Vancouver’s story: A lack of unity

By Azadeh Thiriez-Ariangi

More than a habit, it’s a religion. Before setting foot in a new place, I study the museums, the great monuments, the beautiful architecture. It’s a purely intellectual exercise. I believe that the works conceived by another belong to another time. Or maybe that the very time I spend contemplating the work of that other becomes an essential element of it as I find myself entering into the timeline of my own existence. I find the traces of suffering, joy – even indifference – visible in these works to be both fascinating and frightening.

Fascinating because they focus on the cultural suggestions of a place, more precisely, on what was written before our time of personal existence by men and women of another time. Frightening because they remind me of the transience of my own existence.

Nevertheless, does it not amount to a quest, to an existential query of this wandering being, in the occurrence myself, present in a new space and restricted by the passage of time? What have these others done who have preceded us with their time on these lands and in this very country?

And Vancouver in all that is certainly not an exception. I pass through it, trying to discover something that makes us contemporary to the men and women who were here before us. What they left behind should allow that. Alas, the history of this country is brief. We have a lack of history. Vancouver refers us back to our native lands and opens up its arms to welcome all these arts and cultures that we have previously seen with our eyes and felt with our souls.

In an almost strange manner, this city readily admits...
Explorer Wade Davis starts UBC stint with talk on world cultures

by TIA LOW

Former National Geographic explorer-in-residence Wade Davis has travelled extensively, immersing himself in remote cultures and learning about their worldviews. This fall, he’s back in his birthplace, Vancouver, as a professor of anthropology at UBC. On Sept. 14, he will present a talk at the Museum of Anthropology called The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World, also the name of his 2009 book.

As an ethno-botanist, anthropologist, author, photographer and filmmaker, Davis’ time among cultures and learning their languages has kept alive today by a small percentage of people working to document them. Davis’ time among the Penan people of Borneo – just to name a few – has spawned 17 books and numerous articles, documentaries and lectures. But above all, he says, “I don’t mean storytelling in a disparaging or self-deprecating way,” says Davis, who earned his PhD from Harvard. “I really do think that the most important thing to do is to disseminate to the public the insights that scholars achieve.”

World knowledge disappearing with language loss

One of Davis’ key insights is that many cultures are dying out fast. Most telling of this, says Davis, is that half the world’s 7,000 languages, many of which are only kept alive today by a small population, will disappear within our lifetimes. According to Davis, “I don’t mean storytelling in a disparaging or self-deprecating way,” says Davis, who earned his PhD from Harvard. “I really do think that the most important thing to do is to disseminate to the public the insights that scholars achieve.”

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The Golden Rule as a universal ethical principle

One such moral concept, commonly known as the Golden Rule, which says one ought to treat others as one would wish to be treated, appears in many historical accounts of ethics from a wide range of countries, cultures and schools of thought from Buddhist and Confucian philosophy to Christian and Islamic theology and has been considered a quintessentially universal ethical principle.

Randall MacKinnon, who will facilitate and moderate the discussion on “Universality” on Sept. 16 at Dogwood Pavilion in Coquitlam, is captivated by the topic and thinks the answers to those questions are not so obvious.

“We might say something like ‘Do unto others as you would have others do unto you’ or some other version like that, but the question of whether or not there are universal ethical standards is very much open for debate,” says MacKinnon.

“I think the Golden Rule is overly simplistic because you might like or appreciate things which are different from what I like or appreciate,” he says.

Academic discussions in a relaxed setting

MacKinnon has been moderating cafe sessions for over 10 years and has met a variety of curious and inquisitive people from diverse cultures, ethnicities and age groups. While he likes to choose and moderate topics which will arouse interest and have a degree of controversy and emotion, the sessions are friendly and respectful, where friendships are formed and understanding of different life views are revealed.

“No punches are thrown, nobody is pushing anybody else, though people can get worked up because of widely divergent opinions or challenges to their beliefs. But many participants come out of these sessions with new perspectives, see a controversial issue more clearly and awaken an interest in philosophical issues in them,” MacKinnon says.

In addition, the sessions go beyond mere lecturing and text reading as they are designed for participant interaction and to put real faces to moral and philosophical positions.

“We’ve had some very interesting guests who are able to take the opinions and positions expressed and say, ‘My experience has been so-and-so’ which gives others a little more to chew on than just hearing something in the media or reading about it in a textbook,” says MacKinnon.

Perhaps the most important thing future Philosophers’ Café participants can bring to the discussion is to keep an open mind and explore outside one’s own perspective, to imagine what life is like to other people and how perspectives that may not work for one person can work for another.

As for what MacKinnon himself thinks could qualify as a universal ethical principle that can be understood and accepted by all cultures, familial love is high on his list.

“I see a lot of parents with kids and I see virtually all of them delighted with their kids, taking care of them. And I have to believe that’s innate; that generally, there is love within the family.”

Agree or disagree? Feel free to attend, participate and let your viewpoints be known at venues around the Lower Mainland. Full schedules are available at www.sfu.ca/philosopherscafe
Why has Vancouver’s ‘progressive’ Mayor been so quiet about the BC teachers’ strike?  

Instead of going to back-to-school this month, BC students and parents are getting a lesson in class struggle. They are the collateral damage of Premier Christy Clark’s BC Liberal government and their ideological vendetta against BC teachers and their union.

This past week, the BCFTF showed itself remarkably will- ing to compromise, while the BC government and their negotiators remain intractable, thus far refusing the union’s offer to put the marathon dispute to binding arbitra- tion. As I’ve written about before in this space, the current fight stems back all the way to 2002, when then Education Minister Clark imposed legislation on teachers that stripped them of their right to bar- gain class sizes. BC Supreme Court rulings have excoriated the Liberal- s and vindicated the BCFTF, and yet the government has chosen to appeal these cases and play hard- ball with the union. Despite a vast PR campaign which has included straight up misinfor- mation from Premier Clark herself – she falsely claimed last week that teachers were de- manding “unlimited massage” benefits – BC teachers have re- tained widespread public support. You can see evidence of this on social media, on picket lines and at rallies across the province this week. Last Friday in Vancouver, for example, thousands came out to support teachers at a spirited rally in front of Canada Place, organized by the BC Federation of Labour.

This is the sharpest political po- litarvation we’ve seen in the year and half since Clark’s shocking 2013 election win. Given her con- conflict in this battle with teachers— especially aloof and mean-spir- ited, the Premier broke a long sum- mer silence on the eve of Labour Day by effectively trolling teachers and half since Clark’s shocking 2013 election win, Mayor Robertson singled out some workers but made no mention of teachers; give thanks to our VPD, Fire, Libraries, inside/outside civic union workers who serve only us.

Robertson’s avoidance of the light between the BCFTF and the BC government is actually not out of character. Despite being a former BC NDP MLA, Robertson has for the most part carefully stayed out of the provincial fray. One of the more flagrant excep- tions was a comment just before the 2009 provincial election that seemed to imply support for Gor- don Campbell, when he joked that the then BC Liberal Premier was “going for a three peat,” and on his three terms as Mayor of Vancouver where Robertson said Campbell left a “legacy of good de- cisions” we have enjoyed and con- tinue to build on.

That rhetorical flourish aside, the reason Mayor Robertson has been so muted in criticizing the BC Liberals is likely structural. His party, Vision Vancouver, is heavy with NDP organizers and former candidates, but it also has a num- ber of Liberal staff members, if most importantly, financial back- ers.

The Lynchpin here could be Bob Robertson, the notorious former BC dis- tinguished Vancouver condo salesman. He’s both a big backer of Vision Vancouver and a key fundraiser and political supporter for Christy Clark and the BC Liberals.

There’s a new factor in the up- coming Vancouver election that may force more polarization between Vancouver’s municipal politicians and the provincial govern- ment. COPE — decimated after a dozen years of splits and infighting — is facing the departure of the group that formed Vision Vancouver — is run- ning a mayoral candidate for the first time since 2002, Meena Weng, a former NDP candidate, won the party’s nomination on Sunday, September 7.

Maybe having a clearly left op- ponent in the race may force Rob- ertson off the fence vis-a-vis the teachers situation and other cru- cial issues. Who wants to vote for a “centre left” mayor who can’t even speak up for public educa- tion against a mean-spirited right- wing premier?

With COPE back in the game, and the NPA seemingly planning a less sharply right-wing campaign, the city is poised for an election that could, if Robertson is unworthy of his own “three peat” this November…

Here’s what’s happening at Surrey’s heritage facilities in September

SURREY MUSEUM 17371 – 58A Avenue, Surrey 604-594-6656 www.surrey.ca heritate Twitter: @ASurreyMuseum MUSEUM INFO Museum – Unique artifacts, images and interactive displays in a stunning and modern space that highlights Surrey’s history. Attractive space for programs, changing feature exhibits, Hosier Textile Centre. Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.; Saturday: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Admission sponsored by Friends of the Museum.

EXHIBITION Every River Tells A Story People from past and present reflect on how Surrey’s rivers have shaped our identity. Personal stories explore the winding paths of Surrey’s rivers; not just through our physical landscape, but also our social and economic landscapes. On display September 23 to December 20.

Heritage School Programs for HomeSchoolers Our curriculum-based programs are specially tailored for homeschool families Gr. 5–7, and include hands-on activities and ideas for extending learning back in the homeschool setting. Info at www.surrey.ca heritate or call 604-594-6656.

Make Believe Birthday Parties Surrey Museum – all ages, fun for a “three peat” this November. For more information call 604-594-6656.

EXHIBITION Ancient Egypt, Classic Greek Mythology, or Medieval Europe. Must pre-book at 604-594-6656. Saturday, September 13, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 5–12, $10.75 per child (birthday child is free). Textile Tours Discover the Museum’s unique Textile Studio and Hosier Textile Library with knowledgeable textile volunteers. See demonstrations of spinning and weaving, learn more about the Museum’s rare Jacquard loom, and explore the Hosier Collection of textile samples, equipment and books. Must pre-book. Details at 604-594-6656.

Kids Can Quilt Kids Learn the steps to make a “four patch” or “nine patch” quilted pillow or small tote bag. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Saturday, September 20, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 5–12, $10.75 per child (birthday child is free).

Children’s Birthday Parties Try your hand at spinning, weaving and knitting with fibres like alpaca and merino. Handle real-fibre arts tools and equipment from the past as you learn the story of fabric creation. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Thursday, September 25, 4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m. Ages 6–12. $10.75 per child (6–12 yrs).

Discovery Saturday BC’s True Stories – Interact with costumed re-enactors, including Surrey’s own re-enactors troupe, as they bring to life stories of early settlement in British Columbia. Make a pioneer craft and end as a scavenger hunt in the Museum’s exhibit gallery. Saturday, September 20, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. All ages, by donation.

Pre-Teen Fibre Arts Try your hand at soccer, weaving, knitting and knitting with fibres like alpaca and merino. Handle real-fibre arts tools and equipment from the past as you learn the story of fabric creation. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Friday, September 26, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 10–12, $10.75 per child.

School Bus: Dino Flyers Tots learn about extinct birds with sharp teeth! Explore the evolution of flight and dino-birds through feathered crafts and fun games. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Saturday, September 27, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 8–12, $10.75 per child.

HISTORIC STEWART FARM 13723 Crescent Road, Surrey 604-594-6656 www.surrey.ca/heritage Twitter: @StewartFarm HISTORIC STEWART FARM INFO Tour the charming restored 1894 farmhouse, pole barn and heritage gardens, try old-fashioned crafts, take part in a program or special event, and imagine pioneer life at the turn of the 20th century. Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Sunday: 12 noon–4:00 p.m.; May–August). Entrance by donation.

DIY Dig This! Dig down to the roots of gardening as we explore early practices that are influencing and informing the gardens of today. In September, all programs: inmates and community programs, $5.50 per child (birthday child is free). Ancient Egypt, Classic Greek Mythology, or Medieval Europe. Must pre-book at 604-594-6656. Saturdays: 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.; Sundays: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. $13.50 per child. All program times subject to available enrolment. 

Good Times & Bad Tots learn about local animals and fish that live in BC’s rivers and oceans as they make a mermaid’s palace and garden to take home. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Friday, September 26, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 3–5. $10.75 (3–5 yrs).

School Bus: Dino Flyers Tots learn about extinct birds with sharp teeth! Explore the evolution of flight and dino-birds through feathered crafts and fun games. Must pre-register at 604-594-6656. Saturday, September 27, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 8–12, $10.75 per child.

Heritage School Programs for Preschoolers Bring your preschool class or daycare for a farm field trip with one of our most popular curriculum-based school programs especially tailored for little learners aged 3–5 years. Included are activities to extend learning back in the preschool setting. Info at www.surrey.ca heritate or call 604-594-6656.

Scandinavian Afternoon Tea Enjoy an old-fashioned Scandinavian tea with baked treats then explore the charming stalls of farmhouses and grounds with a costumed guide. Must pre-book at 604-594-6656. Fridays, September–November, 1:00 p.m.–2:30 p.m. 1 session $25.00 (5 yrs +).

Birthday Parties Party like a pioneer! Celebrate your child’s special day the way kids might have done 500 years ago. A costumed guide will lead you into the world of traditional games and a craft to take home. You supply the cake, and let the kids make the ice-cream! Choose from several themes. Must pre-book at 604-594-6656. Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. $35.00 child (birthday child is free).

Old Harvest Fair Celebrate and learn about harvest season at the Farm! Enjoy live entertainment, shop from local food and artisan vendors, and participate in harvest-themed games and competitions. Saturday, September 20, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. All ages, by donation.

Herbal Wonders Discover the use of herbal remedies from the outrageous to the scientific. Learn how people through the ages have used plants to heal and create and how to start your own indoor herb garden. Must pre-book at 604-594-6656. Saturday, September 27, 10:00 a.m.–12 noon. Ages 5–12. $8.00 (5 yrs +).

SURREY MUSEUM 13765 – 56A Avenue, Surrey 604-594-6653 www.surrey.ca/heritage Roy Hoaghton’s Surrey 1950s and ’60s comes alive as we look at the striking black and white photographs of North Surrey photographer Roy Hoaghton. Must pre-register at 604-594-6653. September 13, 12:00 noon–12 noon. Ages 8–12, $10.75 per child (free for Roy).
The Source

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Receiving individual course credits or a certificate from Yale, Cambridge or Harvard for free and without even leaving home is now possible. The growing trend of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) makes a wide range of lessons free and available to almost everyone with internet access. Whether you are in Paris, Kuala Lumpur or Richmond, you have the same opportunity to learn with the best universities in the world and get a certificate when you succeed.

Popular with the general public since 2012, MOOCs represent an evolution of correspondence-style courses. So will the future of education and training be through these new free interactive educational platforms?

Gregor Kiczales is a professor in the Computer Science Department at UBC who taught a MOOC called Computer Science Problem Design. Through his involvement in the MOOCs at UBC, Kiczales has noticed an explosion of interest in this concept over the last year. For example, 3,000 people from every Canadian province and almost every country in the world registered for the first free online course UBC offered two years ago. Universities are taking on the challenge of combining technology and learning as they to reinvent themselves in the digital revolution.

Kiczales explains this choice: "UBC finds in online open courses a way to be more open and attract more students." According to the Babson Survey Research Group, the number of higher education institutions offering MOOC initiatives doubled in the past year. Kiczales adds that these programs offer universities a way to share resources between various departments and schools.

"We are in a period of improvement where the MOOC has a role similar to a textbook for classroom students and teachers," says Kiczales.

An imaginary battle between online learning and campus education

However, not everyone views MOOCs as positive and some schools are sounding the alarm, highlighting the loss of revenue brought by this new form of education. Kiczales disagrees.

"Many people who are enrolling in these online courses have already graduated. They just need or want to learn more about a specific topic, related to their background, or even just extend their general knowledge," says Dr. Donna Cheng, 26, enrolled for similar reasons. She is a journalism student at Langara College. Cheng enrolled in a MOOC at Columbia University in New York from her home in New Westminster and completed a five-week course.

"I like having an academic education but I also wanted to expand my digital skills and learn in a bigger group of people. It is great but intense and hard because of the amount of people and also because you still feel lonely," says Cheng. Because students are working independently, they must remain committed to complete their course. Cheng enrolled in a second one and she gave up before the end.

"Next time I will be pickier and ask myself if I really want to learn about this topic before enrolling," says Cheng. MOOC programs not only attract young undergraduates, but also working professionals, graduate and continuing education students. "Some of them have more than 20 years of working experience," according to Kiczales.

"It only takes a minute to get enrolled"

For Kiczales, this battle between campus learning and MOOCs is more a matter of perspective. "If you casually watch a seven-minute video, you will still have learned something. And isn't that what matters?" says Kiczales.

For Kiczales, this is why, according to a study by the University of Pennsylvania, only four per cent of students succeeding at a MOOC is meaningless. "Just remember that it takes the time of a click on a mouse to get enrolled and it doesn't cost anything," says Kiczales.

Kiczales says there is no reason to panic because the MOOC will never replace a real university campus, but it is an interesting and growing way of educating more people.
Unmasked, an event being held at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden on Sept. 27, will give audiences a look behind the curtains at the make-up process of Peking Opera. The demonstration will be followed by performances of Murder of a Concubine, and Post Secret, starring William Lau, Mr. Wang, Catherine Li and Heidi Specht.

In addition, Dressed in Drama, a once every 10 year exhibit that showcases vintage Peking opera costumes, jewelry and headpiece collections collected by Lau, a Chinese-Canadian family, will be held prior to Unmasked.

Getting into character
Lau says that during Unmasked, make-up demonstrations as well as the hair styling process will be done in front of the audience. "All this is part of the transformation process of the actor and actress to the character on stage," he says.

In describing the style and color of Peking Opera make-up, Lau, gives examples of various effects in the make-up creates for certain roles.

"These are all invented or created by various artists through the generations, like the use of facial patterns. The colors symbolize things, for example black is honesty, and white can mean trickiness," he says.

Chinese opera was performed in outdoor or dim venues. The dramatic make-up was an effort to be esthetically appealing on stage to audiences from afar.

The make-up transformation however doesn’t simply rely on its dramatic effect. Lau notes that depending on the role, the actors consider the character’s facial expressions and highlight certain parts of their facial muscles accordingly.

"This will help depict nuances of the characters on stage," he says.

Sharing the art
Born in Hong Kong and raised in Canada, Lau, who has been sharing the tradition of Peking opera with Canadian audiences for 20 years, says that growing up in Canada has helped him to connect with Canadian performers and audiences.

"I grew up here so I kind of like a mask, as it completely transforms one’s face but allow one to express their ideas and act on stage. Because it takes some time to apply the make-up, it allows for meditative time before performance to transform into the character." she says.

Lau agrees that doing the make-up and looking at the mirror is a form of transformation, not just for the audience but for the performers themselves.

"If you’re not so convinced you are the character that you’re portraying, how are you going to convince your audience?" she says.

Lau sees Unmasked as an opportunity to showcase the different layers of work involved in the make-up process of Peking Opera.

"When we go on stage everything is done, everything looks beautiful and nice but actually behind the scene there’s a lot of processes that require a lot of training, precision and esthetic," she says.

Margo Kane, artistic manager of Full Circle, says that although the job market remains competitive for emerging actors and writers, "I grew up here so I kind of understand what the Canadian audience wants so I try to not only bring in the tourist but I started to push other's utes and actually collaborate with western performers like Heidi [Specht]," he says.

Lau explains that he and Specht will develop a bilingual Peking opera during the performance where Lau will speak and sing in Mandarin and Specht will sing and dialogue with Lau in English.

Exploring behind the scenes
Specht says that the Peking opera make-up functions almost like a mask, as it completely transforms one’s face but allow one to express their ideas and act on stage. Because it takes some time to apply the make-up, it allows for meditative time before performance to transform into the character.

"I would like to see it continue to thrive. I hope this performance will contribute to developing and piquing people's interest," she says.

Unmasked: A Peking Opera Experience
Sept. 27. Pre-show: 7-8 p.m., Performances 8-9:30 p.m.
www.vancouverchinesegarden.com/events or call 604-662-3307

A continuous journey
For Full Circle, a First Nations arts and performance group, engaging communities and gathering people together is an important part of their mission. Embracing the concepts of inclusiveness, wholeness and full gathering, the organization aims to train actors in understanding cultural sensitivity surrounding Aboriginal issues, create a range of opportunities for Aboriginal actors and engage and educate the public on these issues.

"In a world that at once fetishizes Aboriginal people and traditions, and/or keeps them relegated to a people of the past, Full Circle challenges us to see our collective history now, not just for Aboriginal and First Nations, but our shared history as people on Earth," says Justin Neal, Full Circle's marketing manager.

Highlights from Full Circle this year include the annual Talking Stick Festival, which features artistic work by First Nations groups within Canada and abroad, as well as workshops and discussions about inclusion and diversity. The Raven Meets the Monkey King tells the story of Chinese and Aboriginal traditions coming together and discussing acceptance, cultural understanding and shared values.

A diverse theatre from page 1
Asian theatre, while VACT's and Post Secret play readings by Asian-Canadian playwrights - a good opportunity for a creative network of emerging actors and writers, says Yu.

A graduate of the acting program at Studio 58, Yu grew up with little moral support from her parents, who migrated to Canada from Hong Kong.

Yu says a person's cultural upbringing deeply affects their character, especially those from non-white backgrounds.

"My parents came from an environment of survival - you have to go get it, you have to do it. So what’s that we inherit," says Yu.

Past and present - on the stage
Donna Spencer, artistic producer of the Firehall Arts Center, supports artists like Yu.

"I find it exciting that there are certainly more [minority theatre] coming out there than before VACT for example," says Spencer, who adds that it can be risky for some people to pursue the arts - especially those from non-white Anglo-Saxon backgrounds.

Spencer has been involved in the arts for over 40 years in Vancouver and is one of the founders of the Firehall Arts Centre. She credits herself as lucky to have done career doing what she loves.

"When I first started, it was very unfriendly whether one can make it for sure," says Spencer.

She says that although the job market remains competitive for emerging actors and writers, "I grew up here so I kind of understand what the Canadian audience wants so I try to not only bring in the tourist but I started to push other's utes and actually collaborate with western performers like Heidi [Specht]," he says.

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Margo Kane, artistic managing director of Full Circle, says she wants to surprise and intrigue the audience in a way that they never realized live performance could, through respecting the individual voice and honouring the Aboriginal practice of gathering and sharing collectively. She also wants Aboriginal people, along with other people, to feel included and empowered by their engagement in Full Circle's work.

"I want them to know that they are not just idle witnesses, that their voices are welcome, important and should be heard," says Kane. }
Karen Santos’ newest mixed media abstract art exhibit, Silence Lifted, emerged from a harrowing experience. As an opera singer, with starring roles such as Pamina in The Magic Flute and Laetitia in The Old Maid and the Thief among her accomplishments, Santos explains that a vocal injury provoked this exhibit. “As language was stripped from me, and what I loved most, music, was robbed from me, I was forced to express myself in a different way,” says Santos. Silence Lifted, Santos says, began with a vow of silence, where she chose to convey her varied emotions, primarily through oil, acrylic, ink and watercolour, in her paintings. “I feel that the exhibit accurately records each stage of the journey, from the difficult moments to the great ones. Throughout this process, I explored how I express and perceive my emotions,” Santos says. “I hope this in turn provokes the viewer to analyze...”

“Obviously, everyone has a different dark moment. For me, it was vocal troubles, but for someone who might be going through something different, they might see with my paintings that they are not alone and they can talk about it.”

Silence Lifted is on display until Nov. 8 at Place Des Arts. For more information, please visit: www.placedesarts.ca/gallery/current-exhibitions.aspx

www.karen-santos.com

Through silence, art speaks: Karen Santos’ mixed media exhibit

by CARMINE LANE

Karen Santos proves beauty in music can flow through a paint brush.

Karen Santos in the midst of creation.

‘Zero to the Left’, which articulated how she was feeling at the time. “‘Zero to the left’ means that you are insignificant, or that you do not alter the value of that number,” says Santos.

Santos adds that her paintings often convey the feelings evoked from listening to a piece of music, from the act of singing itself, or give music a physical form. Painting Silence Lifted has reciprocally enhanced Santos’ singing career. Through painting the exhibit, Santos says that she has been able to further develop the authenticity necessary to fully reach an audience.

Opportunities for Expression

By being forthcoming about the typically taboo subject of suffering and art, Santos explains that she is receiving a positive response from other singers who have begun seeking Santos out for support.

Similarly, Santos hopes that her paintings will inspire her audience to express their difficult times, and reflect on the resultant lessons. “Obviously, everyone has a different dark moment. For me, it was vocal troubles, but for someone who might be going through something different, they might see with my paintings that they are not alone and they can talk about it.”

Silence Lifted is on display until Nov. 8 at Place Des Arts.

For more information, please visit: www.placesarts.ca/gallery/ www.karen-santos.com

IMMIGRANT EXPO coming back to VANCOUVER Career, Education & Settlement Fair for Immigrants

[Vancouver, September 3, 2014] — After four successful Sans in Toronto and the inaugural Fair in Vancouver last year, Canadian Immigrant magazine and Scotiabank, in association with JP-IELTS, are proud to present the second Career, Education and Settlement Fair for newcomers to Canada in Vancouver, B.C.

The free, day-long immigrant expo, which will take place on Monday, October 6, 2014, at the Vancouver Public Library (500 West Georgia St), from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., aims to help newcomers navigate a bewildering array of exhibitors including employers, settlement agencies and educational institutions; inspirational speakers; an IELTS master class; an erudite resume clinic; speed networking; and more.

Thousands of immigrants arrive in Metro Vancouver yearly with ambitions for their family’s future. However, many have little knowledge of the reality of Canadian living — from continuing education to obtaining employment and getting settled. Canadian Immigrant magazine has been a guiding star for such newcomers, through its national print and online publications for 10 years. The Career, Education & Settlement Fair, which has been a hit in Toronto for the last four years and launched in Vancouver last year to great success, expands its support of Canadian newcomers with comprehensive interactive sessions packed with useful information.

“After the tremendous success of last year’s event in Vancouver, we are excited to bring this event back, with diverse exhibitors, brand new speakers and more,” said Gustav Sandman, Publisher of Canadian Immigrant. “This is a chance for newcomers to connect one-on-one with dozens of employers, settlement agencies and colleges, along with other immigrants who are facing similar journeys as they settle into Canada.”

Various exhibitor booths will be located in the open, main promenade and lower-level rooms of the amazing venue. The keynote speaker at the fair will be Ezekiel Festo Chilling, who has chosen courage and determination in his immigration journey and fight for religious freedom (he was the first ICMP officer to wear a turban while serving his duties), but that’s not the only secret to his rising success, as he will share in his inspiring keynote.

Other sessions will include a presentation on financial literacy for newcomers by Scotiabank, a 90-minute IELTS Master Class, a workshop on the importance of mentorship for newcomers by MADOAC, an accent reduction workshop by Patrick Byrne of L2 Accent Reduction Centre and more. Information on the fair will be updated regularly at www.canadianimmigrant.ca/careerfair/vancouver.

Space is still available for exhibitors. Those interested can contact: Alla Dordovs, Canadian Immigrant magazine, telephone: 778.558.3397, email: alla@canadianimmigrant.ca.

For more information visit: www.canadianimmigrant.ca/careerfair/vancouver

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The Source
Vol 15 No 4 | September 9–23, 2014

The making of the artist: exhibit features Ai Weiwei's early photographs

by SONIA GRIGAR


The exhibit features 227 chronologically laid out black and white photographs that Ai Weiwei took during the decade he lived in New York, and range in subject matter from depictions of the artist’s friends and documentation of life in the city, to the portrayals of social change that swept New York in that era.

The artist personally selected all the photographs featured in this exhibit (which also shown in Beijing, New York, Berlin and San Francisco) out of thousands he created during that formative decade in New York, none of which were ever printed until recently. “The exhibit is more experimental, and a representation of a time. It’s a story of an individual who lived through the cultural revolution, had never been outside of China [at that time], and this collection of images are really [his impressions of New York],” says Keith Wallace, associate director/curator at the Belkin.

Creative genesis Though he did not set out to be a documentarian at that time, nor was he an active participant in the 1980s neo-expressionist New York art scene, Ai Weiwei’s photographs not only capture some of the distinctive tributes of that era, but also demonstrate the artist’s burgeoning interest in social justice.

“We think of Ai Weiwei now as this political activist, so what is interesting is to see this early formation of his activism. He was observing [life in New York], and [it made him] realize that in the West there is the opportunity to protest, which there isn’t in China,” says Wallace.

Photographs such as Bleeding Protestor. Tompkins Square Park Riots, 1988, depict police power and brutality, and Ai’s photographs of this riot were even used as evidence in the lawsuit that was filed against the police for undue use of force in that incident.

Challenging oppression Some of the photographs feature arrests made by undercover police, and therefore reveal Ai’s early interest in surveillance, which has gone on to feature as a prominent theme in his work. Ai’s work on this and other social critique topics is generally interpreted as targeting China’s political and social regime, yet he is currently only able to show his more politically overt work outside of China.

For example, Remembering, a work constructed out of 9,000 children’s backpacks which spell out the sentence “she lived happily for seven years in this world” – a quotation taken from a mother whose child was one of the many victims of the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan, China – was shown in Munich in 2005 yet it wouldn’t have been able to be featured in Ai’s homeland.

The artist himself has been arrested and beaten by Chinese police over his support to Chinese activists who were exposing the corruption that tolerated lax construction codes which allowed buildings to easily collapse during the earthquake.

Global appeal Yet the reason why Weiwei’s work has garnered such international acclaim is because it addresses oppression and inequality as something that isn’t just unique to China. “I believe [the reason Ai Weiwei’s] work has gained such acclaim is because the mirror he holds up is not only [directed at] China’s failings, but reflects injustices found in varying degrees in all societies,” says Barbara Zeigler, associate professor at the UBC Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory (AHVA).

The work Ai exhibits in China is often less directly political, and focuses more on deconstructing traditions in the face of changes brought on by globalization. “He is an artist who is able to confront the social, cultural and political environment of change in China,” says Xiong Gu, professor at AHVA.

Gu points out that Ai’s internet savvy and his popular blog and twitter account as strong contributors to his international acclaim. Gu also believes Ai’s work has grown in popularity within the Vancouver Chinese community, and he is certain that the Belkin exhibit will draw significant attendance from that demographic. Wallace also points out that Vancouver has an established history of street photography with artists such as Fred Herzog, so that Ai Weiwei’s personal and eclectic photographs of New York will therefore resonate easily with local audiences.

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THE LOVER’S ART Valentine’s Eve Concert Feb. 13, 2015, 8 p.m. Ryerson United Church

CHORAL MOSAIC The Joy of Song Mar. 13, 2015, 8 p.m. Ryerson United Church

FAURÉ REQUIEM The Good Friday Concert Apr. 3, 2015, 8 p.m. Orpheum Theatre

YOUTH & MUSIC 2015 New Choral Creators Apr. 24, 2015, 8 p.m. Ryerson United Church
Japanese artists bring light to underground art

by DONG YUE SU

The exuberant colour and delicate lines of Japanese art, blended with rough and explosive North American street art, will be the highlight of an upcoming show, Hiraki, at Ayden Gallery in downtown Vancouver from Sept. 12 to Oct. 12. The show will feature pop surrealism paintings by six Japanese-born artists, most of whom are extreme sports enthusiasts.

Taka Sudo, one of the artists and also the co-organizer of the show, has been living and working in the ski town of Whistler for more than 10 years. He is now in his mid-thirties and he participates in freestyle skiing competitions. Ryuki Oigo started his art career in San Francisco and based his art on his experience in the local snowboarding community. Yoshifumi Nomura is a living as a bike messenger in Vancouver and also the co-organizer of the show. He adds that the Japanese artists have been active outside of art galleries by doing live painting, and they are also involved in commercial design such as creating patterns on snowboards or skis. The Ayden Gallery brought in Japanese artists and pop surrealism years ago and has seen increasing interest in this kind of artwork in the market.

Hiraki attributes the increasing acceptance of underground art to the uniqueness of works by him and his fellow Japanese artists. “This show is not about typical or traditional Japanese art,” says Sudo. As a Japanese artist living in Whistler, his Japanese identity has already made him stand out. On top of that, he acquires an identity associated with extreme sports and underground culture. “I made things in my own way,” says Sudo.

Sudo explains the name of the show, Hiraki, literally translates as light, suggesting illumination. As Sudo sees it, one of the commonalities among them is the use of opulent color to illuminate the so-called pop surrealism or low-brow art, an art movement born in Los Angeles and Las Vegas. Cultural roots in underground comics, punk music and other street art culture. In Sudo’s painting Feral, he transferred newspaper print to a large square canvas and painted a delicate skull in the middle. He then applied printed text and color patterns. After that, he sprayed bright yellow and saturated orange color and used a black marker to create movement reminiscent of graffiti text.

The outcome is a rebellious gesture of graffiti, normally seen on street walls, now hanging in a clean and well-lit gallery. The contrast is instantly palpable, but for Sudo, the fact that his underground art has found its way into a commercial gallery suggests the triumph of underground art, and he gives credit to the dedication of his generation. A unique painting style increases in popularity “This art movement is on the rise and it is good to see the contribution from Japanese artists,” says Kenneth F. Lum, managing director of Ayden Gallery and the curator of this show. He adds that the Japanese artists have been active outside of art galleries by doing live painting, and they are also involved in commercial de

-© Ayden Gallery

The Source

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SFU SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

INAGURAL CONFERENCE

Diaspora, Sustainability, and Development: Meeting at the Nexus

Save the Date

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20
9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Segal Graduate School of Business
560 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC

Simon Fraser University’s Centre for Sustainable Community Development, Institute for Diaspora Research & Engagement, School of International Studies, and the Faculty of Environment’s Development and Sustainability Program invite you to participate in an inaugural conference focused on the intersection of development, sustainability, and diaspora studies.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

We are pleased to announce Julian Agema, a Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University, Medford, as the keynote speaker for this conference. Julian is the originator of the concept of ‘just sustainability’, the full integration of social justice and sustainability, defined as ‘the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems.’

PANEL THEMES

• Diaspora Driven Development and Global Sustainability
• Governance: Diaspora as Agents of Change
• Extractive Industries, Global Trends, and Indigenous Local Interests
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For further information, please visit www.sfu.ca/diaspora-institute/events/conference.html

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culture point is this short moment where one looks back towards the past and the last two steps.

Vancouver makes us realize that our temporal distance with its beginnings is brief. The brevity of Vancouver’s past changes our relationship with the city. We are not here to observe, preserve, continue or modify history. We are here to make history, to make from our personal histories that of a city of a land rich with an extreme almost savagely so — beauty.

We are here like all the others, coming from elsewhere, with our own culture and history. To each their vision, to each their lifestyle, to each their own uniqueness. It is up to us to build a new horizon, a new cultural entirety comprising all cultures.

In Tokyo, he saw people hurry to work and the city packed with information. In Vancouver, life is much slower, but people's cultures are overwhelmingly diverse, which is another dimension of chaos to him. However, he says that he embraces both kinds of chaos in life because they are both organic.

Kanomata feels the same way. She creates dream-like fantasy images and found pop surrealism the best way to express her identity in Vancouver.

Sudo finds Vancouver more accepting for his arts. He says, “What I want to express in my painting is chaos. Both Tokyo and Vancouver are giving me the impression of chaos.”

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When visitors look into the artwork that adorns the entrance stairwell of the West Richmond Community Centre, they might just see a little bit of themselves in it. Rising is the result of a community art project led by Vancouver-born artist Jeanette G. Lee which encouraged community members of all ages to contribute ideas and designs, and even features silhouettes of community centre users.

Lee involved community members from a broad range of ages and backgrounds at each stage of the art project, from generating ideas to creating the physical work itself. “The helpers were all different. There were seniors from the centre, school kids from grades 4–7, two preschool classes and teenagers from the youth group,” says Lee.

Preparations for the artwork began in the summer of 2013 and have involved multiple hands-on workshops to generate ideas and build the artwork. “I was picked for the project at the start of the summer,” says Lee. “We met to discuss plans at the start of the fall, then in October and November, we did workshops with the kids at their school, and I asked them for ideas.”

The end product turned out to be Green Symphony, seven sculptures located around the park, representing life in the area. “The best part was working with everyone,” says Lee. “We must have gone through a thousand emails. We want people to take ownership. It’s their park, so we let them use their ideas to help decorate it.”

Representing the whole community

For the Green Symphony project, Lee picked the community to help her; this time, for the West Richmond Community Centre artwork, the community picked her. “A jury was selected with a representative from each section of materials needed for the project – someone with steel, someone with wood and so on,” she says. Artists applied for the job of leading the project, and Lee was the one selected.

For Lee, the project was like putting together a piece of music, creating harmony from the multiple ideas brought to the project by her community partners. “We tried to include everyone’s ideas. It’s like music, when everything comes together it is perfect and beautiful, but each note is different, each idea is different, and together the ideas formed this beautiful piece,” says Lee.

There was a more concrete concept in November, and work to put it together began in February. The kids had put their ideas down in an earlier workshop, and then were given the cut steel to paint their ideas on. The resulting work, which features steel silhouettes, paintings and words from community centre users, may now be seen at the entrance to the centre.

Public ideas shape community gardens

This is not the first time that Lee has drawn inspiration and ideas from the community. She was given the task of redesigning part of East Richmond Nature Park in 2011 and decided to involve the community, holding sessions with elementary school students and incorporating ideas from their drawings into her sculptures. “I asked if I could use the community for ideas and help, and they said yes,” Lee says. “There was positive support, but there was a little nervousness, as no one knew how exactly it would turn out. We were using kids, but they didn’t want it to look like a kid’s work.”

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Enjoy the works of Anna Wong, a local graduate of the Vancouver School of Art who has won international prizes. For a limited time only, McGill Library will be showing several pieces from 1965–1982 by Anna Wong. The works include several etchings and others that will have you mesmerised. The vintage looks will have you wanting more.

Dragon in the Garden
Sept. 13, 7:30 – 10 p.m.
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden
5711 Carrall St., Vancouver
www.vancouverchinesegarden.com

Come and join world renowned Chef Vikram Vij as he serves special dishes inspired by the Classical Gardens. The night includes drinks, entertainment and different festivities such as a silent auction. Enjoy the spectacular garden as the feast is served by Chef Vij as you enjoy the music and breathtaking scenery from the gardens. All the proceeds go towards community programs, so indulge in a spectacular night! Visit the website for more information on admission prices.

KidStart Community Day
Sept. 13, 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Victory Square
500 W. Hastings St, Vancouver
www.thenpeak.fm

The event brings the kids and have fun at the third annual KidStart Community Day. For the admission price of $5, the day includes multiple activities for the whole family. With live painting, button-making, the Vancouver Circus School, and so much more, the fun will last for the entire day. Food and prizes will be available for low prices. This is an event the kids won’t want to miss!

Breakfast in the Park
Sept. 13, 7–2:45 a.m.
Victory Square
500 W. Hastings St, Vancouver
www.thenpeak.fm

Join The Peak Radio and the Vancouver Circus School to celebrate the 8th Annual Breakfast in the Park event the kids won’t want to miss! Enjoy your meal while the Vancouver Circus School, and so much more, the fun will last for the entire day. Food and prizes will be available for low prices. This is an event the kids won’t want to miss!

Best Catch: Sustainable Seafood Festival
Sept. 14, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site
2278 4th Ave., Richmond
www.bestcatchfestival.org

Learn to make smart seafood choices at the third annual Best Catch Sustainable Seafood Festival. This free event includes food demonstrations, canning workshops and live music. The Best Catch Festival is family friendly with many events for children. With multiple exhibitors, this year’s festival will surely be a hit! Come out and learn more about sustainable seafood, and give your taste buds a treat!

Youth Fest 2014
Sept. 20, 2 – 8 p.m.
Cloverdale Recreation Centre
6388 – 176 St., Surrey
www.surrey.ca/youth

The 2014 Youth Fest is filled with live entertainment performed by youth from all over the Lower Mainland. With BMX bike demos, a break dance battle and other fun activities, this event will surely bring out your inner teenager! The Youth Fest also has information booths that allow kids to learn about the resources available in their community. With amazing entertainment, this event is a must for teens.

Two UBC/ACTRA Members were recently honoured with the Order of Canada

Long-time UBC/ACTRA members Eleanor Collins and Antony Holland have each been awarded the Member of the Order of Canada. This prestigious award is bestowed by the Governor General of Canada and recognizes distinguished service in or to a particular community, group or held of activity.

Eleanor Collins, C.M., Member of the Order of Canada Awarded on May 8, 2014:
For her pioneering endeavours as a jazz vocalist, and for breaking down barriers and fostering race relations in the mid-20th century.

Antony Holland, C.M., Member of the Order of Canada Awarded on May 8, 2014:
For his achievements as an actor and teacher, notably for founding Langara College’s Studio 38 to cultivate the next generation of Canadian performers.

Established in 1967 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Order of Canada is the centrepiece of Canada’s honour system and recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. The Order of Canada’s motto is DESIDERANTES MII LIMINEM PATRAXM (They desire a better country).

Cryptic images of people in the Canadian winter;

Celebrity Chef Vikram Vij,

Celebrity Chef Vikram Vij, A food demonstration by Tahera Rawji at Best Catch 2012.

Embrace Italian culture by attending MERCATO: Italian Night Market! Indulge in food as you enjoy the live entertainment. Not only will there be a wide selection of Italian goods, there will also be live food demonstrations such as pasta making and olive oil tastings. Bring the whole family and enjoy a little taste of Italy.

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Street Photography by Denis Bouvier

Transformational encounter

Two worlds are meeting here: one from BC and one from Brazil. Both represent transformations; both are totems of a kind.

On the left is the work of Clarence Mills, an accomplished artist from Haida Gwaii, known both locally and internationally. He is a traditionally trained carver and a member of the Eagle Clan, taking the Split Raven and Grizzly Bear as his crests. He produces carvings in wood, ivory and argillite as well as engraved jewelry and serigraph prints. One of his totem poles was commissioned for the Louvre in Paris.

In the photo is a Haida Bear and Eagle totem carved out of an 800-year-old red cedar that fell during the Stanley Park windstorm of 2006, representing a transformation of destruction into art. Mills’ work is beside Ocean Concrete on Granville Island. The “totem” on the right of the picture is one of six silos belonging to Ocean Concrete that have been painted by contemporary artists Gustavo and Otavio Pandolfo, two Brazilian brothers, identical twins that go by the Portuguese name: Os Gemeos – The Twins. They are well known internationally and have worked with the Tate Modern in London and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

Their current work is part of a global series called "Giants" and Vancouver has the only one in 3-D. The Twins paint deeply from their inner world, which being identical twins, they claim they share; always knowing what the other is dreaming, thinking, completing each other’s thoughts. They feel their work is deeply spiritual. Their mission is to transform public space and present uplifting images to people. The prominent colour of yellow in their works plays an important role in sending a positive message.

Indeed their message stands out, the Giants’ mural being 23 metres tall and all six silos covering a space of 7,200 square metres. Their choice of Ocean Concrete couldn’t be more impressive; it will be seen by the thousands who flock to Granville Island and can also be viewed from across the other side of False Creek.

Ocean Concrete is one of Granville Island’s oldest tenants, having been there since 1917. It is a great supporter of the arts, as can be witnessed by the colourful transformation of its cement mixers, which have been painted at times with giant asparagus and colourful suns. They often have art installations out front and hold annual open houses.

Giants is part of Vancouver’s 2014-2016 Biennale, a non-profit charitable organization which supports art in public places for the enjoyment of all. The current theme is Open Borders/Crossroads Vancouver “where artists from all nations, cultural backgrounds, political histories and artistic disciplines gather to celebrate art in public space. Together we inspire creativity, transform thinking and find our interconnectedness as global citizens through art.” It features diverse works by both breakthrough and established artists, and hosts six supporting public programs.

For more information: www.vancouverbiennale.com/explore-art/exhibition-theme/

Don Richardson

Erratum

In “Artist reframes old master for modern age” by Kumiko Aoki (Vol 15 No 3), we mistakenly referred to Hyung-Min Yoon’s book as The Book of Jets. The correct name is The Book of Jests.