

# Global

...who bring the Festival of Authors

## Key on

**PETER CAREY** interviewed by **EVAN BROWN** at the Premiere Dance Theatre, (Thursday, October 23), 9 pm.  
**PETER CAREY** reading with **DOUGLAS COUPLAND** and **ALI SMITH** at the Premiere Theatre, Friday (October 24), 8 pm.  
**MY LIFE AS A FAKE** by Peter Carey, 104 pages, \$35.95 cloth.  
**NNNN**

**ALIAN AUTHOR PETER CAREY** tells a fantastic tale in his latest novel, *My Life As A Fake*. In real life, in the 1940s, James McCauley and Harold Stewart created hoax poet Em Malley as a means of ridiculing Modernist poetry. McCauley and Stewart sent Malley's poems to Max

**Peter Carey** mines a 1940s literary hoax.

In *My Life As A Fake*, which is loosely based on this incident, sham poet Bob McCorkle comes to life – like Mary Shelley's monster or Alasdair Grey's Bella Baxter – appearing out of nowhere to pursue and torment his unfortunate creator, Christopher Chubb. Unlike Dr. Frankenstein or Godwin Baxter, however, Chubb takes a little while to convince himself that his bane is no actual madman but the freakish creation of his own mind.

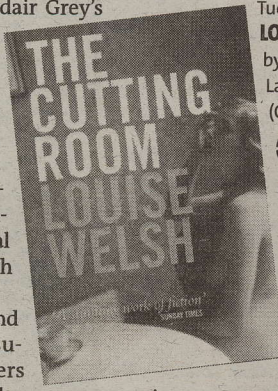
Chubb is an intriguing and lovable character, his supreme life-giving powers amusingly offset by his pathetic wretchedness. McCorkle is a multi-layered creation, monstrous yet surprisingly human, energetic and larger than life.

The author completely eschews quotation marks, much as he did in *True History Of The Kelly Gang*. This makes the narrative a tad confusing in the beginning, but the fact that things do eventually flow smoothly once the reader's mind becomes accustomed to the prose style is quite a testament to Carey's skill.

And since the narrative shifts so often between two characters and so much of it is narrative-within-narrative, you can see that the use of quotation marks would probably, in fact, have been terribly problematic.

*My Life As A Fake* is a gripping story and clever exploration of reality and fakery, truth and lies. So clever, indeed, that through the entire thing you never know who or what to believe.

ELIZABETH BROMSTEIN



**LOUISE WELSH** reading with **DOUGLAS COUPLAND**, **JASPER FFORDE** and **DAN RHODES** at the Premiere Dance Theatre, Tuesday (October 28), 8 pm.  
**LOUISE WELSH** interviewed by Emily Pohl-Weary at the Lakeside Terrace, Thursday (October 30), 7 pm.  
**THE CUTTING ROOM** by Louise Welsh (Canongate), 294 pages, \$35.95 cloth.  
 Rating: **NNNN**

**CAN WOMEN WRITERS** create realistic male characters? What about a promiscuous gay man? In *The Cutting Room*, Scottish first-time novelist Louise Welsh has come up with a most unusual protagonist in the form of auctioneer cum sleuth Rilke.

While at a new job clearing out the house of a recently deceased wealthy man, Rilke discovers a stash of snuff photos. They seem to depict a young woman being stabbed to death while the photographer gets off. Deeply disturbed, he sets out to put together the pieces of a gruesome murder that happened decades earlier.

Along the way, he gets sidetracked by beautiful boys and bathroom quickies. Early in the book, he's even picked up behind the bushes in a park, along with "a new friend," and then released with a warning by a policeman who fooled around with him when they were children.

As a character, Rilke is eccentric and morally complex. Nothing's black-and-white in his world. He's also 90 per cent convincing as a man. While at times he seems too perceptive about women and the power dynamics at play, he is one of the most unique detectives I've come across in a mystery novel.

The reader grows to trust Rilke's

queen's stash of drugs stashed in exchange for a phone number. Sometimes the quickie bathroom sex is bizarrely detached and pointless. Rilke lacks compelling motivation for seeking an orgasm with almost every man he meets.

Welsh's novel was released to a rush of accolades. It's worthy of the praise, both literary and escapist. Rilke's world is suitably gritty and as dismal as the British weather. *The Guardian*

selected novels of fiction is, I store of written Glasgow. I'll get her research my interest October 30

10/23 ~ 29 / 2003 Ekuni

## Twinkle doesn't

**KAORI EKUNI** interviewed by **RUI UMEZAWA** at the Studio Theatre, tonight (Thursday, October 23), 7 pm.  
**KAORI EKUNI** reading with **TAMA JANOWITZ** and **VIRGINIE DESPENTES** at the Brigantine Room, tonight (Thursday, October 23), 8 pm.



**TWINKLE TWINKLE** by Kaori Ekuni, translated by Emi Shimokawa (Vertical Inc.), 171 pages, \$29.95 cloth. Rating: **NN**

**TWINKLE TWINKLE** should shine brighter than it does.

Published in Japan in 1991, the slim debut novel made Kaori Ekuni a literary star, and it's clear why

it's been translated into English.

This is Will & Grace Go To Japan, complete with a sexless boyfriend for Will, real alcohol and tears for Grace and no laugh track.

Set in the sprawling suburbs of an unnamed city that's probably Tokyo,

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## Authors fest this week

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AUTHORS** October 23 to November 1. Readings/interviews \$15, mbrs \$10; lectures \$10, mbrs \$8. Harbourfront Centre. 416-973-4000, www.readings.org  
**Premiere Dance Theatre**, 207 Queens Quay West (PDT)  
**Brigantine Room**, 235 Queens Quay West (BRG)  
**Lakeside Terrace**, 235 Queens Quay West (LST)  
**Studio Theatre**, 235 Queens Quay West (SDT).

(SDT); Peter Carey, Douglas Glover and Ali Smith reading (8 pm, PDT); Rachel Billington, Jennifer Johnston and Barbara Trapido reading (8 pm, BRG); Bob Rae interviewing Michael Ignatieff (9 pm, LST); Russell Smith interviewing Tama Janowitz (9 pm, SDT).

### Saturday, October 25

Christopher Dewdney interviewing Glyn Maxwell (noon, LST); Carolyn Weaver interviewing Barbara Trapido (1 pm, BRG); Darren Wershler-Henry interviewing Robert Creeley (1 pm, SDT); Donna Bailey Nurse interviewing Francis Itani (2 pm, PDT); CC Humphreys interviewing Margaret Elphinstone (2 pm, LST); RM Vaughan interviewing Mary Woronov (3 pm, BRG); Ken Babstock interviewing Douglas Glover (3 pm, SDT); Robert Creeley, Glyn Maxwell and Aharon Shabtai reading (4 pm, PDT); talk by Michael Wood (4 pm, LST); Dennis Lee interviewing Roy MacSkimming (5 pm, BRG); Camilla Gibb interviewing Patricia Dunker (5 pm, SDT); Marni Woodrow interviewing Jennifer Johnston (7 pm, LST); Phillip Marchand interviewing Robert Bausch (7 pm, SDT); AS Byatt, Iselin C Hermann and Siri Hustvedt read-

### Thursday, October 23

Eleanor Wachtel interviewing AS Byatt (7 pm, PDT); Rui Umezawa interviewing Kaori Ekuni (7 pm, SDT), Virginia Despentes, Kaori Ekuni and Tama Janowitz reading (8 pm, BRG); Evan Solomon interviewing Peter Carey (9 pm, PDT); David Macfarlane interviewing Hugo Hamilton (9 pm, LST); Richard Crouse interviewing Patrick McCabe (9 pm, SDT).

### Friday, October 24

Sasha interviewing Virginia Despentes (7 pm,

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