

# Urban Pleasures

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**In brief...**

Harbourfront resident and violinist Jin Shan Dai (top right) takes the stage this month in the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Messiah on Dec. 14, 15, 17, and 19 at 8pm and Dec. 18 at 3pm. For information and tickets, visit [www.tso.ca](http://www.tso.ca).

Cabbagetown Boxing Club's Ibrahim Kamal (bottom right) made a good showing at the 2005 Amateur Mens World Boxing Championships in Mianyang, China. Kamal defeated Javakhyan Hrachik of Armenia 29-18 on day one of the competition but was eliminated before reaching the semi-finals.

Nelson Mandela Public School announced a donation of \$5000 from the Lions Club of Toronto (Central) on Nov. 25. The donation will go to support the school's planned trip to South Africa.

The school is also planning a second annual Math-a-thon in early March. Last year's event raised over \$6,000. The intention this year is to make the Math-a-thon more challenging for the students. For information, contact Joe Liebovitch, community outreach and special education teacher, at (416) 393.1620



## Clown act connects for storyteller

By Mike Brassard

Comedy and clown, it's about telling a story. We're storytellers," says Sandra Battaglini, a Distillery District resident, comic, and Pachinko-trained clown.

"It's a conversation with the audience, whether it's comedy or clown--always!" she continues. Whether it's a Michael Jackson send-off, or acting for a year and a half in Second City's "Tony 'n Tina's Wedding," Battaglini is telling a story, shocking people's sensibilities, opening them up, and making the audience laugh about her, themselves and life.

Telling a story that connects with the audience drives Battaglini's art--an art that spans word and wordless or physical comedy.

An academically trained storyteller

Battaglini is, with a Masters of Arts in History no less. Battaglini was deeply influenced by one of her professors,

Dr. Wallis, "He's an amazing storyteller. He brought you to that place in a conversational way. He connected with his students. What a performer he was."

Toronto's all about money, and Humber College's Mark eting Certificate to get a job and make money brought Battaglini from her home in Sudbury, Ontario's Great White North. While working at a Bay Street firm, the head consultant suggested she take a class at Second City. Bay Street often uses comedy courses to give their people experience in relating to and performing before an

audience when delivering a pitch or making a presentation. Little did Bay Street know what it unleashed.



Battaglini took Second City's first course, then took the second course in scene, sketch and improv, auditioned for Second City's "Tony 'n Tina's Wedding," scored the role as the monster mother of the bride, and said bye to Bay Street. Her stage stopping antics had them howling through the run.

Downtowners may bump into Battaglini shopping at the corner store, grabbing a coffee at Balzac's, making them laugh at Betty's on King Street almost any Wednesday night in the Corktown Comedy revue.



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