

meteoric rise of a young artist

By Jasmine Osman

VANCOUVER

Garrett Campbell-Wilson is a star in the making. Fresh off the awards circuit, he is fast establishing himself as a rising talent in the Vancouver art world. The trajectory of his meteoric rise is easy to gauge given the fact he's garnered some of the top scholarships and honours the industry has to offer. In fact, it was on just such night we met as Campbell-Wilson received the top Visual Arts prize from the Black Cultural Association.

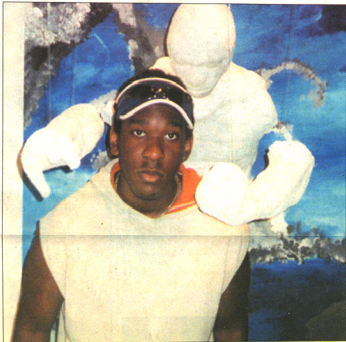
Campbell-Wilson has been drawing ever since he was knee high and could wrap his fingers around a crayon. "I used to have these colouring books where I'd colour in between the lines. I went on to draw different things around the house," he recalls as his father introduced him to comics. "My dad would draw things out of comic books and that interested me." While his father soon abandoned drawing altogether, Campbell-Wilson took to it, never considering anything else at it, never considering anything else.

His repertoire is diverse and includes portraits of men and beasts, sketches of the human anatomy, themes of dualism and technology. And most recently he's delved into animal art. His makeshift studio behind him is a calm steel bed decked with works by himself and those he admires. On one side hangs a grand scale self portrait in graphite and pencil he produced looking through a hand-held mirror. Two smaller paintings with a dualist theme abound, one particularly remarkable in its portrayal of a man's head and that of a bull both perched on a single skull. "I enjoy combining two things," he says, it makes for a more original looking drawing.

One of the more striking pieces in Wilson's collection is a work he contributed to the Time series exhibit at the Buschlen Mowatt Gallery. Wilson cut his entire body into a white madding, set to resemble victims of a nuclear attack. He hoisted the body cast onto a bright blue map of the world with smoke billowing from the edges. "I was thinking about it," he says when he created this eye-popping piece.

"What happens when years from now this big nuclear war happens and things take a really drastic turn." No doubt the ominous events of September 11, 2001 left a lasting impression on those who witnessed it. In a spontaneous reaction to the attacks, Wilson and his peers at Arts Umbrella created a "Mass Extinguishing" with accompanying poem they dispatched to New York City in support of its citizens. It's one of those things where they didn't stop to think they just wanted to help out someone.

While war and peace seem to have inspired his works to date, Campbell-Wilson draws ideas from everywhere with comic book art and hyper animation to the more traditional Italian Renaissance artists. His works have evolved from a cartoonish style, to a more realistic style that brings realism, depth and movement to his characters. When he's not dabbling in art, he's out observing the world. He roams the streets of Vancouver, stopping at cafes and bars stops to draw, occasionally catching



Garrett Campbell-Wilson

an awkward glare from a potential subject.

"You can only do art for so long. You can only draw for one time and for so long cause after a while you lose inspiration and run out of ideas." So he takes to the gym for a little lock boxing or running. "Drawing is not only a mental challenge it's a physical challenge as well. It's good to get out and release some endorphins." Like a typical teenager, he has a myriad of interests including spending time with his family and friends. An avid moviegoer, he often enjoys watching kung fu films, action and thrillers repeatedly. In fact it's Saturday night. By this time the phone has been ringing off the hook. He giggles and sits anxiously in anticipation of what the evening might hold.

With a cherubic mug that could have been fashioned by the Renaissance painters he so admires, a boyish charm and a mind to match, he's realistic enough to know that money doesn't grow on trees and poverty often dogs artists like a bad scent. He's setting his sights on New York City, that hot bed of culture where he hopes to realise his dreams and fulfil potential.

"Vancouver's good for now but at New York I'll find more of what I'm looking for just because there's so much more exposure out there."

Ideally, Campbell-Wilson would like to follow in the footsteps of his idols including New York-based concept designers Joe Madureira, Feng Zhu, Scott Campbell, Frank Frazetta and James Hawks. They are the unsung heroes behind ideas for various entertainment, video gaming, and film industry projects. The artist here based on a script and creativity initiates the ideas for the film (i.e. tools, costumes, weaponry, environment, etc.). "Everything I do now is kind of training for that. I want to be doing film illustration such as in the Final Fantasy and Planet of the Apes films."

Ever bashful about his accomplishments, his parents Keith Wilson and Vena Campbell, glowingly step in to recite them. "His work is excellent. He definitely has the talent and it's just a matter of keeping working at it," Mr. Wilson says. While most parents would coax their kids to attend law school or medicine, his folks happily erected him at Arts Umbrella when he was 6. Since then they've driven him from city to city to catch a travelling art exhibit or participate in a show and gain exposure.

Last fall, Campbell-Wilson received the top prize for visual arts at the Black Achievement Awards. He dazzled critics and took home the MADD prize (Music, Arts, Drama and Dance) at the Delta Festival.

The prize money from his winning entry Dreaming of Heaven at the Marshall Clark gallery, was donated to OWL, a local wildlife group. He was awarded the Buschlen Mowatt gifted teen scholarship prize in 2002 and hopes to seek it this year as well. And at press time, Campbell-Wilson was

working on a piece for the next Marshall Clark exhibit entitled, *Unleashed*.

"He is very focused and very determined," Mrs. Wilson says glowingly. "He's set himself up some pretty high goals. I think his work is very passionate. He puts his soul into whatever he does. I'm pretty proud."

As part of Black History Month festivities, Campbell-Wilson is showcasing his artwork at the Khanna Kitchens at 1363 Railway Alley on Granville Island. The exhibit will run for the entire month of February.

Shop hours are Mondays to Saturdays from 8.30 a.m. to 5 pm and on Sundays from 9 to 5 pm.

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THE ALLIANCE OF JAMAICAN ALUMNI ASSOCIATIONS (TORONTO) wishes to thank all our supporters who participated in the 2003 MEGASWEEPSTAKE Dance/Draw event that was held at the Alliance Canadian Centre on February 8, 2003.
Lenny Klossner is judge

Megasweepstake Dance 2003 and Draw Event

The 2003 MEGASWEEPSTAKE WINNERS are as follows:

1st. Prize	2003 Toyota Corolla	No. 08581
2nd. Prize	Caribbean Cruise for two	No. 01412
3rd. Prize	Trip for two to Cuba	No. 08968
4th. Prize	Digital Camera CX4200	No. 19335
5th. Prize	Extraction juicer	No. 08573
6th. Prize	Television set	No. 20901
7th. Prize	Painting	No. 17501
8th. Prize	A day at Spa Eden	No. 10746
9th. Prize	A Painting	No. 04109
10th. Prize	DVD Player	No. 03386
11th. Prize	\$250.00 towards airline booked with Travel Kiosk	No. 00057
12th. Prize	\$200 cash prize	No. 05047
13th. Prize	1 Night Accom. at Sheraton Centre	No. 01073
14th. Prize	VCR	No. 11018
15th. Prize	Spa Treatment from Atelier	No. 21106
16th. Prize	Spa Treatment from Atelier	No. 05045
17th. Prize	Microwave Oven	No. 08615
18th. Prize	Basket from Grace Kennedy	No. 04002
19th. Prize	Basket from Grace Kennedy	No. 04550
20th. Prize	Pasta Bowl set	No. 07123
21th. Prize	Weekend at Sheraton Four Points	No. 06092

On Saturday April 12, 2003, the CAST-UTTECH Alumni Association (Ontario Chapter) will be holding its 1st Anniversary Awards Banquet @ Dance. Venue: Elite Banquet Hall (Alton Road) @ HWY 27. Keynote Speaker: Dr. Blossom O'Moily-Nelson, Post Master General of Jamaica Cocktails 4:00pm. Music by: DJ Funky. Contribution per ticket: \$50.00

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