ROUNDUP

School for Scoundrels
An unscientific assessment of OCAD’s most wanted  BY JASON MCBRIDE

When a student claimed responsibility for November’s faux bomb scare at the ROM, we couldn’t help but wonder if Toronto’s artsiest institute offers a class in courting controversy. Here, a ranking of headline-grabbing hijinks, from the inspired to the inane.

1985: Going Green
In an aggressive act of graffiti art, a third-year student sprays a police cruiser green. Cops nab him near the scene of the crime; he is later fined $300 in repainting fees.

1996: Puke Prank
Jubal Brown barfs red Jell-O on Raoul Dufy’s painting Harbour at Le Havre, on display at the AGO. He does the same with blue Jell-O at New York’s MoMA before security gets wise to his less than subtle criticism.

2001: Cat Fight
In a grossly misguided attempt to highlight the hypocrisies of a meat-eating society, Jesse Power videotapes the skinning, disemboweling and decapitation of a cat. He is later convicted of cruelty to animals and gets 90 days’ jail time. A 2004 documentary on the case, Casualty: The Art of Killing a Cat, premieres at the Toronto film fest, causing PETA types to picket in masse.

2006: Quench Your Curiosity
Performed at OCAD’s Professional Gallery, Jess Dobkin’s piece, The Lactation Station Breast Milk Bar, aims to eradicate the taboos surrounding lactation. Viewers are invited to taste pasteurized human breast milk donated by new moms.

2007: ROM Scare
Thorarin Jonsson plants a bomb-like sculpture outside the museum, then posts a YouTube video called “The Fake Bombing at the ROM.” The bomb squad goes in anyway, while the disruption of a glittery CANFAR bash causes further explosions among ladies who lunch.

ASININE

ARTISTIC

ABOMINABLE

TIMELINE

Guru Gaga
How Toronto fell head over heels for an American urbanist named Florida  BY MIKE MINER

Ever since world-renowned city swami Richard Florida touched down in Toronto to head up U of T’s new Martin Prosperity Institute, our civic ego has been soaring. But while Florida euphoria* continues to run rampant, we have to ask: Is this guy really worth the hype?

2004: The tease
The object of our desire nearly takes a job in Toronto but opts to stay in the U.S. to comfort a deeply concerned (and largely wise-tapped) creative class.

October 2006: You had us at infection point
Still in Washington, our future flame speaks with The Globe and Mail, calling Toronto an “infection point” with the potential to become a first-tier mega-region. Pillow talk never sounded so cerebral.

July 7, 2007: Ink service
The official Florida fascine (a.k.a., the Globe) reports he will soon teach at the Rotman School of Management. Town crier Shrinan Govani drops R.Flo’s name for the first time, later dubbing him the Justin Timberlake of urban theorists.

* Intense feelings of validation stemming from the good doctor’s fawning praise.
Their Art Will Go On
Toronto music talents perform songs by an unlikely icon at the launch of Carl Wilson’s latest book, a probe into the popularity of la diva Dion

What’s your favourite Céline Dion song?

“‘It’s All Coming Back to Me’ is, like, the craziest song ever” — Owen Pallett (a.k.a. Final Fantasy)

“I like ‘I Drove All Night’, but Cyndi Lauper’s version is better” — Jian Ghomeshi

01 Artist and playwright Darren O’Donnell 02 Painter Margaux Williamson 03 Musician Owen Pallett 04 Céline impersonator Laura Landauer 05 CBC stud Jian Ghomeshi 06 Poet Kyle Buckley 07 Blocks Recording Club co-founder Steve Kado 08 Author Carl Wilson 09 Fashion designer Jeremy Laing 10 Musician Gentleman Reg 11 MC Misha Glouberman 12 Lit chick Sheila Heti

October 27, 2007: Global domination
Not satisfied with stories about Richard Florida, the Globe introduces its new columnist: Doctorrr Richaaaard Flor-i-da! His monthly column brings star power to the paper’s revamped weekend edition.

November 2007: Boy in the ‘hood
Florida discovers Kensington Market. “You have a combination of old buildings and almost shacks,” he enthuses. Sales of patchouli triple overnight. Later, his Toronto lust is tested with a visit to our very own concrete jungle—Yonge-Dundas Square. And guess what—he likes it! He calls the Eaton Centre “really beautiful.” What’s next? An ode to Jane and Finch?

August 21, 2007: Welcome wagon
U of T fête its new acquisition at a swanky soirée. Belinda Stronach and Andy Barrie are among the 125 luminaries mixing with the messiah of metropolises. Premier McGuinty puts his re-election bid on hold to give the keynote address.

October 30, 2007: Miller time
Even the mayor gets Florida fever at a Creative City dinner at Grano: “It’s daunting to be invited to a dinner as mayor and have the guest speaker be far more interesting than you,” he says of his new pal.

January 2008: One of us (only better)
New year, new crush? Not likely. Florida calls us “one of the most tolerant, open-minded, accepting and inclusive cities in the world,” shortly before announcing his intention to obtain Canadian citizenship. Torontonians turn black and blue pinching each other.

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