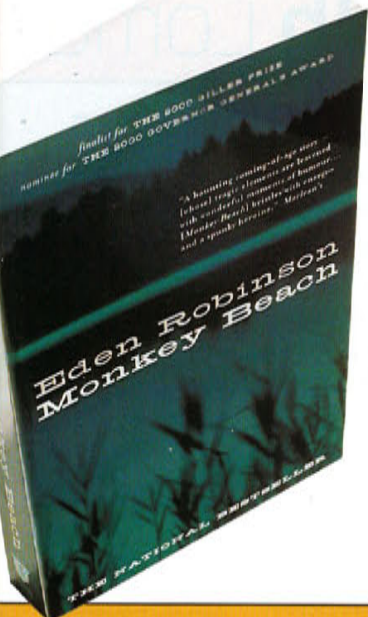


High Theatrics

Shakespeare's art director can't hold a candle to mastermind Richard Monette who's behind the 49th season of the Stratford Festival of Canada. It's the biggest Festival in 10 years, with 14 plays on the bill—among them the premieres of four new Canadian plays, including *The Trials of Ezra Pound* by Timothy Findley, as well as Shakespeares' *Henry IV Parts One* and *Two* and *Henry V*. This year, Stratford also celebrates the life and work of Canadian author, playwright and theatre patron Robertson Davies. Located in the Ontario town of the same name, two hours west of Toronto, Stratford is an annual custom for those who enjoy the intensity and intimacy of live theatre. The 2001 season—sponsored by Buick—runs from April 25 to November 4. Contact the Festival at 1-800-567-1600 or stratford-festival.on.ca



PAPER

Between the Lines

In her Giller-nominated first novel *Monkey Beach*, Eden Robinson writes of West Coast First Nations culture with humanity and sincerity. This story of family history and loss is a remarkable journey. Knopf/Vintage Canada, \$17.95.

Generica is pure pleasure for pop-psychology cynics. In his first novel, Will Ferguson explores the question, What would happen if self-help books really worked and changed their readers' lives?

Penguin Books Canada Limited, \$24.

JAZZ >>

Swing Time

The terraces are packed and the lattés are flowing. Montréal is preparing once again for the summer jazz invasion. The 22nd Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, presented by General Motors, will take place June 28 to July 8 with a host of big-name acts. Last year's festival featured performances by such luminaries as Charlie Haden, Max Roach and Holly Cole. montrealjazzfest.com

TIMBALADA (RIGHT) ENTERTAINED 225,000 PEOPLE AT THE GRANDE ÉVÉNEMENT GENERAL MOTORS.



PHOTO: DENIS ALIX

Rocket Man

Brian Feeney wants to fly in space so badly, he's built himself a rocket.

Feeney's machine is one of 20 entries in a race to launch a reusable craft into space. The winner's reward: instant fame, a huge adrenaline rush... and \$10-million (U.S.). The X Prize Foundation—a group of aerospace enthusiasts from St. Louis—hopes its competition will launch the era of commercial space travel.

Feeney's vessel will be strapped to a 300-metre cable and dragged to its "blast-off" altitude of 12,000 metres by one of the biggest hot-air balloons ever built—more than 300,000 cubic metres. All told, the project will cost a mere \$5-million, peanuts compared to NASA's \$2-billion Space Shuttle.

The da Vinci team has been testing the craft's propulsion system since 1999, and the first flight could be just around the corner. "It's gonna be a hoot," says Feeney. davinciproject.com

TRAVEL

America Online

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* fuelled the dream of hitting the open road to experience America. But where to start? Try the online version of the popular *Road Trip USA* travelogue. This highway and interstate guide will help road trippers navigate famous cross-country routes, with lively anecdotes and road-tested advice. Whether you're looking for the birthplace of the corn dog along The Mother Road (Route 66) or pivotal spots in the civil-rights movement from Selma to Montgomery along Alabama's Route 80, this site is the ultimate guide to drive-by Americana. moon.com/road_trip