Two doses of medicine from the East

**by CURTIS SEUFERT**

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and Ayurvedic medicine are forms of medicine originally from China and India, respectively, with cultural histories dating back between 2000 and 5000 years depending on the particular philosophy or medical practice.

Both TCM and Ayurveda are seen as alternatives to Western medicine, which have been gaining knowledge and researching TCM since she taught English in China in the late 1990s, and has been formally practicing full-time since acquiring her degree in TCM in 2011.

Dr. Ling notes that TCM tends to be more holistic and preventative in nature than Western medicine, but that it has, similarly to Western medicine, changed and adapted over the years.

"There is a lot of culture and philosophy behind [TCM]. It has a lot of ritual practices behind it that have been adapted over the years, some of which have been lost, while others are coming back," says Dr. Ling.

There are four branches of Chinese medicine: acupuncture, herbology and herbal medicine, medical massage, and medical qigong. Dr. Ling describes qigong, the oldest of the four branches, as a kind of meditative practice that can be offered by a practitioner or taught to patients themselves.

"We have very specific types of movements, visualizations and hand motions that have particular meaning and function," says Dr. Ling. "It's a really wonderful way to receive a treatment that is just as powerful [as acupuncture], especially when people don't like needles."

For Dr. Ling, qigong is at the core of holism in TCM. "One can feel it not only on the physical, but also on an emotional and spiritual level. There is a real emphasis on all three energetic bodies," Dr. Ling says. "Not just the physical, but the emotional and spiritual as well."

There are also four levels of qigong: beginner, intermediate, advanced, and expert. The four levels are designed to help people develop their own personal practice and find balance in their lives.

"I soon realized that pretty well everybody has an accent here!"
Ireland’s national Abbey Theatre is being rocked for the lack of female representation in its theatre program commemorating the centennial of the 1916 Easter Rising, signifying the independence of the Irish Republic.

The series of theatre productions scheduled for 2016 centered around female contributions in achieving independence for the Irish Republic and how these historical events relate to 2016’s women’s movement for change.

“My talk is really about women’s place in Irish theatre and women’s place in the ongoing project of achieving an egalitarian Irish Republic,” says O’Toole.

Crisis in Ireland

Women across Ireland argued that their voices, stories and histories had been removed from the theatre program that was supposed to celebrate the centennial of the Easter Rising. According to O’Toole, 90 percent of the playwrights and directors were men and it was obvious that board members of the theatre had selected very few submissions from women.

“Many Irish women who were involved in the nationalist movement (during the 20th century) were also playwrights,” says O’Toole. “These women helped establish the Abbey Theatre, which continues to be a place for independent thought and controversial ideas that allows the people of Ireland to think about what is possible with a socialist republic.”

O’Toole says the centennial in spring 2016 was supposed to be a year of national introspection for Ireland— to encourage the people of Ireland to reflect critically on the questions that define them as a nation— yet the actions of the theatre suggest that only a male lens would suffice.

“Feminists suddenly realized that they were being told what’s important to Ireland, what would be reflected upon, and where Ireland is going,” says O’Toole. Taking a hint from the past

Dara Culhane, professor of Anthropology at SFU, has spent over a decade researching the corresponsive of women who have written about Canada from Ireland through historical archives.

“We’re interested in bringing Dr. O’Toole to Vancouver as a leading scholar in Irish studies in Canada,” says Culhane, PhD. Culhane believes that the crisis in Ireland should be of interest to all women, especially now, as women struggle to reaffirm their position in society after enduring misogynistic rhetoric spread by the President-elect of the United States of America. She is candid about her frustrations with the recent election results: “...we’ve been plunged back many generations to an era where many of us didn’t think we would return.”

Culhane senses the constant push and pull that women must endure to maintain their position and voice in society and says women cannot assume that their efforts in gender equality today will be understood and accepted in the future.

“The announcement made by the Abbey Theatre and the public outcry of feminists everywhere was the impetus for a much larger social conversation that includes women’s representation in Irish theatre. But it also stretches to other areas of the Irish arts like literature, the film industry—which is overtly patriarchal—and it extends to how women are treated socially and politically,” says O’Toole.

For more information about #WakingTheFeminists, please visit www.wakingthefeminists.org

#WTF – waking the feminists, the Irish way

by SUSAN HANCOCK

Simon Fraser University (SFU) Lecture Series presents Waking the Feminists: 2016’s Irish Theatre Revolution on Dec. 1 at the SFU Harbour Centre campus. Guest speaker Emer O’Toole, professor of Irish Canadian Studies at the University of Concordia, will explore Ireland’s revolutionary history and the role of theatre in shaping its politics.

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Conference gives voice to migrant youth in B.C.

by IAMMUN GUNAWARDENA

Funded by the largest community foundation in Canada, Vancouver Foundation, Fresh Voices works to improve experience of immigrants, refugees and other newcomers groups in B.C.

Vancouver Foundation, who has a focus in youth engagement, recognized that the need to express youth from the immigrant and refugee community exists.

“We thought that it was important to bring an event together where migrant youth come together with policy makers” says Jorge Salazar, project manager of Fresh Voices Grants & Community Initiatives at Vancouver Foundation.

“The diversity conversation in Canada has been about building bridges, but not so much about foundations. That's what we've been doing. Sure, build bridges! But, we need foundations,” he says.

According to Salazar, there is great importance in involving migrant communities in the Canadian democratic infrastructure, regardless of their immigration status. He mentions smaller communities, in particular, should be participating in these changes as well.

“There are less of them. There is less opportunity to celebrate their own cultural practices, calendar years, their own way of going about systems, and conversations. We are here to support them,” says Salazar.

With the help of B.C. Representatives for Children and Youth, they began pursuing this project through a series of dialogues and work shops from which their Youth Advisory Team was formed. This group of young immigrants and refugees worked tirelessly and created the first Fresh Voices conference in 2011.

Making a difference

Even from their first conference, Fresh Voices was creating change.

“The youth explained that the term E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) does not reflect their experience, Fresh Voices was creating a difference in the francophone milieu, according to Salazar.

“We had 80 spots and in two weeks, we had more than 180 registrations,” says Salazar. “We just couldn't keep up.”

He remembers an overwhelming interest, from both community members and elected officials, in the event; both the Vancouver Foundation and the Representative for Children and Youth (R.C.Y.) decided the event should continue.

Fresh Voices Conference 2016

This year, the Fresh Voices Conference will be happening on Dec. 4 and 5 with 200 available spots for attendees.

“We will talk about anti-blackness and islamophobia for the youth component, and for the policy component, we will talk about education and immigration,” says Salazar.

A keynote speaker at this year’s conference will be Deputy Minister of Education Dave Byng. The first day will be one of discussion where youth will be able to learn and engage themselves in conversations regarding current issues within their communities. On the second day, policy makers, elected officials, school board trustees and other adults will be invited to confer with the youth on these topics. The event creates an opportunity for immigrant and refugee youth to raise their concerns and truly influence change within their cities and communities.

Fresh Voices provides a space for migrant youth to meet and discuss the issues at hand and then a platform to voice them to elected officials and other policy makers.

“[Our success] is because of the attention given, because of the approach we took, and then the effect we have had,” explains Salazar.

The conference is free of charge and Fresh Voices encourages anyone with migrant background to attend the conference. Registration for the Fresh Voices Conference will be open until Nov. 25. For more information: www.freshvoices.ca
Nothing is impossible. That’s a phrase I’ve heard uttered by countless friends, colleagues, and acquaintances since Donald Trump’s unexpected victory over Hillary Clinton. Whatever the initial subject of a conversation these days, it inevitably turns quickly to the bizarreness of the Nov. 8 shocker south of the border.

All over the world, people and politicians are struggling to understand how this happened. Adjusting to this surreal new reality will take time, and it won’t be easy.

Some have suggested the U.S. election results represent the highest expression of a modern kakistocracy, meaning a society in which the rulers are the worst and least capable citizens. But while Trump’s impulsive, ignorant persona makes his capture unlikely, the toxic force propelling a rising far right worldwide. That’s the stuff of which Trump plays the clown, his much Trump may play the clown, but beware of his appointees.

Steve Bannon, his chief strategist, is one of the many undisciplined, bigoted candidates. They are the toxic fuel propelling a rising far right movement worldwide. However, much Trump plays the clown, his appointees are anything but a joke.

Some of Bannon’s first phone calls after the election was to French National Front leader Marine Le Pen, a rebranded fascist who is running a dangerously close second place in polls ahead of next Spring’s presidential elections.

All the far right leaders of Eu- rope are overjoyed by the rise of Trump. And with elections coming up in Austria, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Germany, there’s a very real danger that explicitly racist, nationalist, anti-immigrant parties will soon be controlling a number of key European coun-

tries.

The centrist, liberal establish-

ment in Europe is discredited and intellectually bankrupt. With their un- questioning loyalty to neoliberalism’s archaic and inequitable system of wealth and inequality it is time to cast aside the centrist and labor movement to decline. Trump seized the initiative with appeals to regional working class constituencies who felt abandoned, de-

nouncing corporate free trade deals like NAFTA and bashing the establishment. “The system is rigged,” he thundered. It’s true, of course, although Trump ne- glected to mention the system is rigged precisely in favour of monsters like him.

The other candidate in 2016 whose anti-establishment mes- sage resonated profoundly was Bernie Sanders, a 75-year-old democratic socialist who elec-
tified youth across the United States with his appeal for a high-

er minimum wage, free college education, and his impassioned calls to reduce inequality by ag-

gressively taxing billionaires like Trump. The phenomenal and unexpected success Sanders enjoyed in the Democratic pri-

maries, despite blatant collusion against him by top party officials and a mostly hostile mainstream media, is every bit as significant as the Trump phenomenon.

The world’s political map is be-

ing redrawn.

Canadian politicians are not im-
nune to the virus of Trump-
tism, even if there is less political space here for overt xenophobia and racism, and even though a popular and televisual new Liber-

al prime minister is still enjoying something of a long honeymoon with media and the public.

Perhaps even more important than smashing down the Cana-

dian politicians who try to mimic Trump’s vile rhetoric, people concerned with social justice and equality in Canada need to con-
sider the success of Bernie Sand-

ers in pushing for bold and un-

ashamedly leftist policies. The mil-

queaspe politics of centrism are less relevant than ever.

With the B.C. election less than six months away, there are en-
couraging signs that John Hor-

gan and the NDP are learning some lessons from the Sanders campaign. For one, they have ruled out running a campaign based on major financial com-

mitments and deficit spending, which of course is what helped Justin Trudeau win the last fed-

eral election. Recently, Horgan announced a new $10/day child care policy which will be a cen-

tral plank of the NDP election campaign.

In a recent interview with the Vancouver Sun, Horgan acknowled-
ged the influence of the old democratic socialist from Ver-

mont, “What I’ve heard a lot, and it goes back to the Bernie Sand-

ers (U.S. presidential) campaign, this notion of being bold. People say we need to be bold.”

For decades, establishment politicians have defended their timidity and defense of the status-

quo as pragmatism. “There is no alternative,” they told us, re-

peating Margaret Thatcher’s fa-
mous mantra. Trump has proven that there is an alternative – only monsters like him.

The challenge now is to keep alive the hope of a better alternative, and the other candidate in 2016 was rigged. It’s true, of course, that the system is rigged precisely in favour of monsters like him.

The centrist, liberal establish-

ment in Europe is discredited and intellectually bankrupt. With their un-
questioning loyalty to neoliberalism’s archaic and inequitable system of wealth and inequality it

casterial and labor movement to decline. Trump seized the initiative with appeals to regional working class constituencies who felt abandoned, de-

nouncing corporate free trade
Chantez Noël

by Cherrie Lam

What does it mean to be Jewish? In challenging dominant narratives of intermarriage, sociologists and married Jewish-Asian couple Helen Kiyoung Kim and Noah Samuel Leavitt explore the ways in which they, their children and many Jewish-American Americans navigate this crossroads of race, religion and ethnicity.

“Our work helps readers to understand how what might at first look like a long list of differences can in fact, for the people involved, be understood as similarities,” says Leavitt.

On November 28, Kim and Leavitt will be discussing their research at a panel on cultural intersections, during the Jewish Book Festival at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver.

For Kim, a Korean American associate professor of sociology, and Leavitt, a Jewish American associate dean of students at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, raising their two curious, young children has brought to the forefront an ongoing conundrum of comprehending their families’ mixed-race and religious identities.

But Kim and Leavitt are not alone – what seemed like an unlikely couple when they first started dating in 1997 is now part of a rising trend of Jewish-Asian marriages across America.

Against the backdrop of recent, prolific Jewish-Asian unions like that of Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and pediatrician Priscilla Chan, Kim and Leavitt noticed a gap in academic literature on these partnerships, initiating a seven-year qualitative examination of intermarriages between Jewish Americans and Asian Americans.

Their recent publication, Jewish-Asian: Race, Religion, and Identity for America’s Newest Jews, is an unprecedented book-length analysis on the subject.

A personal story behind the pedagogy

Launched amidst Kim’s pregnancy with the couple’s first child, Kim and Leavitt’s research delved into personal curiosities about their future family.

The two sociologists saw their relationship flourish through the values like academic performance and work ethic, between their seemingly dissimilar Asian and Jewish backgrounds and eventually got married in 2002.

However, in spite of her keenness to nurture practicing Jewish children and conversion to Judaism last December, Kim, a child of Korean immigrant parents, has not always readily seen herself reflected within the Jewish community at large.

In their book, Kim and Leavitt describe a past conversation in which their son, Ari, eight, argued that Kim cannot be simultaneously Korean and Jewish, as Kim’s parents did not practice Judaism.

Likewise, Kim’s students often express surprise in learning that her children are Jewish.

Leavitt says, “I’ve really had my eyes opened to how my whiteness allows me to avoid being challenged as not being ‘authentically’ Jewish...”

Noah Samuel Leavitt, Jewish-American

To their surprise, the testimonies contradicted the existing discourse that Jewish intermarriage leads to diminishing Jewish self-identification.

Many mentioned regular observation of the Sabbath, synagogue attendance, as well as children’s participation at Hebrew schools.

“Judaism and Jewish identity were being instilled in a marriage and family life in very traditionally Jewish ways,” Leavitt comments.

Moreover, most mixed-race youth interviewees defined themselves more deeply by their Jewish faith than by their Asian heritage. Kim explains that with-out a similar text like the Torah, Asian cultural practices are often more ambiguous and cumbersome to pass on compared to Jewish practices.

“The main takeaway was making everything available to them – learning, education and resources that validate their histories and heritages – so they can pick, choose, and figure out who they are and what they want to be,” Kim says.

Jewish Book Festival in Vancouver

From Nov. 27 to Dec. 1, the Jewish Book Festival brings together celebrated Canadian, American and Israeli writers.

Leavitt says, “We are excited to meet and talk to people in Vancouver for whom the book has relevance but from whom we can learn regarding a different cultural context and racial landscape.”

For more information about the Jewish Book Festival, visit www.jccgv.com.
Spotlight on grit, resilience and a touch of humour at Turkish film fest

by GORDON GAMLIN

This year’s Vancouver Turk-
ish Film Festival (VTFF) holds special signifi-
cance in light of the
country’s recent challeng-
es. The festival takes place in
partnership with the Vancou-
er International Film Festival
at VIFF Vancity Theatre, run-
ning from Nov. 25 to Nov. 27.

“Our goal is to bring the best of
Turkish film is now witness-
and significance in light of
the country’s recent challeng-
es,” says Hakan Burcuğlu,
VTFF’s director.

For the first time, the VTFF re-
ceived direct funding from the
Turkish Ministry of Culture.

“Even though the government
was literally operating within a
state of emergency, crucial fund-
ing and acknowledgement was
finalized in the weeks leading up
to the Vancouver festival,” says
Burcuğlu. “This has been a diffi-
cult year for Turkey, and in times
like these, the artists’ evocative
works reflect our humanity back
onto ourselves.”

According to Burcuğlu, this
year’s line-up reflects how Turk-
ish artists are responding to
these troubles. Festival high-
lights include Q&A sessions with
Nurser Çetin Kören, actress
and co-writer of Blue Bicycle,
Maksut Aşkar, central character
of The Turkish Way and head chef
of Istanbul’s Neolokal restaurant
and Haydar Şişman who stars in
Cold of Kalandar.

Blue Bicycle stands out as a
coming-of-age story about con-
temporary Turkey that recently
won Best Picture, Best Direc-
tor, and Best Screenplay at this
year’s prestigious International
Antalya Film Festival (Turkey).

“It’s our strongest line-up to
date, ranging from arthouse films
to a world-class animated film
about a cynical alley cat,” says
Burcuğlu.

Current Trends

“Turkish film is now witness-
ing its own renaissance,” says
Burcuğlu.

Serving as a producer, direc-
tor and writer, Burcuğlu is in
a unique position to give some
historical context to help under-
stand current trends.

“As a millennial, I grew up
with zero Turkish movies. Only
my parents’ Turkish tapes of
the 70s were available to me,”
Burcuğlu explains. Main-
stream Turkish movies are
more popular than Hollywood
movies these days. “Younger
people prefer Turkish movies,”
says Burcuğlu.

The increasing viewership and
positive reception in turn help
to shape and define aesthetic quali-
ties.

“As a result, Turkish cinema has
grown into a distinct school. Ev-
erywhere, people recognize and
are developing a strong affin-
ity for Turkish cinema now, and
many Vancouver filmgoers are
themselves a great example of
this trend,” he says.

2017 Oscar contender

The movie Cold of Kalandar is
attracting international atten-
tion as Turkey’s Oscar contender
for the 2017 Academy Award
for Best Foreign Language Film.
The tightly-knit family’s story of
survival is set within a stark at-
mosphere of Turkey’s northern
Black Sea mountain region.

“It’s a movie of epic proportions,
filmed over four years. The lead,
non-traditional actor Haydar
Şişman delivers an absolutely
breathtaking tour-de-force per-
formance,” says Burcuğlu.

“Turbulent times are also the
best times for artists to cre-
te their best works,” says
Burcuğlu. “Great challenges
create great art. We present leg-
endary Turkish auteurs known
for their strong courage. The
cinema says it all. It speaks for
itself.”

For more information,
visit www.vtff.org
Topdog/Underdog examines sibling rivalry with a twist

by FLORENCE HWANG

An upcoming play refers to one of America’s most divisive presidents, and no, not Donald Trump. A play called "Lincoln and Booth" by Suzan-Lori Park’s Topdog/Underdog, presented by the Seven Tyrants Theatre, is a two-person drama focusing on two brothers named Lincoln and Booth. The play runs from Nov. 24 to Dec. 3 at Studio 1398.

Director David Newham says he has seen a cycle of presidential campaigns touching on race in America, and around the world. I feel it’s more a part of our everyday... now than it was in 2002,” Newham says.

Rich characters, rich relationships

Newham appreciates the play is written from an unusual point of view: the underdog of two African-Americans. He says the drama, which is rooted in a long tradition of brotherly rivalry, is funny yet heart-breaking.

Topdog/Underdog is being presented in Western Canada for the first time this November. The play is about two brothers. The story of the two brothers – Cain and Abel. You kind of guess when they were ages 16 and 11. Lincoln becomes the father figure, but his younger brother, played by David Lloyd. After Lincoln loses a friend to street violence, he decides to get out of hustling and get a regular job.

"Booth then lost respect for him when Lincoln stopped hustling because that's all that Booth wanted to do – he wanted to be like his older brother," says Church. Church says he can relate to Lincoln. He remembers his mother telling him that he had to hustle, or work harder, than everyone else.

"I took those words to heart because they're always watching. Being a black guy in this industry, I feel like I've got to work that much harder for it and definitely make sure that when I show up I'm prepared," he says. Newham says the key element – the story about the two brothers – could potentially get lost in the discourse around this play.

"The first and foremost thing is that it's amazing drama about two brothers. The story is told from a point of view we don't hear very often on the stages of Vancouver," Newham says.

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For more information, visit www.seventyrants.com.

I think the story, the topic, the themes are almost more relevant today than they were in 2002 – the themes of class and race in America, and around the world.

David Newham, director of Topdog/Underdog

ism, sexism and classism. He also wishes to draw attention to murders of innocent young people in the United States, the police force and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Parks's Pulitzer Prize win in 2002 with Topdog/Underdog is the first time a female African-American has been awarded this prize. Newman feels it was groundbreaking and ahead of its time.

"I think the story, the topic, the themes are almost more relevant today than they were in 2002 – the themes of class and race in America, and around the world. I feel it's more a part of our everyday... now than it was in 2002,” Newham says.

Topdog/Underdog, a play by Suzan-Lori Park, performed in Topdog/Underdog, a two-person drama focusing on two brothers named Lincoln and Booth. The play runs from Nov. 24 to Dec. 3 at Studio 1398.

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“A lot of Chartrand's work is about racism,” says Beth Carter, curator of the Bill Reid Art Gallery. “I don’t get racism in my life...for native people, it’s constant, it’s draining. When people found [out that] I'm native, kids won't play with me,” says Chartrand. “But I will never let them make me feel ashamed of being Indian. I am vocal, I always talk about racism, that’s the problem being solved.”

Chartrand’s own mother, Melanie Chartrand, had spent 12 years as a chambermaid to support her family. “The experience Chartrand says affected her mother’s parenting ability. A survivor of two abusive relationships, Melanie Chartrand was left with the responsibility of raising 13 children alone while working as a chambermaid to support her whole family.

For more information, visit www.billreidgallery.ca.
Canadian jazz, Sicilian soul

by Andrew Kruschell

Guitarist, composer and arranger, Michael Occhipinti excels at making his guitar gently wave between technical styles and genres with progressive precision, all while letting his own personality shine through.

Occhipinti is currently on tour with the Sicilian Jazz Project, a band that showcases Occhipinti’s heritage through jazz fusion and features the Italian vocalist, Pilar. The Sicilian Jazz Project plays at theetch Historic Theatre on Nov. 25.

When past meets passion

The Sicilian Jazz Project originated when Occhipinti made a family trip to Modica, a town on the southern end of Sicily where his parents grew up and much of his extended family still lives. After the trip, Occhipinti took to studying the work of musicologist and world folk song promoter Alan Lomax in order to better understand the Sicilian sound. “Alan Lomax and his father, John, would go out into the Appalachians and the fields and record music that they thought would die out,” explains Occhipinti.

Occhipinti rearranged some of the Lomax recordings, and in 2009 the Sicilian Jazz Project released their first album. Other than Occhipinti himself, the line-up for the band has always been fluid. However, one important contribution came in the form of Occhipinti’s brother, Roberto. Roberto produced and played bass on the record, making this band the sibling’s first project together.

Connecting to Sicily

The Sicilian Jazz Project’s second album landed in 2015 after Occhipinti’s parents going out dancing on the weekend.

“She has a lot of electricity!” says Occhipinti. “Every gesture she makes and every glance she gives – she is so immersed in the music.”

The Sicilian dialect, which Occhipinti learned from his parents, is wielded beautifully throughout the music. While it wasn’t Occhipinti’s intention to preserve this nearly extinct way of speaking, he wants to acknowledge the reverence those in Sicily still have for it as well as the unique impact it had on his life.

“I have this language but I have no one to speak it with,” says Occhipinti. “You have to incorporate your own thing, then the song and the language is alive in the present tense.”

An origin of sound

Growing up in Toronto, Occhipinti was exposed to a large array of musical genres through his father’s adoration for opera and the passion for hip-hop. His two older brothers, already established musicians before Occhipinti even picked up a guitar, fulfilled their brotherly duties by taking him out to jazz clubs and symphonies at a young age.

Occhipinti began his musical quest at age 13 when curiosity reached a tipping point and he practiced with his first guitar. Occhipinti developed his talents quickly and traversed many genres before going to school and turning his passion into musical professionalism. “I loved practicing [guitar], unlike all my friends in high school,” says Occhipinti. “I was actually in a pop band for a time and we were very serious about writing pop music.”

When the Sicilian Jazz project comes to Vancouver, it is a commemorative stop on the Canadian tour as this great city is home to the person that originated this musical concept to Pilar. Occhipinti is grateful for friends and acquaintances like Pilar and Occhipinti. “I was actually in a pop band for a time and we were very serious about writing pop music.”

Occhipinti took a four-month fellowship in Sicily, living only a few kilometres from Modica. During this immersive time, Occhipinti took every opportunity he could to meet the members of the community, play music with others and indulge in local specialties like chocolate.

The album is titled Muorica, the proper Sicilian name for the tomato and features a 40-page booklet with pictures, song explanations, recipes and more. Occhipinti wrote original music, taking many lyrics from well-renowned Sicilian poets. Pilar, a pop/jazz vocalist based out of Rome, decided to contribute her own sounds to Muorica. The energy and emotion she contributes to the group is prominent in the album’s opening track, Amuninni/Ruzzetta, a song about Occhipinti’s parents going out dancing on the weekend.

“For information visit:

www.michaelocchipintimusic.com

PHOTO CREDIT: MICHAEL OCCHIPINTI
Jayeonmi: (natural Beauty) all around

by ALISON CHIANG

Ilsoo Kyung’s exhibition, Jayeonmi, depictions the significance of the environment, as well as her message to her audience. The exhibition takes place (Oct. 27-Dec. 10) at Douglas College.

Kyung, who immigrated to Vancouver from South Korea at the age of 29, says the environment has always been an inspiration for her artwork.

“I grew up near a forest in a small town, the walk was quite far to school (almost an hour), had to climb up a mountain: it was inspiring,” says Kyung, 80, who now lives in Ladner.

Kyung describes the exhibition as a multimedia piece, which includes: acrylic paintings, landscape prints, photography, woodcuts (printmaking) and a paper culture as well.

“While I was walking around Burrard Street downtown, you can see the reflection so I used that as a base. I also was influenced by the Ladner landscape, the Richmond fishing village and animals in the environment. For the paper culture, I used Korean rice paper,” explains Kyung.

Beginnings

Kyung never thought she would be an artist.

Having experienced both the Second World War and the Korean War, Kyung says life was tough for immigrants back then. They often came to Canada ‘empty-handed’ and had to work very hard.

“When I came, I didn’t have 100 dollars in my hand. I had to earn my own money by working as a nurse (a license which I had to work very hard and long for),” says Kyung.

She decided to take her first art class in her mid-60s.

“I knew that I didn’t want my retirement to be in the house watching TV,” she says.

She tells a story about how on the second day of class, the art instructor couldn’t believe Kyung never painted or had prior art experience.

“But I didn’t even know how to hold a brush!” says Kyung, with a laugh.

That was both motivating and inspiring for Kyung. Some of her nursing colleagues also complimented her on her work.

“My husband says he doesn’t like my painting but prefers my photography, so I mix it up: a little of both and everything,” says Kyung, who also does video art.

Meaning in art

Kyung says she doesn’t consider her work political, but rather a representation of her personal opinions.

“Most times, it surrounds environmental awareness. It’s always about landscape, about nature,” she says.

The artist, who was also inspired by the works of the Group of Seven, says symbolism is important in art, but the way it comes across varies from artist to artist.

“Most artists try to give a message to the public and that’s important. It’s something intentional and sometimes by accident,” Kyung says.

Kyung wants to bring awareness to the environmental consequences of people’s disregard for nature.

“I want people to know we are wasting materials, like tossing garbage in the river or someone [tossing] their cigarette butt on the ground...this is carelessness – of course we don’t want people to do this,” she says.

Happiness in art

Kyung, who is currently teaching art classes once a week to seniors as a way to give back to the community, says she hasn’t always liked Group of Seven.

She says her previous work was very dark and depressing.

“I felt I had to change,” says Kyung.

After walking around, looking at other people’s work, she decided to make her work happier.

“So my painting [became] quite bright and colourful, like Group of Seven,” Kyung says.

The artist says adding emotion to art can be challenging; sometimes you can see peace or anger in there, but it’s hard to describe.

The best compliment someone can give Kyung is when someone is really happy with her work.

“One in a while when I put my painting on Facebook, people comment: ‘Your work is like the Group of Seven.’ It’s really a big compliment because I think, ‘Areally, am I like that?’” says Kyung.

Kyung hopes people like her work and ultimately feel a sense of joy.

“When you see an image, you may feel happiness or sadness, so I’m trying to draw to make people happy – that’s important to me,” she says.

Cultural Calendar

November 22–December 6, 2016

by SIMON YEE

The Christmas season is in the air as we close in on December. Time to get your holiday shopping done at the many Christmas markets throughout the city. As always, there are film fests, live performances, technology lectures, holiday markets and many other events and festivals happening around town. Here are few to check out and add to your calendar!

***
European Union Film Festival Nov. 18-30
The Cinematheque, Vancouver
www.thecinematheque.ca

Come on down to the Cinematheque Theatre to experience the cinematic offerings from 23 European Union countries during the 19th Annual EU Film Festival. Catch a Romanian thriller about the perils of tabloid journalism, a Finnish film chronicling the stories of the remote Sami community or a Slovenian budding love story between two women from different worlds coming together by chance. From documentary to drama, comedy and historical, there's plenty to see. For showtimes and movie information, check out their website.

***
Disney on Ice: Worlds of Enchantment Nov. 25-27
Pacific National Exhibition, Vancouver
www.disneyonice.com

Take the kids to the Pacific Coliseum at the PNE to catch your favorite Disney characters on ice. This family-friendly show will recreate scenes and short stories from four Disney and Pixar films: Cars, Frozen, Toy Story and The Little Mermaid. See Lighting McQueen and the Cars cast speed across the ice or watch the daring great escape from the Sunnyville Dogcare of Buzz, Woody and the rest of the toys. For tickets and further information, check out their website!

***
Candytown
Nov. 25-27, 7-10 p.m.
Vancouver, Vancouver
www.vancouverchristmasmarket.com

Take the kids to check out Yaletown on November 25 to see Candytown: an outdoor winter market featuring live music, horse carriage rides, ice carving demonstrations, candy making and a visit from Santa and the Ice Queen. Enjoy some holiday treats while you get your holiday shopping done, with unique and themed gifts.

***
A Charlie Brown Christmas Nov. 26-Dec. 4
The Waterfront Theatre, Vancouver
www.carouseltheatre.ca

Good grief! The Waterfront Theatre is putting on their musical adaptation of Charles M. Schulz’s holiday classic, A Charlie Brown Christmas, to get you into the Christmas spirit. Join Charlie Brown as he tries to organize a school pageant, but in the process learns the true meaning of the season. Featuring Andrew Cowden as Charlie Brown and Allan Zimny as Snoopy, this play will be sure to delight the family. For showtimes and further information, check out their website.

***
Vancouver Christmas Market Nov. 26-Dec. 31
Jack Poole Plaza, Vancouver
www.vancouverchristmasmarket.com

The Seventh Annual Vancouver Christmas Market will be held at Jack Poole Plaza for all of December. Take a holiday photograph, decorate your home with the unique arts and crafts on sale and listen to live performances! For the adults, don’t forget to down some holiday Glühwein!

***
VAMSO: Peter and the Wolf and The Bells Nov. 27, 7 p.m.
Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver
www.vancouveracademyofmusic.com

The Vancouver Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra (VAMSO) presents two 20th Century Russian compositions: Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf and Rachmaninoff’s The Bells. Peter and the Wolf tells the tale of a young boy who outwits his gremlin foe. The enchanting classic will come to life with music by young VAMSO artists coupled with a splendid performance by the Goh Ballet. Next, the orchestra will share the stage with the Vancouver Bach Choir in Rachmaninoff’s resplendent score for Edgar Allan Poe’s The Bells. Poe’s illustrious verses will ring out anew as the mass ensemble evokes the rich tones and timbres that paint this vivid masterpiece. For tickets and more information, check out their website.

***
Jewish Book Festival Nov. 27-Dec. 4
Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver www.jccgv.com

Join some of the Jewish community’s prominent and emerging writers at the Jewish Book Festival as they read from their latest works. Events include literary presentations, readings, lectures and workshops for audiences of all ages. Be sure to catch the opening night gala with existential psychologist Dr. Irvin D. Yalom as he presents his latest book, Creatures of Day and Other Tales of Psychotherapy.

***
The International Race for a Quantum Computer Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m.
SFU Harbour Centre, Vancouver
www.sfu.ca/publicsquare

With technology getting more compact and the space between silicon transistors getting smaller, many technologists are seeing the limits of transistor-based computing. As a result, some technologists believe the way forward is building computers that operate at the quantum level. Quantum computers, they argue, will lead to a tremendous advance in computation, power and, possibly, self-aware artificial intelligence. Join material science professor Stephanie Simmons as she discusses the possible next generation of technological advances and how to create a working prototype.

***
Poly-Allergia Night: The China Philharmonic Orchestra Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m.
Or Shalom Synagogue, Vancouver
www.orshalom.ca

The China Philharmonic Orchestra will be coming to UBC on November 30 to perform three musical compositions: Ludwig van Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Zheng Lu and Ma Hong-jieh’s Good News from Beijing and Antonin Dvořák’s Symphony No. From the New World. Featuring 11 year old pianist Serena Wang and conductor Maestro Long Yu, the orchestra has performed at many venues throughout the world, and was named one of the world’s most inspiring orchestras by Gramophone online. For tickets and further information, check out their website.

***
Twilight Between the Worlds Nov. 26, 7 p.m.
Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver
www.orchsalom.ca

Join guest scholar and storyteller Simcha Raphael and the Or Shalom Synagogue as they explore the Jewish folk perspec- tive on the meaning of life and death with traditional Jewish tales of ghosts, wandering spirits and reincarnating souls at the Mountain View Cemetery on November 26. Admission is free, but seating is limited. To register and for more information, check out their website.

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Pigeon Park: A symbol of despair and hope

This small triangular park, on the north corner of Hastings and Carrall Streets is virtually on the east/west divide of Vancouver. It's at the heart of Vancouver's history, standing on the southeast corner of the 1873 Granville Townsite, which pre-dated the city of Vancouver. It's also on the traditional territories of the Squamish, Tseil-Waututh, and Musqueam First Nations.

In the early 1990s, the area was literally the centre of the new city of Vancouver with City Hall, the courthouse and the BC Electric Railway head office all neighbours. There were banks and a vibrant shopping district on Hastings St. roughly between Main and Granville. Before the park was established, there was a CPR spur line on the site that connected the False Creek Railyards with the main line on the site that connected with the city.

However, with the growth of the city the spur line became a traffic impediment and was eventually replaced with the Dunsmuir Tunnel in the early 1930s. Once the tracks were removed, plans were made for the conversion to a park. It was the depression years and many itinerant workers were milling around hoping to find work. It was felt that a little green space would brighten the area and give these labourers a place to rest. In 1938, the CPR deemed the land to the city.

Officially, the name of the park is Pioneer Place. Locals, however, began calling it Pigeon Park. People hanging out in the park fed pigeons and there were complaints before the park was paved over in the early 1960s that pigeons were ruining the grass.

After the depression, many itinerant workers left the area except for men who were disabled, sick or elderly. Pigeon Park became a place for these men to hang out and drink. At the same time, there was a shift to the west of the downtown district businesses, towards Granville St. and Robson St. Even City Hall relocated in 1936. Then there was the closure of the BC Electric Railway's downtown office and depot in the 50s. All this resulted in a loss of tourist traffic and gradually many local hotel rooms turned into rundown, low-rent housing. Prostitution became established in the 60s and the 80s introduced heavy drugs. At the same time, the provincial government had downsized mental health facilities relocating many patients to the Downtown Eastside (DTES) without proper aftercare. The cut off of funding for social housing by the Federal Government in the 90s surely contributed to the prevalence of homelessness we see today. Cuts to the provincial welfare program in the early 2000s just put another nail in the coffin.

So today the DTES is one of the poorest areas in all of Canada. Drugs, mental illness, crime, prostitution, abject poverty, rising housing prices all make for a toxic mix and there is a high rate of Aboriginals living in the area who are immersed in this toxicity. All of this is reflected in the current frequenters of Pigeon Park. People are still hanging out, drinking, as well as doing drugs.

The situation may seem hopeless but what is amazing is the resilience of the residents! There are over 2000 people frequenting them on Sundays at Pigeon Park, which allow local residents a modicum of pride in being able to sell goods to help supplement a meagre income. 

The Survivors Totem Pole was carved by Haida artist Skundaal, the totem represents a three-year collaboration between First Nations, DTES advocates, the LGBTQ community, Japanese, Chinese and South Asians.

The 8 metre, 980 year old cedar tree was carved by Haida artist Skundaal and a team of 12 apprentices. She was the first woman apprentice of famed Haida carver Bill Reid and is also a long time DTES resident. To Skundaal, the totem represents the fact that survivors are still standing and standing together. The animals carved on the pole symbolize transformation, protection, renewed strength and unity.

Please visit www.thelasource.com for more pictures. 

Don Richardson

Dublin Coddle

A Coddle is basically a leftover stew. Traditionally eaten in Ireland on Thursdays, to finish any meat left in the house, it is a hearty potato based dish best made in a Dutch oven, or any other heavy lid on the fire. It sounds like a very cheap dish with little flavour, this dish lends itself really well for a little investment in your basics. Visit your local butcher for good in-house made pork sausages (like Cumberland sausages) with some beautiful herbs and spices, good bacon, and butcher made beef broth. The investment will show in the flavour of the end result. Since this was traditionally a dish that contained everything but the kitchen sink, feel free to change it up. Serve this warm winter dish with a fresh tossed salad and a zingy vinaigrette.

Ingredients
• 200 g bacon
• 3 large potatoes
• 1 large onion
• 3 large fresh sausages
• 2 cups good quality beef stock
• 2/3 cup Guinness
• fresh or dried parsley

Method
1. Heat a little butter and olive oil, brown your sausages on all sides in the stove, in a heavy faled, oven proof pot. Slice the bacon into smaller pieces and render until slightly browned.

2. Meanwhile peel your potatoes and cut into thick slices. Peel and slice one onion into thin strips.
3. Take the sausages out of the pan and cut into thick slices. Drain most of the fat out of the pan, into a glass container. Keep by the side of your stove to cook with on another day.
4. Layer potatoes, bacon, sausages and onion in the pot. Add the beef stock, parsley and Guinness. Crack some fresh pepper over the dish and cover tightly. If there is no need to add salt to this dish, both the bacon and the sausages will provide enough flavour.
5. Cook in a 300 degree oven for 2 to 3 hours. Check every hour to see if there is still liquid in the pot. If you need to, add a bit of beef stock. Test if the potatoes are cooked by pricking them with a fork. You want them to be soft, but not falling apart.
6. Serve hot, with a side salad and some Irish soda bread to mop up the juices.