



Inside
Two-man show
2 Pianos, 4 Hands
recalls early
musical ambitions
page 23

CIVT
(Vancouver
Television)
officially hits
the air on
September 22,
but it's already
causing static
at other
stations

**New kid
on the box**

by George Affleck
While construction workers busy themselves with building studios in the old downtown library, Vancouver's newest TV station is slowly revealing the people behind and in front of the camera. Maintaining a sense of mystery about what's taking place on the corner of Nelson and Howard is part of a strategy to keep the competition guessing on the Sept. 22 launch date on Channel 13's new one. CIVT Vancouver Television's general manager Jon Festinger means for the media. "I will not discuss strategy," he says to keep quiet.

Employees at BCTV, U-TV, CHEK-TV, and CBC-TV have gone through a few rough months as they prepare for Vancouver Television's arrival. In early July, its employees at U-TV were laid off. They included long-time anchor Ted Friend, segment writer Jon Ferry and late-night news producer Scott Harper. The remaining positions and were mostly news and technical support workers. The station also cancelled the Saturday afternoon show *Star Trek*, which was produced by Friend.

In the same week, management for CHEK in Victoria announced the cancellation of its 11:30 p.m. newscast. Instead, CHEK will have a 6 a.m. show produced in Burnaby at BCTV. CHEK's newscast. The majority of the new show will be on Lower Mainland news, with some stories from Victoria. Staff at CHEK are awaiting possible re-assignments or layoffs.

General manager
Jon Festinger is keeping
the new station's
local programming
to himself

CASINO SMOKE • IN SYNC • CROFTON CENTENNIAL

al Pacific Northwest

**ANALIAN
FESTIVAL**

Wineries share their Vintages

Prepared by

ORIZONS

SALMON HOUSE
allegorical fish soup

September 27th, 1997. 7:00 pm

clair Centre
 Hastings Street, Vancouver

\$65.00 per person

Association for the Mentally Handicapped
 51 or 291-2979

Global
north shore news

**Get A Deal
at Arna**

Husqvarna
15" / 16" Bar

SALE
Regular Price
\$639.00
Sale Price
\$449.00

entertainment

Brit essay a spooky post-script to Diana's death

New station unites cultures

ENGLAND CAME TO A COMPLETE HALT last Saturday, and much of the world with it. But when the World came to Cambie and Broadway, the show had to go on.

Vancouver's newest FM station CHKG, billed as the World of 96.1, opened its doors with a Saturday afternoon party that was planned long ago. Unlike the British gathering, this one was scheduled on a calendar that any mortal could read.

Program director Cal Koat was philosophical about the unfortunate timing. "Obviously, we didn't plan for this to happen. There'll be time for reflection later."

Koat's station is designed to unite the world in a happier way, with programming for 20 different cultural communities in 15 different languages. The music of 96.1 will be a mix of multi-cultural programs, with an over-all emphasis on the style that has come to be known as world beat. Here, you would be no more likely to request "Benny and the Jets" than you would have been during the ceremony at Westminster Abbey.

steve burgess
urban ranger

Performing at the opening party was Pancho and Sal, a local act that is already benefiting from the programming policy of the new FM outlet, as well as from its AM sister station. "Cal gave us our first interview on 1470 CJVB," says Sal Pace, who along with husband Francisco (a.k.a. Pancho) plays a style they call urban folk. "We're already getting calls as a result of the tapes the station has been playing."

Although upbeat about the opportunity to launch the new station, Koat would probably admit to a secret yearning for a chance to program a flat-out, 24-hour world beat format. He can't do that here.

Starting up a radio station in Canada is like running a series of races: first, get a licence from the CRTC, and then gain an audience. There's a catch, though; sometimes, your prize for winning race number one is a pair of cement running shoes.

Unlike stations licensed to play the same format 24 hours a day, 96.1's mandate from the CRTC forces it to provide separate programs for all 20 of the aforementioned different cultural communities. It's a task too great for the repertoire of the Gypsy Kings.

Koat is unfazed; thrilled, in fact. "It's a feel-good situation all around," he says. "There's a growing genre called world beat,

the local scene lacks cohesion, and multi-cultural radio is at a crossroads. We get to make an impact on all those areas."

The bane of multi-cultural radio is block programming—the need to reach different linguistic and cultural communities with different shows, as separate from each other as *ER* and *NYPD Blue*. The problem is, most people don't treat radio like TV; that is, tune in for specific shows. They treat radio like a water faucet. Very few people want different types of fluid every trip to the sink.

Koat hopes to overcome the problem by blurring the line between program blocks. "We do it in a way that encourages cross-over listenership," he says.

Koat also stresses that the music will not be aimed only at purists. "You won't be hearing the 5 a.m. prayer chants from the towers of Cairo," he insists. "Some people in the music community may take exception, but our number one concern is accessibility."

Typically, Koat even sees the CRTC restrictions as an advantage. "We can't dump this approach in two years to become a pop station, the way CJAZ turned into KISS-FM," he reasons. "We are anchored by our licence."

The party ambled on through the afternoon, with a slightly bizarre multi-cultural menu: sushi and cocktail wienies. Hopelessly conservative diners who are still put off by the now-commonplace prospect of eating raw fish had potentially bigger worries; any nibbler who did not look before munching risked ingesting a live wasp. They may be pests, but give them credit for taste—they ignored the cocktail wienies.

★★★
HOURS BEFORE THE PARTY, the Princess of Wales' funeral cortège had proceeded through London's streets without incident. Despite the strong anti-paparazzi sentiments afoot, none of the thousands who snapped photos felt the need to beat each other up afterwards.

A very spooky post-script—or more accurately, prologue—to the tragedy was brought to my attention by noted local food writer Jamie Maw. A devotee of various British publications, he faxed me a story that ran in *The Spectator*.

It was an essay written by British Tory MP Alan Clark, attacking the media for, he believed, driving several public figures to suicide. In the final paragraph, Clark suggests that the U.K. press has one particular goal in mind: "The ultimate trophy, the most brightly plumaged of all: to accelerate, and then be the first to capture, the sudden death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 'unexplained circumstances.'" The article appeared Aug. 9.

As Maw wrote across the top of the fax: "Prescience of mind?"