

# Arts.

## The girls with the dragon tattoos

It's the U.S. vs. Sweden: who will come out on top?

By Allie Davison, Staff Writer

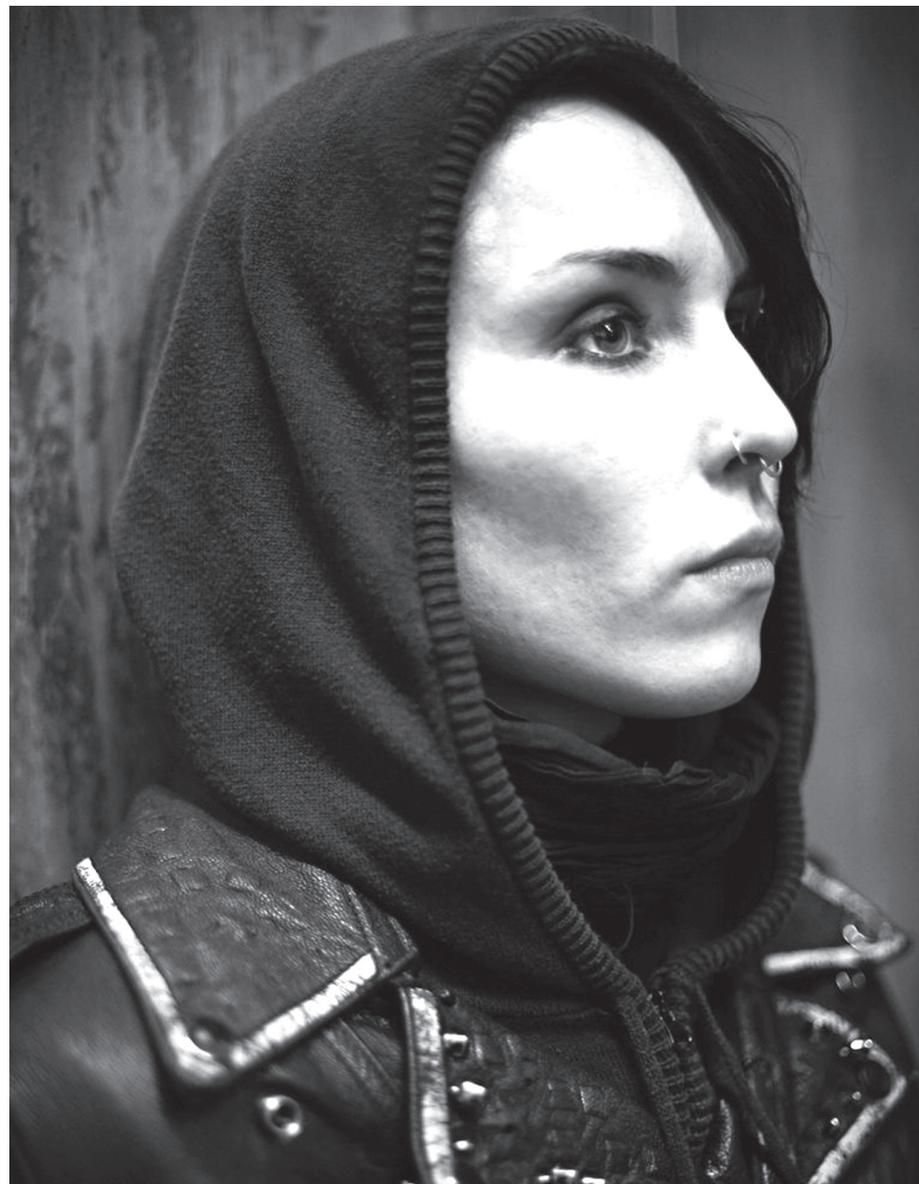
Before I begin, I stand by the fact that the books are always better. No matter how riveting a movie is, I have never found a book-turned-movie where the book has not been better. That being said, both versions (the original Swedish and the American remake) of the bestselling novel, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, were—in my opinion—successful adaptations. The characters (for the most part) were portrayed as they should've been (as they were in the books) and, most importantly, they both managed to stick to the original story relatively well.

Now obviously there were a few differences between the two films that gave them each strengths and weaknesses. One of my favourite elements of the original Swedish version was the realistic chemistry between Mikael Blomkvist, played by Michael Nyqvist, and Lisbeth Salander, played by Noomi Rapace. They mastered not only the working aspect of their characters' friendships, but also their complicated romantic relationship that develops throughout the movie.

That, however, took quite a drastic turn in the American version. Although Rooney Mara did an excellent job portraying the difficult character of Lisbeth, I felt that Daniel Craig fell short as Mikael. Mara's character came alive on the screen, as she gave a very strong performance through the more difficult scenes, but I found that Craig's character came off flat and unemotional at times. Perhaps a little less of James Bond's stone-cold personality would have made his take more of a success.

On the other hand, Stellan Skarsgård—who played the villain, Martin Vanger, in the American version of the film—appeared just plain evil as the movie came to its climax. Although Peter Haber (the Swedish Martin Vanger) did an excellent job, Skarsgård managed to send chills down my spine while giving his big confession.

Overall, they were both great movies. I recommend seeing each of them, and the Swedish sequels. But above all, always read the books. Movies always change some aspects, and leave other things out—in this writer's opinion, books are just better.



## Latin up!

Arts at One presents Latin Jazz group Susana Abreu & Terra



By Angela Espinoza, Arts Editor

On Thursday Jan. 5, there's a chance you may have heard the sounds of some intense drumbeats and club-like crooning on the fourth floor of Douglas' New West campus. That's because Susana Abreu & Terra, a Vancouver-based Latin Jazz band, were performing what happened to be the first Arts at One concert of the winter semester.

The group is lead by Susana Abreu, a Venezuelan musician who immigrated to Canada in 1998. Abreu is now recognized

were playing, such as "Como Fue" by Ernesto Duarte being a nostalgic song from her childhood; "One of those tunes that—doesn't matter how many times I sing it, I enjoy it just as much."

Each of the songs were, again, part of the Latin Jazz genre, the majority of which we fast-paced. The opening song, "Casa Forte" by Edu Lobo, began as a slow climb from some experimental mixing of gentle guitar, drums, and shakers, which eventually met with Abreu's passionate vocals before exploding into a battle of the drums between Duncan and Abreu—even as she continued

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for her contributions to the Latin music scene in Vancouver, having formed various music ensembles during her time here. Of these groups, Terra has proven to be one of her most successful projects, often playing sold-out shows at the Jazz Cellar and Silk Purse Gallery in Vancouver. The group also consists of Abreu's long-time collaborator of 16 years, pianist and guitarist Andre Carrasquero, Vancouver-based Latin percussionist Jack Duncan, and young guitarist Peter Serravalle. Terra's bassist, Cameron Hood, is also known as a prominent, private music teacher in B.C.

*Latin Jazz* was the straight to the point title of Thursday's eclectic concert. The show was a pleasant change of pace from what tends to be the usual Arts at One performance. As Susana Abreu & Terra are used to playing the clubs, they approached the somewhat formal setting of the Laura C. Muir theatre as they would any other show—something the entire crowd appreciated. Abreu would often get the audience going with a couple of jokes, and occasionally tell stories about the songs they

her duty as vocalist. Another was the sultry, scat-like "Yatra-Ta" by Tania Maria. One of these songs, "Bebe" by Ermeto Pascual, placed Carrasquero and Duncan centre stage as the two blended Duncan's speedy and spot-on drumming with Carrasquero's vibrant piano playing. Occasionally the slower song made its way into the show, such as "Garota de Ipanema," by T. Jobim & V. De Moraes, and "Como Fue," both of which were sung softly by a very intense Abreu, contrasting with her otherwise cheery and swaying style. The show closed off with the popular Spanish song "Bésame Mucho," which has been covered by just about everybody, from The Beatles to Andrea Bocelli.

Overall an excellent and fun show provided by Douglas College, making for quite an interesting afternoon. If you'd like to see Susana Abreu & Terra for yourself, once again, they perform regularly at the Jazz Cellar. Their next show will be Sunday Jan. 29, and be sure to check out this Thursday's Arts at One concert, which will feature a group lead by violinist Angela Cavadas.