

# Arts & Entertainment

## Christian singer finds peace through music

**KATE GILDERDALE**  
Correspondent

When Heather McCullough became a Christian, it seemed only natural that she should choose to celebrate her faith in song.

McCullough, who has worked at Emmanuel International in Stouffville for almost eight years, recently released her first compact disc, entitled *All The Way Home*, a compilation of original songs composed by some of Nashville's finest songwriters. "I started singing when I was

about five and I took dancing, acting and singing lessons."

She continued to hone her skills throughout her school years and attended the Banff School of Fine Arts, where she studied musical theatre and performed twice at the Banff Festival. She has appeared in productions at Harbourfront and Leah Posluns Theatre in Toronto, where she also received much of her theatrical training.

"I did seven shows in one year, at the same time as attending the University of Toronto. I became a Chris-

tian in 1989 - I went through a difficult time just out of high school, because my mom took sick with cancer," explained McCullough. "She was ill for a couple of years and died when I was 21."

As the only child of a single mother, her loss was particularly hard to bear. "My whole family was gone and I began to question what life was about. It was an interesting time too, because I also got married when I was 21."

The emptiness left by her mother's death continued to haunt her, howev-

er. "I was really alone in the world and I was praying and saying to God, if you could just give me a mother and a friend, someone that would be there for me."

Her prayer was answered when she met a woman at the real estate office where she worked and the two established an instant rapport. "We became friends immediately and I really believe she was the answer to my prayer."

Her friend was a Christian and one day McCullough asked if she could attend church with her. "I became a



HEATHER McCULLOUGH

Christian along with my husband and life took on a whole new meaning."

As a result, she also began to reconsider her career. "I knew that I wanted to do something different, but I didn't know what. Soon afterwards, Mark Middleton (general director of Emmanuel International) came to speak at our church."

Impressed and moved by his presentation she said she would be interested in working for the organization. As a result of that conversation, "they called and said they had a position for me as publications' editor."

McCullough was also proving to be an accomplished gospel singer and as people in her own congregation became aware of her vocal talents, she began to receive invitations to perform at other churches. "I didn't promote myself, it came about through word of mouth."

She made her first tape four years ago and her new release was produced by Brian Hardin and recorded in Nashville. *All The Way Home* is a powerful celebration of faith and hope which will appeal to people of all ages. The CD is distributed in Christian bookstores across the country by CMC Canada.

All proceeds go to Emmanuel International, and McCullough, who is a regular guest on 100 Huntley Street, will sing selections from her album at Springvale Baptist Church June 7.

## Fifth Element goes where others have gone before

To enhance our entertainment coverage, *The Tribune* is pleased to introduce Stuart Green, our new film reviewer. Green has been reviewing movies for *Metroland* newspapers for more than six years.

There are a tremendous number of similarities between last summer's blockbuster, *Independence Day* (ID4) and *The Fifth Element* (T5E). Whether T5E, the first in this year's high-volt-



### Screen Scene

Stuart Green

age, effects-filled science fiction extravaganza bonanza (*Men In Black* and *The Lost World* being the next), can equal the success of ID4 is another question.

Set in the 23rd century, Bruce Willis stars as Korben Dallas, a retired army hitman turned New York cabbie who is assigned to

help save the world from an evil entity living inside a 1,200-mile-wide meteor and its earthly aide Zorg (Gary Oldman).

With the help of a mysterious woman named Leeloo (Milla Jovovich), a nervous priest named Cornelius (Ian Holm) and a cast of oddball humanoids, the mission takes Dallas on an intergalactic search for four stones representing the four ancient elements of fire, water, earth and wind which, when combined with the fifth element, will create the only weapon that can save the world.

Playing like a high-tech cross between *Blade Runner* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Fifth Element* is a visually spectacular film that occasionally sacrifices its story for the sake of a cool chase scene or a laugh.

Like *Independence Day*, it borrows a little too liberally from elsewhere in the science fiction genre, going where many films have gone before. It also, like ID4, uses comic relief far more often than it needs to and sometimes in all the wrong places.

Writer/director Luc Besson, who certainly deserves full credit for giving the film an awesome look, should have pulled back on the humor and spent more time

on the science aspects. He could also have used a better continuity editor to help fix up some of the jarring quantum leaps in plot development that go unexplained.

I don't know where, but somewhere along the way the major studios got it in their collective head that science fiction couldn't be serious. They're dead wrong.

*The Fifth Element* could and should have been a little more serious to give it any sense of suspense. As it is, we never get a sense that the world is in that much danger. If it was, the supposed savior wouldn't take time out of his day to attend an opera, which he does.

In the end, *The Fifth Element* offers a little bit of escapist fun with cool special effects and a lush look, but absolutely no depth.

### MIKE MEYERS COOLS OFF AS AUSTIN POWERS

He's back, baby and as he's as shag-riffic as ever.

After a far too lengthy hiatus from the big screen, Scarborough native and Saturday Night Live alumnus Mike Myers returns with his take on the early James

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An army of Mangalores are the mercenary servants of Zorg (Gary Oldman), the agent of all that is evil, in *The Fifth Element*, opening this weekend.

## Plenty of nightlife activities in 905 area

### UXPERIENCE

"Help Wanted No Experience Necessary" May 7-10 at Uxbridge Secondary School, 8 p.m. Tickets are \$9 adults and \$7 for children 12 and under. Tickets are available at Toronto Street Drugs, Quaker Pharmacy, Blue Heron Books, Presents Presents and Star Office Products.

### COL. MUSTARD'S

Live entertainment Friday May 9 with Bob Brunton - new country, 50's and 60's. Saturday, May 10 Medicine Hat, 6545 Hwy. 7 Markham, call 294-4925.

### FATHER'S

May 9, the John Stewart Band; May 10, the Iyn Sister Clyd Band; May 11, Karaoke Sunday, McCowan and Hwy. 7, Markham.

### OLDE TYME SQUARE DANCE

For young and old, no experience necessary. A public dance at the Buttonville Community Centre, 8931 Woodbine Ave. Markham at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 10. Adults \$6, children \$3. Pot luck snack. Call 416-961-9719.

### DINNER THEATRE

Ebenezer United Church, 5000 Steeles Ave., Markham is holding its annual dinner theatre Saturday, May 10, theme this year Country and Western. Dinner 6 to 7:30 p.m., musical from 8 to 9:30 p.m. Tickets must be bought in advance. Adults \$20, 14 and under \$10.

### VOICES OF YOUTH

At the Uxbridge Music Hall at Saturday, May 10, 7:30 p.m. Free, all welcome.

### QUINTE BALLETS SCHOOL

At Markham Theatre Saturday, May 10, 8 p.m. as part of the school's 25th anniversary tour. Tickets adults \$20, seniors and children \$15, call 305-7469.

### HOBBY HORSE ARMS

Friday, May 30 - 7:30 p.m. Scotch Nosing, Feature: Macallan 12, 18 and 25 Uxbridge, call 852-6126.

### SGT. PEPPERS PUB & GRILL

Join us every Monday night for 25 cent wings and enjoy a game of NIN or watch the hockey playoffs on our big screen. On Sunday nights bring your voice, instrument and friends to jam night. Make reservations now for Mother's Day brunch. Starting May 10, live music provided by Rick Washbrook, 5694 Hwy. 7, Markham.

## spotlight

### HERITAGE ARMS

Thursday, May 15 - The Grand Poobah Band; Saturday, May 17 - The Niki B Band, a three piece band from Toronto playing 60's-90's music; Friday, May 23 - Jimmy Frazer, the One Man Boogie Band; Friday, May 23 - Comedywood, Five stand up comedians on stage; Thursday, May 29 - Steve Worrall Band.

To promote your event in Spotlight, fax the details to (905) 294-1538, mail to 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, L3P 1M3, or e-mail to econsun@istar.ca.