



## Cross-cultural language learning

by CHERRIE LAM

**Most language learners today are no strangers to phrase-books, immersion programs, or Rosetta Stone, but how about using First Nations language learning apps, or watching ultrasound imagery to speak Cantonese, or adopting an Arabic conversation partner?**

In today's globalized world where the value of multilingualism is increasingly palpable, technology advisor Costa Degikias, linguist Heather Bliss and provincial organizer Mary Leighton have introduced unconventional methods for modern language learners.

For all three, teaching languages has also meant teaching cultures, and in some cases, saving cultures from extirpation.

### Protecting cultures with language technology

Perhaps the intersection of technology, language, and cultural preservation is most salient right here in British Columbia's First Nations communities.

Dedegikias is the technology manager of Simon Fraser University's SNF New Media Lab, currently supported by the federal government and 22 Aboriginal community groups in building online pedagogy for 12 B.C. First Nations languages.

Using voice recordings from indigenous elders and artwork from Aboriginal youth, Dedegikias' team and the SFU First Nations Language Centre are producing web and mobile apps that will teach dialogue, vocabulary



▲ Conversation partners at a free Arabic-English language exchange for women.

and grammar in endangered languages such as X̱aad Kil (Haida) and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh sṉichim. The first apps will launch this fall.

For Dedegikias, the crux of these apps lies in infusing ancestral stories behind language, geography and botany – to generate pride amongst indigenous youth in their history.

He comments also that language technologies allow for collection of data to improve curriculum and teaching methods as the apps move forward.

These apps will be critical for revitalizing Canada's indigenous languages, most of which are on the brink of extinction due to historical assimilation policies banning indigenous cultural practices.

A 2014 report by the First Peoples' Cultural Council found

that fluent speakers comprise only four per cent of B.C.'s First Nations population. As of that year, only nine fluent speakers remained for X̱aad Kil, and seven for Sḵwx̱wú7mesh sṉichim. Four B.C. indigenous languages no longer have living speakers.

"You can't take the culture outside of language, and you can't take the language outside of culture," he says.

The SFU team is not alone in preserving indigenous languages.

Heather Bliss is the research coordinator of the University of British Columbia's eNunciate! project, spearheading ultrasound technology for language learning. She recently garnered attention for piloting ultrasound overlay videos in UBC's new Cantonese language course, the first for-credit program of its kind in Canada.

Beyond Cantonese, Bliss' research background also focuses on First Nations languages. She spent the summer visiting indigenous communities, producing videos instructing younger speakers to pronounce the sounds of their languages.

"Our idea is that if you teach them exactly how to form their tongue and put their mouths into the right shape, they'll be able to do it," Bliss explains.

These follow-along videos juxtapose ultrasound imagery over a speaker's side profile, demonstrating the tongue's placement and shape.

Alongside First Nations languages, videos are being developed for French, German, Spanish and Mandarin. Language educators outside UBC can also

See "Language learning" page 9 >

### Verbatim

## Everyone can leave their mark

by JAKE MCGRAIL

Growing up in Vancouver I heard the term "multiculturalism" a lot. I was taught that Canada, as a whole, is a multicultural country, a "mosaic" of peoples from many different places. As a kid, that seemed pretty obvious. People are all different – some were born here, some were born across the country and some were born across the globe. It didn't really seem special in any way – it was more of a fact of life. You're always going to have a variety of cultures where you live. That's something that people respect and enjoy.

Now, of course, I know that's not the case everywhere, but it still seems kind of weird to me that it isn't. Reading about some of Canada's past immigration policies, such as the head tax on Chinese immigrants, they seem wrong to me. When Canada announced they would be accepting Syrian refugees into the country I almost wanted to say "well, duh." Accepting other cultures and people just seems like the right thing to do, because having lots of variety in people, culture, ways of thinking and viewpoints makes for a different, more dynamic and more exciting place to live, and that's (to me, at least) a good thing. And I still haven't even explored everything the city has to offer!

Since I began writing for *The Source*, I've written about dozens of events that I'd never even heard of before: a large variety of places and events that sound interesting and exist here because of Vancouver's (and Canada's) multiculturalism. I live close to Commercial Drive, and I've been to Italian Day on The Drive multiple times, where thousands of people come out to walk along the road, listen to music, eat food and simply enjoy themselves. It's an annual tradition and one that accepts

See "Verbatim" page 5 >

### Also in this issue

Music, costumes and dance, Mexican-style  
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A unique Asian take on West Coast landscape  
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# Community Profile

## Celebrating Taiwanese heritage

by DAVID LEWIS

**This year marks the 26th anniversary of the Taiwanese Canadian Cultural Society (TCCS), with the upcoming TaiwanFest in Vancouver promoting a history of the Taiwanese community's cultural engagement with the Lower Mainland.**

Harbouring more than 100 cultural organizations, the now 40,000 strong Taiwanese population in Vancouver has been contributing its vibrant traditions of art and economic prowess to the city's cosmopolitan mix for more than half a century.

"I cannot think of any other country that has the better opportunity for people sharing their different cultures," says TCCS CEO Cecilia Chueh. "I think we have the best chance living in Canada."

Chueh, who lived in the United States for a while, says she didn't find the same kind of open-mindedness towards different cultures there.

"[Canada] gives us this opportunity. If we don't do something with it, if we don't contribute, then what's the point?" Chueh says.

### A history of exchange

Taiwan has a long history of cultural diversity and exchange. The island country is home to 14 aboriginal languages, the majority

French for some periods of time, and Japanese for fifty years. So, especially in the last 100 years, [the] Taiwanese really developed into a very unique culture – a different cultural identity."

Japanese rule ended with Taiwan's transition to the Nationalist (KMT) Chinese government after World War II. The political repression in Taiwan following the KMT's ejection from China by the Communists led to many visiting international students choosing to stay in Canada, forming the nucleus of a burgeoning Taiwanese community in cities like Vancouver.

The Greater Vancouver Taiwanese Canadian Association was founded in 1966 to support Taiwanese immigrants living in Vancouver. The establishment of the points system in Canadian immigration policy the year after led to a growth in immigration from Taiwan to Canada. Immigration reached its peak during the 1980s and 1990s, when Taiwan's gradual democratization and economic boom saw a relaxation of emigration laws and an increase in skilled and investment immigrants.

"But now it's a little bit shrinking, after about 2005," Chueh says. "Because of the economic situation and the first generation immigrants coming after 1986 especially, their children growing up, they might get married or something, leave the family, and



▲ Taiwanese performers at an exhibition in Richmond.

being Han Chinese descent who settled Taiwan in after the 17th century, speaking either Hokkien or Hakka. This does not include the 1.2 million people who emigrated from mainland China after the Chinese Civil War in 1949.

"Many people do not realize that Taiwanese history has been influenced by many other cultures in the last 400 years," says Chueh.

"The Dutch, the Spanish came to Taiwan, and then Chinese people, and then others, even

still have their career and family back in Taiwan. Many of the families returned, in the last decade."

### Differences and similarities

"Sometimes it's really not easy to identify what the difference, or what's unique, about Taiwanese culture," says Chueh. "But through the Taiwanese Cultural Festival, since 1991, I think people gradually recognize there is some difference between Tai-

See "Taiwanese community" page 5 >

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Photo courtesy of the Taiwanese Canadian Cultural Society

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# From Iran to Vancouver via Turkey

by SUSAN HANCOCK

**Golsa Golestaneh's journey began in Iran, where she, her younger brother and parents lived before immigrating to Canada as part of the Government-Assisted Refugee Program in 2014.**

"Our [family's] first option wasn't to flee [Iran]," explains Golestaneh, a 2016 recipient of the City of Vancouver's Diversity and Inclusion Award. "Our first option was to make a difference, but we failed, and then we had to flee."

**Flight from home**

Golestaneh, 19, touches on a difficult time in her life. She remembers her father's arrest for voicing his political beliefs

and recounts how he was denied employment as part of his punishment. The Golestaneh family was in a vulnerable situation. If her father was arrested again, he would be executed, yet they didn't have the means to survive without his employment.

With no options left, the Golestaneh family joined others who were protesting against the Iranian government. When the risk of being arrested became too great, the family sold all their possessions and secretly travelled to Turkey in 2012, where they received asylum from the United Nations.

"Eventually, the risk became too great for us," says Golestaneh. "We had to go. We had to flee Iran."

At 14 years of age, Golestaneh was conflicted with the cultural and political beliefs of other people living in Iran. She wanted to become a judge, yet she felt her dream was in jeopardy if she remained in Iran.

grow. Maybe later [it will be different]."

**Helping others find their voice**

A year and a half after the Golestaneh family arrived in Canada,

she knows the injustice of being ignored, of being invisible. She also knows what it's like to take massive risks to fight for her personal beliefs, which

“ The beach makes me feel close to other places. You see the water and you know that there is something beyond it...”

*Golsa Golestaneh, recipient of a 2016 City of Vancouver Diversity and Inclusion Award*



▲ Golsa Golestaneh, a 2016 recipient of the City of Vancouver's Diversity and Inclusion Award.

"How could I represent the institution of law in Iran until it changed?" says Golestaneh. "I love [Iran], but at this point it's not a place where I can

Golestaneh was awarded the 2016 City of Vancouver Diversity and Inclusion Award under the individual youth category.

She was surprised to learn she had won, as she had no idea her efforts had been noticed by other people.

"It's just confirmation that I'm doing the right things," she says.

Her peers recognized her for her activism within youth leadership programs: Vancouver Foundation; Pave the Road, an organization focused on inter-religious action that promotes peace; and Leave Out Violence, a society that supports violence prevention and intervention programs for youth. Since her arrival to Vancouver, Golestaneh has worked with other refugees to create a sense of belonging in a new country. She is also a board member for *BEATS Magazine*, which provides a voice for other newcomer youth living in the Lower Mainland.

**Looking forward**

Golestaneh's journey in advocacy continues. As a young

is why she is passionate about helping others who feel marginalized.

"I want to help others find their voice through education, advocacy and by addressing women's issues," she says.

Golestaneh would like to return to Iran one day, but not quite yet. For now, she wants to focus on starting her post-secondary studies in political science, her first step toward becoming a judge. When she's not volunteering, she enjoys hanging out at the beach with family and friends.

"The beach makes me feel close to other places," says Golestaneh. "You see the water and you know that there is something beyond it: there are people beyond the shorelines of English Bay that are living their lives differently than me." ✍

For more information on Golestaneh's Diversity and Inclusion Award, please visit [www.vancouver.ca/your-government/diversity-and-inclusion.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/your-government/diversity-and-inclusion.aspx)

Photo by Susan Hancock



**Announcing the UBC School of Music 2016–2017 Concert Season**

Vancouver - The **UBC School of Music** announces the 2016–2017 season of performances and special events by our ensembles, faculty, and guest artists. The following are selected highlights:

The **UBC Symphony Orchestra** and **UBC Choirs** will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the opening concert of the Chan Centre with a very special performance on April 8, 2017 to honour and thank the Chan Centre and Chan family for supporting student performance and excellence at UBC. *A Song of Joys* by composer and UBC faculty member **Stephen Chatman** will be featured along with Mozart's final masterpiece *Requiem Mass in D minor*. Chatman wrote *A Song of Joys*, with words from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* as a companion piece to Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*. It was this symphony, with its iconic "Ode to Joy", that was performed by UBC music students in the spring of 1997 as the gala opening concert of the Chan Centre.

Internationally-renowned composer **John Corigliano** will be in residence at UBC in November. The **Corigliano Festival** will culminate November 19 with a spectacular evening at the Chan Centre featuring performances of his music by the **UBC Symphonic Wind Ensemble**, **UBC Choirs** and **UBC Symphony Orchestra** with violin soloist and faculty member **David Gillham**. Works include *Fern Hill*, *The Red Violin: Chaconne for Violin and Orchestra*, and *Symphony No. 3: Circus Maximus*. The festival and residency will also include a talk and discussion with excerpts of Corigliano's opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* performed by the **UBC Opera Ensemble**. All events in the Corigliano Festival are part of the Master Mind Master Class Series presented in partnership with Alumni UBC.

The **UBC Opera Ensemble** presents three fully staged productions:  
 November 3–6 Menotti *The Consul* at the Old Auditorium  
 February 2–5 Tchaikovsky *Eugene Onegin* at the Chan Centre  
 June 22–25 Strauss *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Old Auditorium  
 For more information about each production, visit [music.ubc.ca/opera](http://music.ubc.ca/opera).

**Music on the Point: Concerts with Personality** featuring faculty artists and guests:  
 October 21 Brahms chamber music with **David Gillham violin**, **Eric Wilson cello**, and **Chiharu Iinuma piano**  
 November 25 In Praise of Bach! **Miranda Wong piano**  
 January 20 **Archytas Quartet** with quartets by Bartók and Beethoven  
**Dale Barltrop & David Gillham violins**, **David Harding viola**, **Ariel Barnes cello**  
 March 3 **Oskar Morawetz Centennial** Celebrating his life in music  
 The **Music on the Point** series is presented in partnership with UTown@UBC. [Link to Music on the Point series](#)

The School's ever-popular **Wednesday Noon Hour** series begins September 21. Highlights include: **Microcosmos Quartet** with works by Dutilleux and Bartok (Sept 29); A late '60s blue note modal bag with the **Steve Kaldestad Quartet** (Oct 12); "Sanglots" *Chansons of Love and Loss* with **Patrick Rafferty tenor** and **Terence Dawson piano** (Jan 25) and Bach's *Musical Offering* with the **PBO Chamber Players** (Feb 8). [Link to Wednesday Noon Hour series artists and repertoire.](#)

A PDF of the entire season and up-to-date online event listings are available at [www.music.ubc.ca](http://www.music.ubc.ca). Digital photos of UBC faculty, student ensembles, and guest artists are also available upon request.

**WORD SEARCH**

This bilingual word search was provided by reader Nicole Foucault.

B I S O N I F F U P N O I L  
 A O P A N D A L A P M I Y E  
 R C A N O I P R O C S N E M  
 R C P Y T H O N H R X M I M  
 A O O P O O R C A E M U D I  
 C B E I K C I I M N I L E N  
 U R T P C N O B S I T E R G  
 D A O I E U L I T D E L A O  
 A L Y T G J E S E R R L U N  
 D A O G N I D I R A I E G O  
 E O C T N E P R E S P Z A E  
 L K A T O U C A N L A A J G  
 O R L A N I D R A C T G E I  
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- |           |         |        |          |
|-----------|---------|--------|----------|
| ALLIGATOR | GAZELLE | LION   | PUMA     |
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| BISON     | HAMSTER | MITE   | RAT      |
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| CARDINAL  | IMPALA  | ORIOLE | SCORPION |
| COBRA     | JAGUAR  | PANDA  | SERPENT  |
| COYOTE    | JUNCO   | PIGEON | SOLE     |
| DINGO     | KOALA   | PIPIT  | TAPIR    |
| EIDER     | LEMMING | PUFFIN | TOUCAN   |

SOLUTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (9 letters)



The Window Gallery is a Roundhouse exhibition space for artists who explore the links between community and creativity in their work. WINDOW is located in the main entrance on Pacific St.

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 Sep-Oct: Elizabeth Shefrin, embroidery



## Left Bank



# B.C. government waits for dog days of summer to unveil do-nothing Climate Plan

Faced with a global climate emergency, Christy Clark's plan is grossly irresponsible

Eight months out from the next provincial vote, Christy Clark is acting like she's already begun the long election campaign. And based on her government's recently released B.C. Climate Plan, the premier is betting that British Columbians won't vote based on their concerns about the global climate emergency.

Clark chose a Friday during the dog days of summer to release her government's overdue new plan on climate. The announced measures were underwhelming, to say the least, a far cry from what the public deserves from a provincial administration that is on course to fail badly to meet its own legislated targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Ignoring the key recommendations of the Climate Leadership

cal cynicism on the climate challenge, B.C.'s new climate plan would be a strong contender for the gold medal."

The measures that are included in the "climate plan" conveniently include a focus on industries that are already prominent in B.C. So there is mention of efforts to reduce methane emissions from liquefied natural gas projects, but the underlying assumption is that the expansion of oil and gas industries can continue indefinitely, rather than being phased out as quickly and equitably as possible. Clark's plan also puts great emphasis on tree planting efforts to absorb carbon from the atmosphere, increasing B.C.'s stock of so-called carbon sinks.



Photo courtesy of the Province of British Columbia

▲ Tree planting is something B.C. already does a lot of, so it's really a cop out for Clark to emphasize it in her climate plan.

Team she herself appointed only a year ago, Clark announced that she would not increase B.C.'s \$30-per-tonne price on carbon. The carbon tax, which earned the BC Liberals effusive praise from some environmental groups when it was first introduced in 2008, has been frozen since Clark assumed the premiership from outgoing Liberal leader Gordon Campbell in 2011.

Not only have the Liberals acknowledged that they won't meet their legally required emissions cuts of 33 per cent of 2007 levels by 2020, but they have failed to set any new more ambitious target. In the context of the UN's Paris Climate Agreement and this year's record global temperatures – July 2016 was the hottest month in recorded history – this is a grossly irresponsible abdication of responsibility by the B.C. government.

Long-time B.C. environmentalist Tzaporah Berman, who was a member of the premier's Climate Leadership Team, blasted the new plan as "pathetic and cowardly." Taking to social media on the day of the announcement, Berman elaborated, "In fact it's not even policy, it's just PR. In an effort to protect their failing LNG strategy the BC Liberal Government has put forward a 'climate plan' that doesn't even result in overall emissions reductions for the next decade."

Scientist and SFU professor Marc Jaccard wrote a scathing op-ed in the *Globe and Mail* echoing Berman's critique, "If there were an Olympic event for politi-

This is all well and good, but climate scientists worldwide emphasize that a reduction of fossil fuel emissions must be the priority of all jurisdictions if we are going to avoid catastrophic warming scenarios. Forests acting as carbon sinks are not as reliable or effective as a cut in greenhouse gas emissions, because forest fires and other scenarios can cause stored carbon to be released back into the atmosphere.

Tree planting is something B.C. already does a lot of, so for the B.C. government it's really a cop out. What we need is a visionary government willing to invest massive public dollars into developing solar, wind, tidal and geothermal energy, and to revolutionize public transport and the province's housing stock to drastically improve energy efficiency. And we need a government committed to reducing inequality, because ultimately it is the rich and the super-rich who contribute the most to global warming, and who are most insulated from its dangerous consequences.

Given the fact the federal government has said it's counting on the provinces to step up in order for Canada to live up to the promises made in Paris, B.C.'s do-nothing Climate Plan is downright shameful. Faced with a global climate emergency, the powers-that-be in Victoria are fiddling while the world burns, confident that the electorate is too short-sighted to punish their irresponsibility at the ballot box. Let's hope they're proven wrong. ☹



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Photo courtesy of TAIWANfest

## The Hakka people featured at TAIWANfest

by JANMIE GUNAWARDENA

**An opportunity has risen in Vancouver to learn and experience the food and culture of the Hakka people of Taiwan. This year's TAIWANfest (Sept. 3–5), alongside the Vancouver Taiwan Hakka Association, sheds light on a people's history with their Experience Hakka program.**

Since 1990, TAIWANfest has been raising awareness to Taiwanese history and building communities through arts, music, food and storytelling.

"It's interesting. There are a lot of people that are Hakka, but they don't understand Hakka culture. They don't understand their background," says Wish Chou, an executive assistant at the ACSEA (Asian Canadian Special Events Association).

### Farming and food

The center of this program is around the Peng family, a Hakka clan that moved to Canada from the Eastern Bamboo Mountain.

"They were also one of the first families that moved to Taiwan and developed the island. They have a long history in Taiwan," says Chou.

Like many communities in history, the Hakka people migrated from one region to another. Due to this, Hakka heritage has trickled from China and Taiwan to India, Southeast Asia and around the world.

"When we bring out Taiwanese Hakka culture, we try to connect with Hakka culture in other countries," says Chou.



Photo courtesy of TAIWANfest

▲ The Hakka people developed a distinctive cuisine.

The Hakka people were often new to everywhere because of their travelling. They were hard-working and a lot of people lived by farming (their main financial income) so they created their

own cuisine in order to adapt to their constant travelling.

"They needed [food] that was quicker to finish and easy to bring out onto the farm. It had to supply the salt, and electrolytes needed for a day of farming," says Chou. "Hakka food is actually heavier. It's a bit oily and saltier than other foods because they need that food to supply their energy."

While farming is a practice that has been done by everyone for centuries, Chou mentions the Hakka people were different from other Asian cultures.

"For example, Japanese people farm as well, but their food is much lighter," says Chou. "It's a way for the Hakka people to reflect their culture: through the food."

### Mochi and Lei Cha

A celebrated food in Hakka culture is mochi (in Hakka it's called "ciba"), a sticky rice ball, and Chou says it is one of the most important foods in Hakka culture.

It is served to guests at important events such as weddings, festivals, or the Lunar New Year.

"I remember when I was younger. I went to my relative's wedding. They always had ciba there. It would always be the starter," says Chou. "Even before the wedding started, we would all eat the ciba while waiting for the bride to come in."

A traditional drink in Hakka cultures is 'lei cha,' which is also known as thunder tea.

"Lei cha is a kind of tea in Taiwan. It is actually an energy drink. It includes ground nuts, seeds and tea leaves mixed with hot water," says Chou. "You can drink it with ciba as well."

The Experience Hakka program at TAIWANfest will include workshops for mochi, lei cha and other Hakka cuisine. There will be opportunities for the public to try these foods as well. They will also have visual arts exhibitions and story sharing with the Peng family.

"I, myself, am a Hakka. This is something that I'm excited to show Canada about Taiwan. How the Hakka culture has affected our food and how our architecture shows the culture in Hakka," says Chou. ✍

This year, TAIWANfest begins in Toronto (Aug. 26–28) and then comes to Vancouver's Granville St. (Sept. 3–5).

# Tech company brings conscience to the cutting edge

by ROXY SPROULE

**Vancouver tech company Animikii walks the walk as a social enterprise.**

Animikii has been using technology to serve Indigenous communities for 13 years, and a recent surge of growth has put them in position to broaden their reach. CEO Jeff Ward, producer Jordyn Hrenyk and designer Dakota Lightning sat down to talk about their projects, their philosophy, and what it means to make social impact the bottom line.

"Our weapon of choice for equity for indigenous people in Canada is technology."

Thirty minutes in conversation with Ward and his team is enough to show that there is plenty of clout behind this statement. Animikii does not simply write cheques to support causes. They routinely donate time and mentorship, help develop programs and selectively choose clientele based on the company's social principles. A few of Animikii's key projects focus on language revitalization, youth support and economic development in First Nations communities.

### Activism in the marketplace

Ward explains that the company's principles developed partly in opposition to the materialistic and capitalistic practices that led to the dot-com boom and bust. Having worked in Silicon Valley during this volatile

time, Ward was motivated to create a socially minded business environment. Hrenyk adds that Indigenous communities have a long tradition of socially conscious entrepreneurship, and Animikii has simply taken its place in that history.

"Indigenous businesses are social enterprises from the beginning," Hrenyk says, "long before social enterprise was the thing everyone was trying to do."

“A huge aspect of our business is inspiring indigenous youth to choose technology or entrepreneurship as a career path.

Jeff Ward, CEO of Animikii

A social enterprise is a business whose reason to exist extends beyond making money. Social entrepreneurs use their position in the marketplace to advance a cause. In Animikii's case, the cause is uplifting Indigenous communities. Their approach involves providing support to established companies from behind the scenes, as well as helping new Indigenous technologists get their footing in the field.

### A focus on youth

"A huge aspect of our business is inspiring indigenous youth to choose technology or entrepreneurship as a career path," Ward says.

Animikii creates bursaries for youth interested in business and technology careers; designers bring youth-generated content to life (such as on the interactive website [indigenouwellness.ca](http://indigenouwellness.ca)); and recently, Hrenyk helped forge a partnership with Startup Skool, a Vancouver company focused on educating youth in social entrepreneurship. The collaboration resulted in a program tailored specifically to young indigenous people.

"[Startup Skool] is a social enterprise that helps kids aged 7 to 16 learn about technology and entrepreneurship and get real experience coming up with business ideas and pitching them," says Hrenyk.

Animikii not only provided scholarships to attend the program, but its employees also helped run workshops and sat in on the Dragon's panel.

### Looking ahead

Hrenyk, Ward and Lightning speak enthusiastically about these tangible additions to the Indigenous presence in Canadian business and technology. They also project a sense of excitement about the current potential for change that exists in this country.

"Now is a really interesting time in Canada. There's a new relationship developing between Indigenous Canadians and the rest of Canada," says Ward.

He explains that he was proud to have been involved in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and that Animikii will continue to seek a role in the conversation unfolding between mainstream Canada and Indigenous groups. For example, the company is looking at Virtual Reality (VR) technology as a way to animate Indigenous voices.

Ward says, "We're working with a developer to help recreate experiences that could help mainstream Canada look at history from an Indigenous perspective, and I think VR really lends itself to that." ✍

Visit [www.animikii.com/blog](http://www.animikii.com/blog) to be updated on upcoming projects like this one, and follow @animikii on Twitter for news and ideas.



▲ Robyn Ward (Content Strategist and Client Support), Jeff Ward (CEO), Dakota Lightning (Front-end Designer and Developer) and Mat Harvard (Back-end Developer).

Photo courtesy of Animikii Inc.

► "Verbatim" from page 1  
any Vancouverite that simply wants to have a good time and celebrate Italian heritage on Commercial Drive in Vancouver.

Italian Day on The Drive is just one of many celebrations that occur in this area. There are dozens and dozens of festivals and celebrations for the huge collection of cultures, ethnicities and beliefs that inhabit the area, with each of them drawing crowds that contain not just those people who "belong" to

that culture, but to people from all walks of life, who want to experience what those around them can share. The opportunity for people to express themselves and celebrate who they are means that there is the opportunity for others to do so with them, bringing people together, no matter how "different" they might be.

Each city has its own culture and its own dynamic or personality that sets it apart from other places. Vancouver's culture is a blend that I haven't yet experienced to its fullest, but I do know that I like it. I won't claim it's the greatest city in the world, because I don't think that's something that can really be measured or that I have any interest in debating, but I will say that it's a city (though of course it has its faults) I am happy to say I live in, a city filled with multiculturalism. And that's crucial, because if we want our mosaic to be the most beautiful it can be, we've got to let everyone leave their mark on it. ✍

► "Taiwanese community" from page 2  
wanese and Chinese. Not just the language, because although in Taiwan the official language is [Mandarin], we still speak Taiwanese, Hakkanese, or other aboriginal languages. Our society is very much like Canada, with different cultures and languages."

The Taiwanese Cultural Festival, now the TAIWANfest, is entering its 26th anniversary this year and will feature three days of performances, films, lectures, visual art, and concerts devoted to Taiwanese culture

and its relationship to a rapidly connected world. One such event will be *A Cultural Tango with Hong Kong*, a musical tribute to world-renowned Taiwanese pop singer Teresa Teng (one of the Five Great Asian Divas) and iconic Hong Kong musician Leslie Cheung. This symphony orchestra concert, conducted by Ken Hsieh, intends to evoke the introduction of Eastern pop music to the West, initiated by Teng and Cheung, showcasing the mutual influence between Taiwan and the cultures that surround it. ✍

# Spreading Mexican culture through dance

by NAOMI TSE

**The Nahualli Folklore Society will be one of many groups performing at the Richmond World Festival to showcase Mexican culture.**

Lily Cazares is one of the founders of the non-profit organization. She says that the society started after she met several other dancers who wanted to create a group to perform dances from the more well-known regions of Mexico as well as regions that foreigners may not have heard of.

“Our goal is to showcase Mexican culture and dance and to share our culture and heritage with others,” says Cazares.

## Rich dance displays

Cazares, who is a nurse by day, says that all children in Mexico are taught some form of Mexican dance in elementary school and dance classes are also offered in some high schools. The children usually perform for holidays or events.

Mexico has 31 states and one federal district (Mexico City), and the dance styles performed vary depending on the region. Cazares, who is from Sinaloa state, explains that Mexico has a large Indigenous population and was also colonized by the Spanish in the 16th century.

“Our native music and costumes mixed with the different music and costumes of the European settlers make a very rich display. We have 32 states and each state has musical diversity according to their native population,” says Cazares. “The



▲ Nahualli Folklore Society performs at their annual fundraiser at the Scotiabank Dance Center in November.

regions include different instruments that make them distinct and when you add the diversity of the actual dresses and accessories; it's pretty special.”

“One dance that we have to put into the program every year is the jarabe tapatio,” says Cazares. “This is very iconic and what everyone recognizes as Mexican.”

This dance is more commonly known as the Mexican hat dance and originates from the region of Jalisco. According to Cazares, the dance is characterized by a male dancer flirtatiously courting the female dancer while she rejects his advances; however, she eventually accepts his advances. Traditionally, the woman wears a colourful “China poblana” dress with a heavy full

skirt, usually embroidered and adorned with lace and ribbons. The men wear a “charro” (horseman outfit), usually decorated with silver accents.

## Rooted to her history through dance

Blanca Zapata arrived in Canada to study English six years ago and shortly thereafter joined the Nahualli Folklore Society. Now she is the choreographer for the group and also helps with social media marketing.

“It [Mexican folklore dance] connects me to my roots, to my history, to Mexico, and to my passion for dance,” says Zapata, who is from the state of Nuevo León.

In addition to dances about courtship, Zapata says that

there are also dances with themes around nature, such as asking for rain or a good harvest that year. She explains that some dances are “mestizo,” which means they are derived from a mix of Indigenous and European influences.

“Even though there are a few steps that are considered a base in most regions, the technical differences in form and style make each dance unique,” says Cazares.

In addition to performing at cultural events, the group also performs at various special occasions throughout the year such as Canada Day events, the PNE and at night markets. When they are not attending events, they are practising with their 15 or so members.

Cazares also hopes that they will be able to travel to other regions to perform in the future. They have received invitations to perform at the Calgary Stampede, but do not have the funds to travel. They would also like to have more male dancers to balance out the group.

“Every year our goals get bigger,” says Cazares. “We want to increase the number of members, find new venues to perform at, and to be recognized for Mexican dance.”

The Nahualli Folklore Society will be performing at the Richmond World Festival on Sept. 3. For more information, please visit [www.richmondworldfestival.com](http://www.richmondworldfestival.com).

# Haida Manga exhibition explores identity, environmentalism and the human condition

by JAKE MCGRAIL

**The *Seriousness of Play*, an exhibition of the unique art that is Haida Manga and created by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas will be on display until Oct. 2 at the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art.**

Haida Manga is a combination of iconographies and frame lines from the culture of the North Pacific Indigenous peoples along with the manga Asian art form.

## Beginnings

Yahgulanaas has worked with a large variety of different art forms, including sculptures, canvases, ink drawings, ceramics and public art projects, but he is better known as the creator of Haida Manga, a fusion of the hugely popular manga art form with Haida culture. The artist began his journey into the world of art early on, driven by the knowledge of the creative exploits of some of his predecessors.

“As the descendant of iconic artists Isabella Edenshaw, Charles Edenshaw and Delores Churchill, my early training was knowing that there were excep-



▲ Artist Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas.

tional creators and master carvers in my community,” he says.

Before becoming an artist full-time, Yahgulanaas worked for years on the Haida Nation's campaign to protect its biocultural diversity. After he became a full-time artist he studied calligraphy at the Canton School of Art, which was instrumental in the eventual creation of Haida Manga.

“It wasn't until the late 1990s after I was exposed to Chinese

brush techniques under the tutelage of Cantonese master Cai Ben Kwon that I consciously began to merge Haida and Asian artistic influences,” says Yahgulanaas.

## Creating new art

Manga is a popular form of comics and cartooning created in Japan, with modern manga originating and gaining large popularity in the years following the Second World War. Yahgulanaas' work takes the distinctive manga look and combines it with images that relate to the culture of the Haida people.

“My work explores themes of identity, environmentalism and the human condition,” says Yahgulanaas, “and uses art to communicate a world view that while particular to Haida Gwaii is also relevant to a contemporary audience.”

He does so with art that he describes as “playful but also serious,” that looks to engage with social issues through dialogue, action or simply inward reflection. Haida Manga has spread since its creation, with Yahgulanaas using his unique style to spread his messages in books,

which have been published both nationally and in Asia and in exhibits such as the one at the Bill Reid Gallery.

“Within the Yahgulanaas clan and the Haida Nation, we welcome vibrancy and relevancy. In the larger indigenous world, I sense there is an understanding that it is important that colonizing societies quickly learn to recalibrate their filters,” Yahgulanaas says.

That is one of the messages that Yahgulanaas is attempting to communicate through his art, as well as through his travels to speak to businesses, institutions and communities about social justice, community building and change. On why he thinks Haida Manga has had the impact it has, Yahgulanaas is clear.

“People, regardless of ethnicity and class, hunger for a more honest relationship with each other. Canadians know there is something missing in the representation of indigeneity and Haida Manga offers an emotional conduit that is accessible,” he says.

For more information on the exhibit, visit [billreidgallery.ca](http://billreidgallery.ca).

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## Local filmmaker finds freedom to relay information

by FLORENCE HWANG

**Leon Lee never expected to become a filmmaker, but an article from an independent Chinese language newspaper started it all.**

After reading a story in the local media about forced organ harvesting, information he says he could never have learned about in China, he realized that independent media were crucial to a strong and free society.

"For me, coming to Canada meant having intellectual, political and spiritual freedom, something that people in China don't have. I was so grateful," says Lee, who was one of the RBC Canadian Immigrant's Top 25 Immigrants recipients in 2016.

### A changed outlook on life

In 2006, shortly after Lee arrived in Canada, he read about a hospital located about 400 km north of his hometown, that had harvested organs from Falun Gong practitioners and sold them to foreign transplant tourism patients.

"I couldn't get that off my mind and kept thinking, 'could this be true?' Why had I not heard about it before? Living people, thousands of cases, brutally targeted only for their belief in truthfulness, compassion and tolerance?" says Lee.

He looked into the matter further and met human rights lawyer David Matas, senior legal counsel of B'nai Brith Canada and former Edmonton MP David Kilgour, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for investigating this issue. Lee documented Matas and Kilgour's work. Eight years later, the film *Human Harvest* was produced. He hopes his film will impact China's organ harvest traffic trade.

"Unfortunately, sources in China say the practice has not stopped nor decreased yet, but I'm hopeful that with more public awareness, people will demand that China account for their actions, the perpetrators

opposite from where I come from," says Lee.

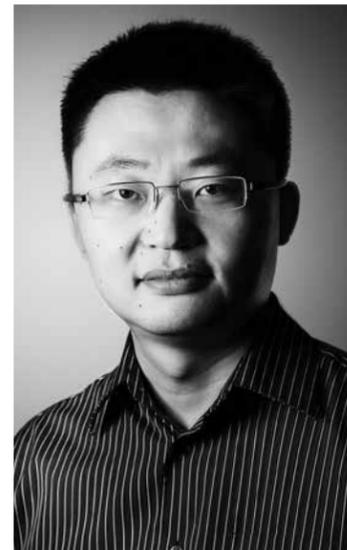
*Human Harvest* (2014) won many accolades internationally – more than what Lee was expecting. One of those awards included the Peabody award, a highlight of Lee's career. He was the first Canadian to receive this honour in the past 10 years.

"It has aired in over 20 countries and over 10 million people have seen it so far. It's been screened in parliaments around the world including the UK, Taiwan and Sweden, where it helped changed legislature. I never imagined it would have that impact," he says.

### Next move

Of the projects Lee has on the go, the next one that will be released later this year is called *Avenues of Escape*. It's about three women who meet when they are fleeing to escape persecution from China to the Burmese jungle.

"Armed with only a road map and a desire for justice, they must rely on their wits, courage and the compassion of strangers to navigate a treacherous passageway out. Staying behind means certain death, but the road ahead holds no guarantees. The story is a gripping thriller, but it saddens me to think it really happened to those inter-



▲ Filmmaker Leon Lee.

Photo by Ali Bordbar



▲ Leon Lee is presented with the Peabody award for *Human Harvest*.

Photo by Ilya S. Savenok/Getty Images for Peabody Awards

be brought to justice and that illegal organ trafficking will end forever," Lee says.

### Championing human rights

Lee says if he tried to make his films in China, he would be arrested, possibly thrown into labour camps and persecuted and tortured like many other human rights activists, lawyers and anyone who didn't toe the Communist party line. He says that Canada and China's attitudes are so different from one another.

"Here, they not only protect human rights champions, they award them. It's completely the

viewees, who are such kind and gentle people," explains Lee.

For Lee, being a former CEO of a medical device company and being a filmmaker have a lot of the same skills. Both roles need a strong vision that motivates people. Running a company and making a film need to be done with a team.

"When eye-opening stories are told from the heart, they move people and change the world like nothing else can," says Lee.

For more information, please visit [www.flyingcloud.ca](http://www.flyingcloud.ca) or [www.humanharvestmovie.com](http://www.humanharvestmovie.com)



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Artwork by Rick Leong, photo courtesy of Richmond Art Gallery



# A visual conversation with an Eastern flavour

by FIONA BENSON

In the Richmond Art Gallery's latest exhibit, *The Transformation of Things*, local artists collaborate to explore Chinese art heritage in a modern Western landscape. Paint, calligraphy and sculpture illustrate the movement of the human imagination in the natural world.

For Victoria-based artist Rick Leong, this show began over a year ago when Richmond Art

Gallery curator, Nan, Capogna approached him with the idea of a show built on Chinese visual history. They met with local artists who had expertise in traditional Chinese techniques, and developed a theme. Supported by a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts, Leong worked alongside Richmond artists Winifred Lee (watercolour), Li Desheng (calligraphy) and Ping-Kwong Wong (ceramics) to take on the experience of transformation. The result is a surreal combination of West Coast Canada and Eastern art traditions.

## Combining realities

A third-generation Canadian with a vivid style and a deep attentiveness to the world, Leong uses each project as the opportunity to learn and develop something new. While his work has always contained some Eastern traditionalism, *The Transformation of Things* called for a far more intentional study. He began with research into iconography and Chinese arts and crafts history. From there, Leong went to work with his trademark surrealism. He says he likes to explore the intersection of realms, namely how the subjective inner world plays with the objective

outer one. His style is a leap towards the fantastical that transforms an ordinary subject into an invitation to wonder. Woven throughout his pieces are Taoist philosophies such as the inevitability of change. In this show, Leong says the resulting work is a visual language – a “hybridized vernacular – between Chinese visual culture and the Vancouver Island landscape.

“I like to think that I paint the landscape of my imagination, informed and inspired by direct experience,” says Leong.

## Symbolism

Leong says that his piece *Hidden Hunger\** represents the urges behind personal transformation. “In and of itself I think that the hunger, the dissatisfaction, or the need for something more is what drives us down the mountain and precipitates movement and change,” explains Leong.

He says *Gold Mountain* stands as its antithesis, representing imaginary utopian desires. Leong doesn't recommend going into the show to try to decipher the language. Art, he explains, is a more powerful thing when viewed with an open mind because then it is free to interact with its surroundings.

“If you come at the work thinking that you know what it's all about, then you may miss how the art is working in a particular space, in that particular moment in time. So my suggestion is just be present with the work,” he says.

Capogna says that beyond the obvious artistic talent displayed in this show, each of the four artists impress as members of community. They all actively teach in addition to their own art practices.

Leong expressed a mutual appreciation when he was asked to describe the best part of the show.

“I am most proud of how everything came together, to be able to work with the excellent and professional staff at the Richmond Art Gallery, the other artists – each a master of their craft – and to be able to present this work to the Richmond community. It has been an honour and a privilege,” says Leong. ✍

The show runs until Oct. 2. For more information visit [www.richmondartgallery.org](http://www.richmondartgallery.org).

\* *Hidden Hunger* is shown on the front cover of this issue of *The Source*.

# Feeling at home with Portuguese Buns

by ALISON CHIANG

While Portugal shares similarities with other Latin countries in Europe such as Italy and Spain, Sandra Medeiros says it is unique in its own right – Portugal winning this year's Euro Cup certainly helps.

“You usually don't hear a lot about Portugal or its events in the city – it's so nice because Portugal gets lost in the shuffle,” says Medeiros, writer, producer and performer of *Festa* by Portuguese Buns Production.

*Festa* (pronounced FESH-ta) is a two-woman performance starring Medeiros along with Maria J. Cruz about growing up Portuguese-Canadian and all the ‘dramedy’ that occurs. It will be featured at this year's Vancouver Fringe Festival which runs Sept. 8–18.

“Maria, who I have known since high school, approached me to do a play about our upbringing and what it was like to be Portuguese. We want to tell our stories,” explains Medeiros, who was born and raised in Vancouver.

In terms of the name “Portuguese Buns,” Medeiros explains that Portuguese buns found in Vancouver bakeries are pretty famous and delicious. It is also a play on words.

“Our buns,” says the actress with a laugh.

*Festa* was written just for the Fringe Festival and is the first production by Portuguese Buns Production. This is Medeiros' third time performing at the Fringe Festival.

“It's so much fun. It's a place where artists collaborate to create works that are unique and

a bit of a burden because my parents didn't speak English well so I had to explain a lot to my parents – I was the go-between,” says Medeiros.

Medeiros' children are half-Greek, and she says she would like them to know and appreciate the Portuguese culture as well.

“I think they were brought up more Canadian than I was. They don't have to translate for me like I did for my parents,” says Medeiros.

She adds that *Festa* is an homage to her mom's great storytelling and the importance of storytelling in her culture. The show is also dedicated to Medeiros' father, who passed away recently.

“A lot of our stories are about our family – how things are done. It shows you a different perspective of the world, how people become the way they are, the struggles and challenges they've had to overcome,” she adds.

## What it means for a Portuguese-Canadian

Medeiros says the timing is right to produce a story to speak to Portuguese-Canadians, particularly those who are first generation children of immigrants.

“We (Cruz and Medeiros) are at that age, where we are straddling the two worlds and want to keep our culture and we're not living at home anymore. We don't have that influence [of culture and practice] from our parents anymore,” says Medeiros.

Medeiros hopes the audience will feel a part of a Portuguese family during the performance of *Festa*.

“The audience is invited to a Portuguese family dinner party.



▲ Clay! by Ping-Kwong Wong.



▲ Artists Rick Leong, Winifred Lee, Li Desheng and Ping-Kwong Wong.



▲ The Portuguese Buns (Sandra Medeiros on left, Maria J. Cruz on right) eating Portuguese buns.

where you can play around and take risks. It's a perfect place for art,” she explains.

## A traditional Portuguese upbringing

Medeiros and Cruz both went to Sir Charles Tupper Secondary School in Vancouver. Medeiros describes it as a very multicultural place; she says it was very cool to be surrounded by various cultures and ethnicities.

“For me, growing up as first-generation Portuguese-Canadian, I was brought up as Canadian with a lot of Portuguese influence. My parents were old-fashioned,” says Medeiros.

Medeiros also learned to speak Portuguese. Her parents, immigrants from Sao Miguel of Acorez Islands, Portugal, helped her to retain her Portuguese roots.

“You don't value a second language until you get older. It was

We want to make them feel like they're really part of it,” says Medeiros.

She adds that arroz doce, a common Portuguese rice pudding made of sweet rice, egg, milk, lemon and cinnamon, will be served at *Festa*.

“Portuguese [people] always make a lot of food, so having leftover rice is very common,” says Medeiros.

Medeiros says that although the Portuguese are not a showy people, they are proud of their culture. Sometimes being in the spotlight, sometimes, is nice.

“We are hardworking, we are loyal and we've made contributions to our community. And we give out a lot of food,” says Medeiros. ✍

For more information visit: [www.portuguesebuns.wix.com](http://www.portuguesebuns.wix.com) [www.vancouverfringe.com](http://www.vancouverfringe.com)

Photo courtesy of Richmond Art Gallery

Photo courtesy of Richmond Art Gallery

Photo by Micah Reid

# Cultural Calendar

August 30–September 13, 2016

by SIMON YEE

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer, filled with mementos, memories and fun! Alas, all good things must come to an end. September signals the end of summer and the beginning of fall (and school for many!). But why not squeeze in some late summer festivals before the season ends? Here are some cultural events happening around town to check out and mark down on your calendar!

\*\*\*

**Vancouver Latin American Film Festival**  
Aug. 25–Sept. 4  
Various venues  
[www.vlaff.org](http://www.vlaff.org)

This film festival returns to Vancouver to exhibit over 60 of the latest cinematic offerings from all over Latin America. From award-winning hits and socio-political documentaries to light-hearted comedies and short films, the films hope to inspire and inform audiences about the diverse Latin cultures here in Canada and internationally. There will also be opportunities to meet and chat with the filmmakers at many of the screenings.

\*\*\*

**The Shanghai Acrobats: Shanghai Nights – A Dream Journey**  
Sept. 1, 7:30 p.m.  
Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver  
[www.vancouver-symphony.ca](http://www.vancouver-symphony.ca)

For one night only in Vancouver, catch the world-renowned Shanghai Acrobats performing their latest show *Shanghai Nights – A Dream Journey* at the Orpheum. Founded in China in 1959, the troupe combines artistry and athleticism to tell the story of a young dreamer who enters a world of fantasy inspired by the Shanghai night sky. Tickets are available on the VSO website.

\*\*\*

**Richmond World Festival**  
Sept. 3, 11 a.m.–10 p.m.  
Minoru Park & Richmond Cultural Centre Plaza, Richmond  
[www.richmondworldfestival.com](http://www.richmondworldfestival.com)  
[www.visitrichmondbc.com/event/richmond-world-festival/1853/](http://www.visitrichmondbc.com/event/richmond-world-festival/1853/)

Following the success of last year's event, the Richmond World Festival returns to Minoru Park for the second time, showcasing the city's cultural diversity through food, music, sport and art. Featuring performances from over 60 musicians, culinary cook-offs, media films, art galas and sporting exhibitions, there will be something for everyone. Admission is free!

\*\*\*

**Nikkei Matsuri**  
Sept. 3–4  
Nikkei Museum and Cultural Centre, Burnaby  
[www.nikkeimatsuri.nikkeiplace.org](http://www.nikkeimatsuri.nikkeiplace.org)

This annual celebration of Japanese culture hosted by the Nikkei Cultural Centre returns to Burn-

aby for the fourth time, featuring food, performances, games and entertainment. Bring the kids down to chow down on a Japadog, play ring toss and mini-golf, dress up in a yukata traditional dress and cheer on talented musical and dancing contenders vying for the Matsuri Star.

\*\*\*

**Serbian Days**  
Sept. 3–4  
Saint Sava Church, Vancouver  
[www.serbianday.com](http://www.serbianday.com)

Bring the kids to this family-friendly event to partake in the celebration of all things Serbian at the 26th Serbian Days at Saint Sava Church. Learn about the heritage and folklore of Serbian culture, compete in a soccer tournament, enjoy grilled barbecued meats and listen to traditional trumpet and popular music. For those with babies, why not enter them in the Crawl-A-Thon? There are prizes for the three fastest babies!

\*\*\*

**TAIWANfest**  
Sept. 3–5  
Various venues  
[www.taiwanfest.ca](http://www.taiwanfest.ca)

Taiwanese culture will be front and centre during the 27th annual TAIWANfest held in downtown Vancouver. This year's theme, "Dialogues With Asia", celebrates Taiwan's place alongside the myriad Asian cultures. Program highlights include *A Cultural Tan-*

*go with Hong Kong*, a symphonic concert celebrating the shared music between the two regions; International Pan Asian Culinary Invitational, a cooking competition between renowned chefs; funk-jazz band Cosmos People and their musical performance, *The Path to Peace*.

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**Polish Festival**  
Sept. 4, 2–7:30 p.m.  
Lynn Valley Village, North Vancouver  
[www.belweder.org](http://www.belweder.org)

Come on down to the fourth annual Polish Festival at Lynn Valley Village, North Vancouver for a day of family fun. Activities include puppet shows, arts and crafts, singing and dancing. Traditional cuisine will be available, as well as vendors selling Polish accessories and merchandise. Special musical guest Groove N Tonic will perform.

\*\*\*

**Vancouver Fringe Festival**  
Sept. 8–18  
Various venues  
[www.vancouverfringe.com](http://www.vancouverfringe.com)

One of Vancouver's beloved festivals returns to Granville Island to delight, entertain and inspire independent theatregoers of all ages. From the humorous to the intellectual, the tear-jerking to the naughty, there's something for everyone. The festival opens with the murder mystery *Butt Kapinski, Dick on the Fringe* (with

a celebratory party afterwards), and closes with the Fringe Awards Night honouring the best of the 11-day festival.

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**Symmetry: A Duo Exhibition**  
Sept. 8–Oct. 8  
Jaydon Art Gallery, Vancouver  
[www.artlink-canada.com](http://www.artlink-canada.com)

From Sept. 8 to Oct. 8, Artlink will host the abstract paintings of American artist Tracie Cheung and Dutch artist Daniel Mullen in *Symmetry* at the Jaydon Art Gallery. Focusing on the intersections between art and architecture and how the two disciplines have complemented each other throughout history, Mullen and Cheung's paintings demonstrate the aesthetic beauty of the two disciplines' scale, precision, manipulation and perception. The opening night reception takes place on Sept. 8, 6–8 p.m.

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**HeArt of Europe**  
Sept. 10–11  
Robson Square, Vancouver  
[www.cityofnations.org/heart-of-europe](http://www.cityofnations.org/heart-of-europe)

The HeArt of Europe is coming to the heart of Vancouver on the weekend of Sept. 10. Bring the family to celebrate Central European culture at Robson Square with live entertainment, authentic cuisine, folk dancing, interactive art and more. For more information, please visit their website.

► "Language learning" from page 1 create customized videos with software that Bliss has produced. Whether a First Nations language or not, Bliss notes that learning a language delivers significant neurological benefits, contributing to neuroplasticity.

## Connecting cultures through language exchange

For Leighton, an organizer with the Dogwood Initiative, cultural sharing is central to the language exchange program she runs voluntarily outside her work. Compared to Dedegikas and Bliss, Leighton reckons her approach is "retro."

Last December, amidst the overwhelming response of Canadians wanting to assist Syrian refugees, Leighton saw an opportunity to connect English and Arabic speakers. Modelled on the UBC Tandem Program she founded in 2011, Leighton began a free 10-week Arabic-English language exchange for women at the Ajyal Centre in Vancouver, pairing up participants and facilitating two-hour informal meetings to practise each other's languages.

"I was comfortable tilting the program towards women, because men are often better able to access language programs," Leighton explains.

The Arabic women were all recent immigrants of between three months to a few years, ranging from 17 to 60, and coming from a variety of countries including Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates.

At the end of 10 weeks, the English and Arabic women broke the fast of Ramadhan together, eating and celebrating Eid at the Centre.

Marie Shuman, a participant in the exchange and current co-

ordinator of UBC Tandem, recalls sharing jokes and sending her partner her first text message in Arabic.

"Being able to speak [someone's] language helps you see where they're coming from," she says.

Resulting from this program, Shuman and Leighton have started Language Partners BC, a volunteer-run organization continuing to facilitate language exchange in the community.

This fall, they will host a 12-week Arabic-English exchange for men and the same for women at the Ajyal Centre, as well as Turkish-English exchange at the Little Mountain Neighbourhood House.

"There is a socially progressive agenda underlying what I'm doing, certainly, to help people overcome isolation in this city. I think having a physical space to go to and a smiling face that greets you is important," Leighton says.

## Words of advice

"It's not for the weak and weary," Dedegikas says.

Bliss, Dedegikas and Leighton all agree that language learning, whether online or offline, requires strong commitment.

"Enjoy the journey and accept it as a lifelong road. As someone who has read *Turkish in Three Months* for 13 years, I respect the road," Leighton adds. ✍

To learn more about the SNF New Media Lab and eNunciate!, visit [www.sfu.ca/snfchs/snf-new-media-lab.html](http://www.sfu.ca/snfchs/snf-new-media-lab.html) and [www.enunciate.arts.ubc.ca](http://www.enunciate.arts.ubc.ca) respectively. For more information about Language Partners BC and to join their programs, visit [www.languagepartnersbc.nationbuilder.com](http://www.languagepartnersbc.nationbuilder.com)

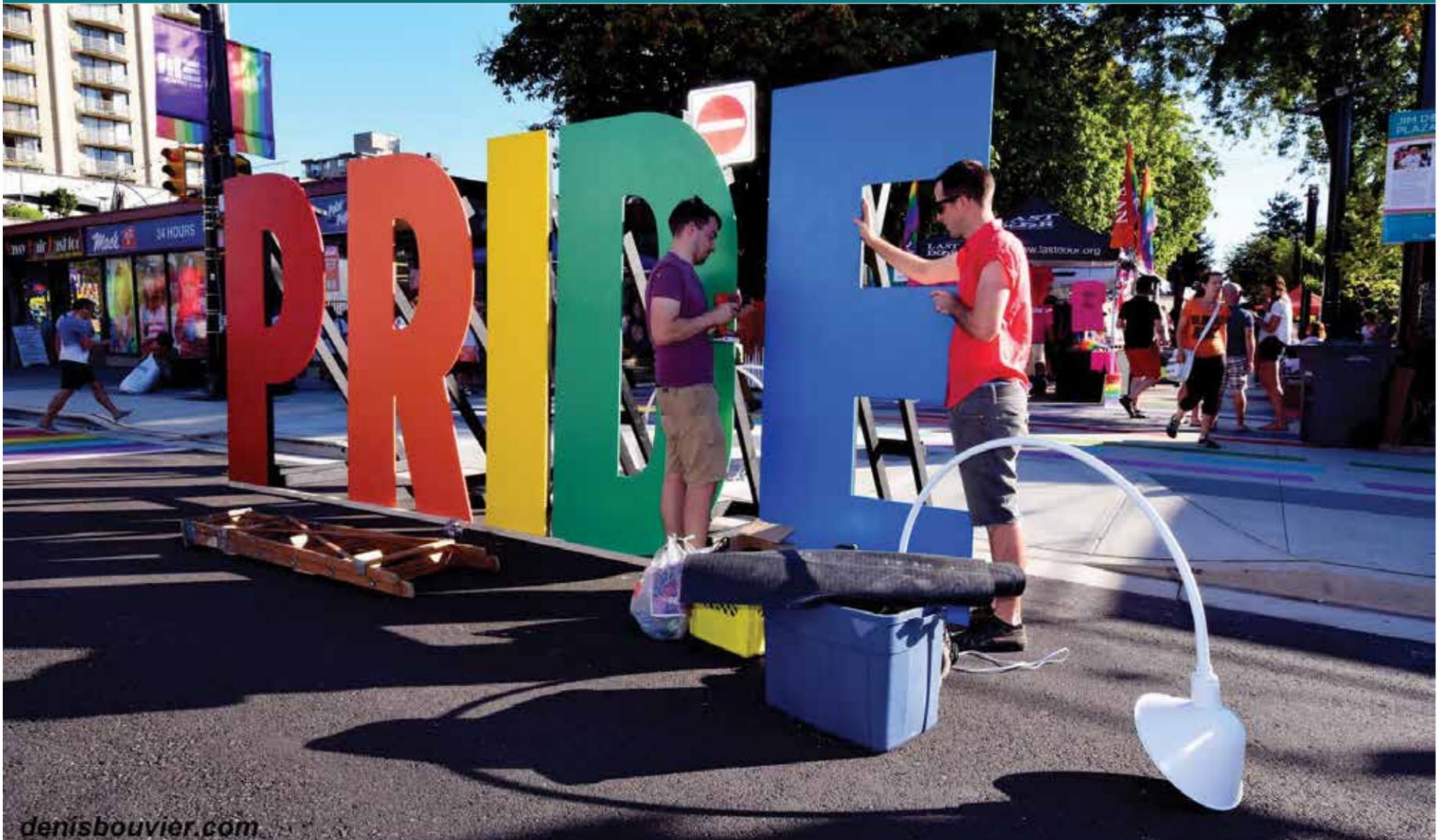


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## Rainbows abound at Bute and Davie

This is the beautiful Pride sign, in rainbow colours at Bute & Davie in Vancouver's West End. It stood in the new Jim Deva Plaza during Pride weekend. The sign was an initiative of Young Ideas, which works out of Gordon Neighbourhood House. Young Ideas proposes to connect young people who live in the West End with activities to help them gain a sense of community and health without great expense. As the 2016 Pride theme states: Better Together!

The rainbow colours in the sign had their origin in the rainbow-coloured Pride flag first created in San Francisco by gay rights activist and artist, Gilbert Baker. He created it as a symbol of pride for the gay community and it first appeared in the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade in June of 1978. Since

that time it has become an international symbol of pride in the diversity of the LGBTQ community. Each of the six colours has a specific meaning: red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sunlight, green for nature, blue for serenity, purple for spirit. The original flag had two more colours: pink for sex and turquoise for magic. However, manufacturing difficulties with these colours forced them to be dropped.

Waving the rainbow flag has become a political act of empowerment for the LGBTQ community and can be a provocative act in the 73+ countries where sexual acts by members of the LGBTQ community are deemed criminal. In ten of these countries, the death penalty can be imposed. We have seen the effects of discrimination with the deaths of club goers in Orlando, and ran-

dom acts of violence against the LGBTQ community in the Vancouver area still persist.

However, progress has been phenomenal and gay marriage has now become legal nationwide in roughly 23 countries, including Canada and the US. Recently, a bill promoted by BC MLA Spencer Chandra Herbert to include transgender people in the human rights code was passed in the BC Provincial Legislature. The BC Liberals refused to support the bill in four previous attempts to pass it. To celebrate this and other hard won freedoms of the LGBTQ community, the Jim Deva Plaza was officially opened on July 28, 2016. Jim Deva was one of the founders of Little Sisters Bookstore currently located on Davie between Bute and Jervis. It served as a haven for the LGBTQ community in Vancouver to meet, read

and shop without prejudice. Some of its materials were deemed obscene by Canada customs and Jim and his associates fought a court battle over censorship that lasted over 20 years. During that time, the original bookstore on Thurlow St. had been bombed three times, fortunately without injury to anyone. Although the Supreme Court ruled in Little Sister's favour, Canada Customs continues to discriminate and it has become financially impossible to do more. Jim also fought for safety in parks and public spaces to combat anti-gay violence and worked closely with City Hall to achieve this. Sadly, Jim Deva died from an accident in 2014.

The creation of the plaza is an homage to Jim Deva's work and as it states inside the huge megaphone installation there: A safe space, inspired by Jim Deva's

lifelong passion for freedom of sexuality, gender diversity, and the fight against censorship, where LGBTQ people and allies can meet, share ideas freely, dare to dream, and love unapologetically. The megaphone is also a metaphor for the difference one individual can make speaking out. But the Jim Deva Plaza as a whole is a place that symbolizes how many people can share their differences since we are all "better together." This message is permanently emphasized by the square's rainbow coloured patches on its surface and the rainbow crosswalks at the intersections of Bute & Davie.

Please visit Street Photography at *The Source* website for more pictures.

DON RICHARDSON

Recipe by Selma van Halder

## Taiwanese braised pork belly

Cooking with pork belly might seem daunting, but it really isn't. Nicely portioned slabs can be found at most Asian supermarkets and at your local butcher's. If you don't see any in the cooler, ask! The butcher will be happy to portion some for you. This recipe makes use of a slow cooker, but it can easily be done without it. You'd just need a heavy bottomed pan with a lid and a very low setting on your stove. With both methods it's important to keep an eye out: don't let the liquid evaporate too much, half the belly should be submerged at all times. This type of braised pork belly is traditionally served in Taiwan as a popular street food, on a steamed bun, with powdered peanuts, pickled mustard greens and cilantro.

A slab this size will make a lovely lunch for about 4.

### Ingredients

- 500 g pork belly
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 star anise
- 1 inch ginger, slices
- 1/3 cup dark soy
- 1/3 cup light soy
- 1/3 cup Shaoxing Chinese rice wine
- 1 cup water
- chili flakes (to taste)

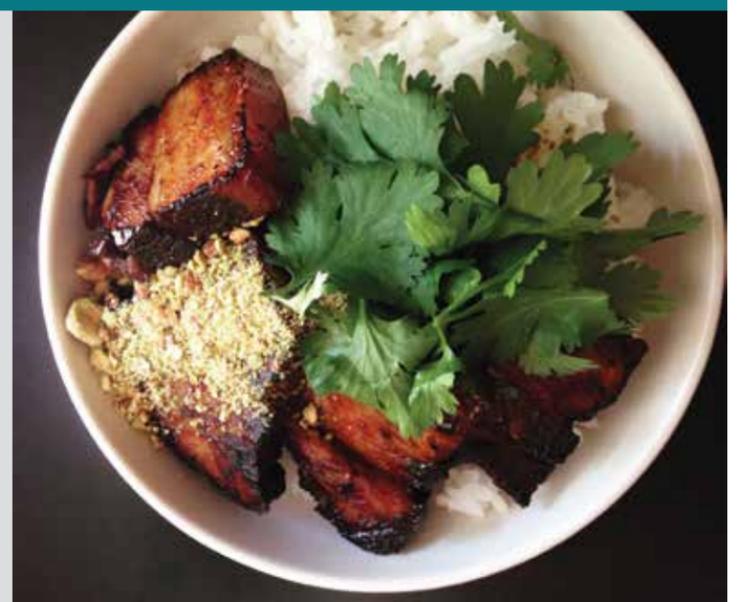
### Method

1. Heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat in a large skillet or non-stick pan. Rinse pork belly and pat dry. When the pan is hot, cook pork belly until lightly browned on the bottom, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook until lightly browned, about 2

minutes longer. Transfer pork belly to the bottom of your slow cooker, skin up.

2. In the same pan, add garlic and ginger and cook over medium-high heat, stirring, until fragrant. Add star anise and chili (if using), and sugar and cook, stirring, until the sugar is melted and bubbling, about 2 minutes. Add rice wine and bring to a boil, stirring until sugar dissolves. Add five spice powder, dark and light soy sauces, and water and bring to a boil.

3. Pour mixture over pork belly into the slow cooker. The mixture should almost reach the top of the pork belly. If it doesn't, add a little extra water. Cover and cook on low for about 5 hours, until very tender.



4. Lift the pork belly out of the slow cooker and onto a plate. Cool completely in the fridge. Reserve the cooking liquid in a separate container. When ready to serve, slice as many slices off the belly as you

need and pan fry them until nicely browned in some of the cooking liquid in a non-stick pan. Serve in a steam bun or on rice, with powdered nuts, cilantro, and pickles.