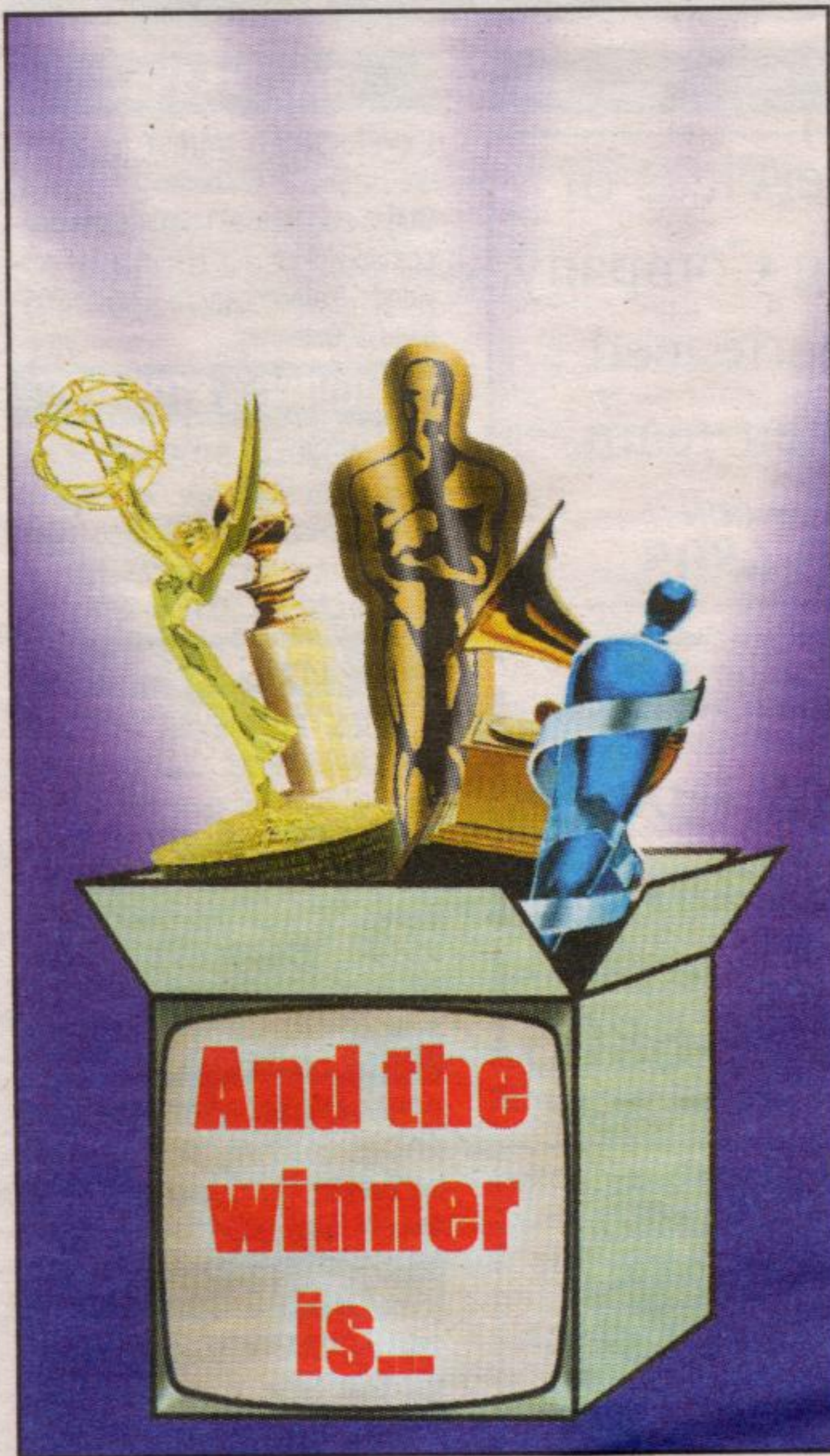


I've got your award... right here!

Let the bells ring and the banners fly, we're right in the middle of Awards



season. Yes it's that time of year where, every two or three nights, we take the phones off the hooks, pop up some corn and soak up the profound remarks of award winning actors, athletes and musicians.

It all began with the Gemini awards on December 13. That's right, December 13. When you think of the absolute perfect date for an awards show, doesn't December 13th just rush to the front of your mind? The past few years of the Geminis are about as easy to track as an Al Qaeda cell. It used to be in the spring, then they moved it to the fall, now it's December 13th. Why the 13th? Was the 25 booked? In all their date confusion it appears the folks who fill out the ballots forgot to watch a show called Corner Gas. It wasn't the first time stunned looks follow the phrase, "and the Gemini goes to..."

I think there's rule in Canada though. If you get shut out of the Gemini's they ask you to host the Juno's. So you can expect Brent Butt centre stage April 3 emceeing Canada's music awards show. One of his jobs might be to provide a large box so Avril Lavigne will have a place for all of her statues. She's nominated for five of them. You know, besides wheat, Canada sure can grow some fine female singers. There was a time a few years ago when Alanis Morissette, Celine Dion and Shania Twain were all number one, world wide, in their respective categories. And if it

Jeff Lumby's view from the country

weren't for Shania Twain's talent search we might not know about Avril Lavigne. Don't forget Sarah McLaughlin, K.D. Lang, Holly Cole and I love to watch Diana Krall... although I'd rather see her sing.

Just prior to the Junos are Canada's film awards, the Genies. March 21st is the date for their 25th Anniversary show hosted by Andrea Martin. And if you think it's difficult trying to determine how a song qualifies for CANCON, wait'll you hear the formula for a Canadian film. See there's a big to-do about foreigner Ian McKellen being nominated in the Best Actor category for *Emile* but Annette Bening gets snubbed in the Best Actress category for *Being Julia* even though she's nominated for an Oscar for the same movie. The reason? You'll love this! If a film is co-produced with another country and most of the funding comes from that country, the only way non-Canadian actors can qualify for a Genie is if the director is Canadian. In the case of Bening and McKellen, *Emile* was directed by Canadian Carl Bessai, but *Being Julia* featured a Hungarian director. Personally I think it'd be easier to figure out the Colonel's special recipe of herbs and spices.

At this year's Oscars they're going to try something different. No, they won't be making it shorter, it'll still take the normal two days and nights to complete. This year, in some instances, they're going to have all of the nominees on stage at once. In others, the nominees will be seated together and the presenter will come down to their seats to read the winner's name. I think the reasoning is obvious. The Academy clearly wants to see a rumble break out. And that illustrates the distinct advantage Grammy has

over Oscar. At Sunday's Grammys, we were thoroughly entertained by musicians doin' their thing. Even if Oscar asks its actors to go up on stage and perform their little scenes, Grammy wins best in show.

Since everyone and their dog now has an awards show, it's time for me to announce a few of my own 'winners'. It's the first annual LUMBY Awards.

The Backfire Award goes to Michael Moore's, *Fahrenheit 911*. Moore's anti-Bush propaganda film, loosely based on conjecture and released during the height of the American election, accidentally helped George Bush get elected.

The Bad-Call Award goes to Michael Jackson for publicly admitting he has sleepovers with children and then asserts that it's ok for a 45 year old man to have pyjama parties with 10 year olds that aren't his.

The Hypocrisy Award goes to all NHL players who stand in solidarity against a salary cap with their union here, only to go over to Europe or the Minor Leagues and take salary capped jobs away from players who really need the money.

And if that isn't enough awards business for one year, there's always the Doras, MTV, Much Music, Brit, Golden Globes, SAG, Euro's, Emmy's, Obie's, Tony's, ESPY's the Tony Esposito's and 40 or 50 others I've probably forgotten. Oh ya, and my favorite one from last year, the VIBE awards. Only because a knife fight broke out during one of the speeches.

Remember, there's nothing wrong with watching awards shows, as long as you watch them for the right reason...to carve up what people are wearing. See ya at the Raspberries.

Ensemble Vivant Plays The Language Of Love

BY LEILA WILLS

Love was in the air at Milton Concert Presentations Valentine's concert on February 11. Even though Valentine's day was three days away, *Ensemble Vivant* managed put the audience in the mood for romance with a selection of music that ranged from classical to twentieth century jazz to modern orchestral music.

Catherine Wilson (piano), Adele Armin (violin), and Sharon Prater (cello) formed *Ensemble Vivant* more than 15 years ago. They perform throughout Europe and North America, and have recorded several CDs. Each member also performs with larger ensembles, including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Philharmonia.

Before the performance of each piece, one of the performers gave context for why it was chosen for a concert with a theme of romance. Debussy's Trio in G was picked because the composer wrote it at age 18 for a young woman he was desperately in love with. Catherine Wilson's own piece, *Sackville Street Ballad*, was chosen because of her love for her former home on Sackville Street in Toronto. "She was very happy there," Ms. Armin said.

The performance included many lesser known pieces. One composition, *Mysterium*, was written by contemporary composer John Burke specifically for Ensemble Vivant. Debussy's Trio in G was only discovered within the last 10 years by Ms. Wilson and her collaborators at the

University of Michigan

A medley of music written by Charlie Chaplin introduced the audience to some of the legendary filmmaker's compositions. Many audience members were surprised to learn that familiar pieces like *Smile* were written by Chaplin, and that he was such a prolific songwriter.

The ensemble ended the performance with four pieces by Astor Piazzolla, known as the father of the new tango. Arranged for *Ensemble Vivant* by Julien Labro, Ms. Wilson said they were perfect for a concert celebrating Valentine's Day. "These pieces that [Piazzolla] wrote are so full of passion and yearning. It's very romantic."

The members of *Ensemble Vivant* put on a wonderful show, but what I appreciated most was the time they took to explain the interesting details and history of each composition. Friday's concert was a great night for music appreciation, but also for music education.



PHOTO BY LEILA WILLS

The women of Ensemble Vivant: Adele Armin, Catherine Wilson, and Sharon Prater.

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TOM JONES

ELVIS

DIANA KRALL

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★ TONY BENNETT ★ DIONNE WARWICK ★ TOM JONES

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