living Things* at the end of March.

Perhaps most well known for their catchy whistling tune *Young Folks* the songs on the new album should be just as memorable with lyrics like "Shut the fuck up boy, you are starting to piss me off."

Jenn Grant- With the release of her latest album *Echoes* this Haligonian songstress has been living a hectic life. She recently performed at a Grammy's showcase and is now setting out on tour with a scheduled stop at the Mack Theatre. If you don't catch her there make sure to pick up her album at a local retailer.

Books to read

The Women- T.C Boyles latest novel tells the story of fictional character Frank Lloyd Wright from the perspective of the four women who loved him. These different views piece together Wright's tumultuous life in a dramatic way that is sure to entertain any lit lover.

Scott Pilgrim- A graphic novel that's been around for a few years now with the fifth instalment *Scott Pilgrim vs. The Universe* out this month. A film adaptation of this Toronto Scenster's life is beginning filming this March with Michael Cera taking the lead role.

Noise: Fiction Inspired by Sonic Youth- Authored by Peter Wilde, along with a number of contributors, this collection of stories inspired by Sonic Youth song titles is sure to please any post-punk fan. Plus this is only the first instalment of "Fiction inspired by..." so look out for the follow up band, The Smiths.

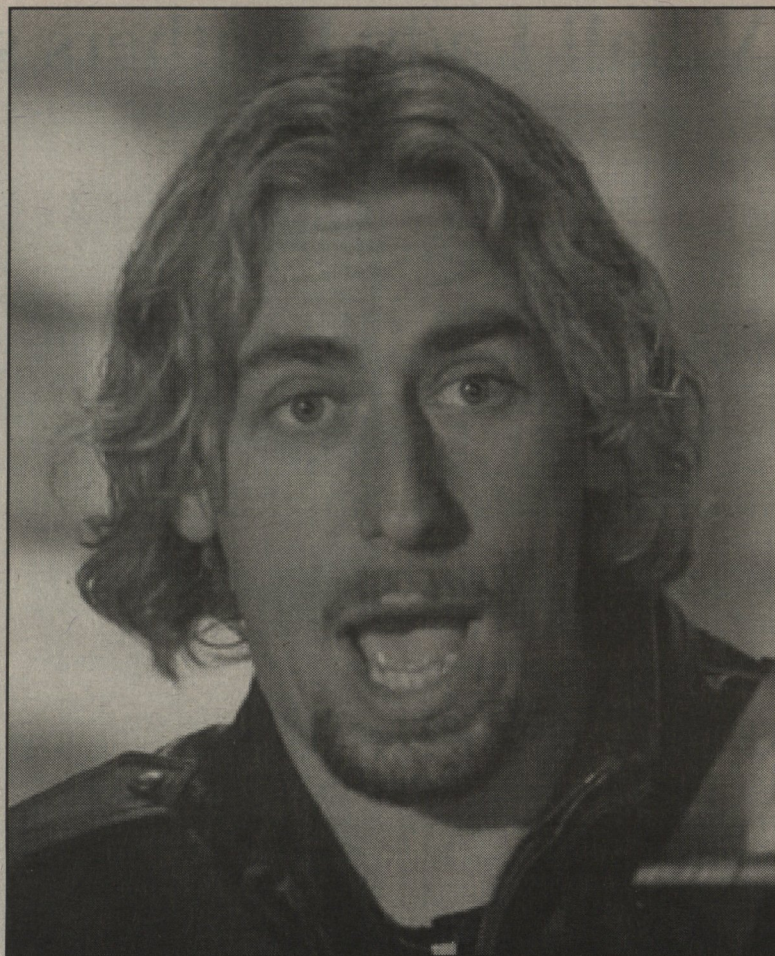
Films to see

Know Your Mushrooms- Released at the end of January, this Canadian

documentary delves into the world of fungi, exploring their many uses. Not just covering the psychedelic variety, hosts Larry Evans and Gary Lincoff take you to the Telluride Mushroom Festival and investigate their connection with the health of the planet.

Coraline- Out this month, *Coraline* may be one of the most visually appealing stop motion animated/3-D films created. Featuring Dakota Fanning as the lead the plot follows a little girl into a parallel universe. Taking three years, 300 artists and \$70 million to produce it's no wonder the experimental film is garnering so much hype.

Polytechnique- Premiering in Montreal early this month, *Polytechnique* is the first film to cover the 1989 murders of 14 female engineering students. Filmed in black and white the plot covers a side of the story that is generally overlooked, that of the male survivors. The English version of one of Canada's most infamous tragedies will be released within the next two months.



Nickelback frontman Chad Kroeger, whose musical interests includes making music that is not interesting, will be with his band as they are set to play at the Junos in Vancouver. Photo: Google Images