MUSIC

## Like peas in a pod

**BY SARAH FERGUSON**

"It's hard to count the times we've toured Canada; at least 10," says Brent "Gisto" Hongisto, guitarist and one of three vocalists for the five-piece Nelson, B.C., band Wassabi Collective. ("Wassabi?" is urban for "What's up?")

And it's largely through this rigorous touring schedule that the band has managed to develop its fan base. It's the "electrifying taste of hip-hop, reggae and dance music that makes people want to dance and let go," says Hongisto. He describes the group's sound as raw, punky, elegant and jazzy, and says listeners are just as diverse. "Our audience is young people, folks that are my parents' age and everyone in between."

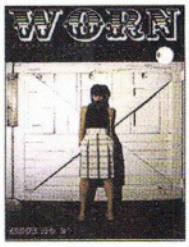
Self-proclaimed environmental, social and spiritual activists, Wassabi Collective was the subject of an award-winning documentary, *Collective*, about the production of its 2006 EP, *Cato*.

The group will be touring Eastern Canada in March to promote its new album, *Stories Not Forgotten*.

MEDIA

## Fashion forward

**BY TRACEY LINDEMAN**




*Worn Fashion Journal* may exude glamour, but unlike the *Vogues* and *Elles* of the world, the magazine tries to take the long view on fashion. Editor Serah-Marie McMahon, 27, started *Worn* in 2005 with little experience and even less money, churning it out from her Montreal apartment. "*Worn* is different in that it talks about fashion in a way no other publication does," she says. "I wanted to inspire an intelligent discussion about every single aspect of fashion." *Worn* publishes twice a year (in May and October), and previous issues have contained pieces on Weimar Germany's impact on contemporary fashion, a primer on Bakelite jewellery and another on rayon, and of course plenty of photo spreads.

ACTIVISM

## Casting on, doing good

**BY LAURA BUCCI**

Vancouver's homeless are keeping warmer thanks to a few good-hearted knitters. Nancy Lee, author of the short-story collection *Dead Girls*, picked up knitting two years ago and is now using the skill to provide hand-knit goods for the homeless.

She started the Sheltering Stitch (www.shelteringstitch.com) last year, after reading Nick Flynn's moving memoir, *Another Bullshit Night in Suck City*. He made it apparent that for the homeless, keeping warm is a constant challenge. "This turned on a light bulb for me," Lee says, and thanks to local yarn store Urban Yarns and homeless outreach organizations, getting and distributing knitted donations has been possible.

After its first few months in operation, the Sheltering Stitch had collected almost 150 knitted items, mostly scarves and hats, from about two dozen knitters. The most needed items are blankets, sweaters and gloves, says Lee, and knitters anywhere are welcome to mail their donations. Toronto knitters can also get involved with Street Knit (www.streetknit.ca), a similar project in that city.

[READ THIS]

## Emergency Contact

**by Tara-Michelle Ziniuk**
(McGilligan Books)


*Emergency Contact*, a collection of 50 poems by writer, performer and activist Tara-Michelle Ziniuk, uses sharp humour, radical honesty and an anxious heart to reveal an unrelenting appetite for connection.

Tales of psychiatric wards, body fluids, pills, abuse, lovers, grocery store aisles and the internet are tempered by Ziniuk's unflinching voice that, at times, makes the terrifying commonplace. ("I always get stomach-aches when I'm trying to die.")

Part intimate journal, part passionate manifesto, part late-night rap session, these poems speak to all those who find strength in facing their weaknesses and connection through sharing survival stories. ("Behind bedroom doors everywhere / girls like us are writing open letters to our fathers / stamping our goodbyes.")

Ziniuk's unapologetic truths ("I realize the urge I have to fuck girls is sometimes actually the urge to push them down.") inspires cackles and awe from those who dare not pull their most garish thoughts from their secret gallows.

To read Ziniuk's words is to hold her murmured heart in your hand and think it your own, as they both pulse in unison. "Here are our stories screamed into / the receiver / out of car windows / to anyone who will hear us." —KAREN DARRICADES