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# Music mix mirrors society, teens say

BY ADRIAN CORSIN  
At the Schools Writer

"Music brings the people together," proclaims Madonna in her song Music.

With the current state of popular music more varied and intertwined than ever before, this statement can hardly be refuted.

With artists fusing hip-hop with hard rock and pop with gospel, the boundaries of music continue to be blurred. Not only are musical styles finding new, common ground, the musical choices offered are unparalleled.

Many attribute this diversity in music to a cultural reflection of our times.

Of nearly 60 teenagers surveyed, more than 85 per cent agreed today's musical potpourri is a mirror of our social mixture.

"Music is common ground for every culture. It's a chance for people to relate," Kaitlin Ritchie, 16, explained.

When asked about the most anticipated albums, the teens' responses were as varied as their cultural backgrounds and experiences.

Each season brings waves of diverse

artists; everyone from nu-metal rockers to R&B crooners will find themselves in the new release section at your local music store.

The spectrum of CDs set to be released this fall stands as a testament to the spectrum of the current styles and artists.

Rock fans will be happy to hear their favourite Canadian punk boys are back Nov. 26. Sum 41 follow up on the success of their 2001 hit record All Killer, No Filler. Produced by Greig Nori, the album is sure to be a hit with the kids.

This fall also sees new CDs from Mudvayne, Bon Jovi, as well as the Foo Fighters. The fourth album by the recently disbanded Wallflowers is to be released Nov. 5.

Not to be outdone, R&B and hip-hop fans will see new releases from some of music's biggest names. Jay-Z, aka HOVA, is geared up to release The Blueprint 2: The Gift and the Curse on Nov. 5. Hip-hop legend LL Cool J continues to perfect his sound on Ten, with production help by the Neptunes. Leading R&B lady, Mya, is also preparing for the release of her new album, Smoke and

Mirrors, sometime in November.

Other big names include the trio-become-duo TLC, whose first album since the tragic death of Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes in Honduras, will be released Nov. 12.

Shaggy fans will be happy to hear Mr. Luv-a-Luva will be following up on the international success of his last album, Hotshot, which also spawned Hotshot Ultramix, a collection of remixes.

With the demise of pop music a topic of water fountain chitchat, many would anticipate this season's new crop of CDs to be muted in terms of sheer selling power.

With new CDs expected from recently crowned American Idol Kelly Clarkson, the outrageously clad Christina Aguilera, Mariah Carey, along with solo outings from Back Street Boy Nick Carter and Justin Timberlake from N-Sync, pop looks to be in top form.

It sounds as though this fall will be sweet music to everyone's ears.

Adrian Corsin is a student at St. Joan of Arc Catholic High School in Maple.

# A visit to three countries in one York Region day

BY STACEY HALE  
At the Schools Writer

As teenagers, our days of family fun tend to dwindle in the dust. As we get older, we're trying to set ourselves apart, to become who we think we should be.

Being at a family outing isn't exactly the way to go about finding that independence, but some things can surprise you. Recently, I realized the summer was nearly over and I hadn't yet made the annual visit to my grandparents' house.

I soon found my way on a bus to Richmond Hill. A visit to Hillcrest Mall was in order, as always. But about two days into the trip, I was bored. My grandmother suggested visiting my distant cousin, Jewel.

I arrived expecting the worst, only to find the best. This place had a pool, a cool interior with artifacts from all the amazing places Jewel had been around the world and, best of all, it was a house filled with kids of all ages and nationalities.

I discovered Jewel was a retired teacher not quite ready for retirement and now teaching English to international students. I was almost as excited to meet these kids as they were to meet me.

First, I was introduced to 23-year-old Hmed Khinin from Saudi Arabia. I first noticed Hmed's excellent English. Being a curious person, I had many questions about his culture. I discovered Hmed has 28 sisters and 17 brothers. His father has four wives and life for him was comfortable.

Hmed explained not all men in Saudi Arabia have four wives, but if they have the income to support four wives, they may do so. Hmed told

me of the strict rules women and men live under in his country.

Women must cover up and men must not make eye contact with women in the street. His reasons and most of the other students' reasons for coming to Canada were to learn English so they could move on to university.

Next I met two nice and energetic girls from Venezuela. Sixteen-year-old Maury Pino and her cousin, 17-year-old Melissa Guanchez. Both girls were excited to be in Canada.

When I asked them of their first impression of Canada, they agreed it was "very beautiful" and "it's nice to see so many people of different nationalities, religions and cultures living together".

Both girls enjoyed their time at school and hoped to attain perfect English before returning home. The girls attempted to teach me Spanish with some success. It was an amazing experience to talk with them about their country in South America.

Lastly, I met two young boys from Korea, 12-year-old Sung Jun and nine-year-old You Bin. They attempted to teach me some Korean, but we found this to be quite a task. I enjoyed their company and I know their English will be great before they go home.

This turned out to be one of the most interesting and amazing experiences I had this summer. It made me feel as if I had visited three countries in just one afternoon. Jewel continues to teach international students English and has aspirations to travel to Saudi Arabia.

Stacey Hale is a student at Keswick High School.

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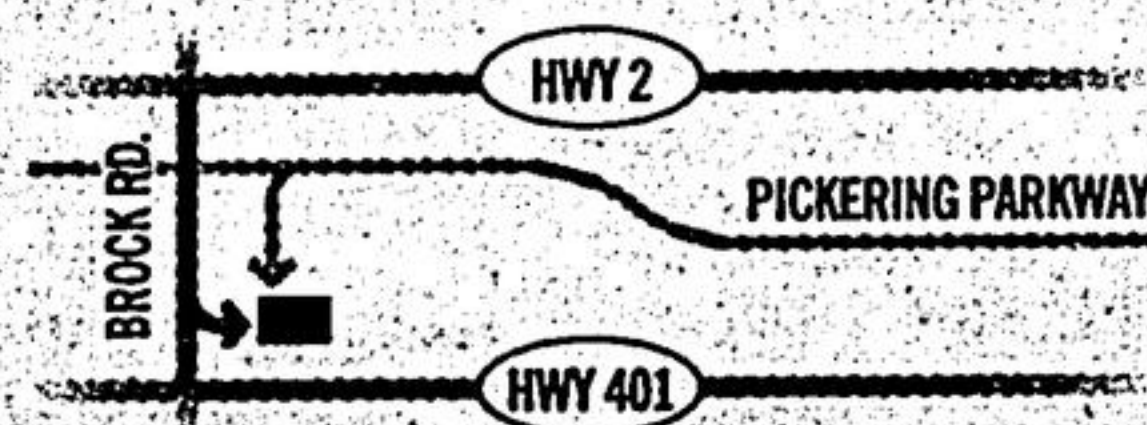


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