Room for diversity in a changing workplace

by RAMAN KANG

The 2018 Community Summit, Brave New Work, invites audiences to consider how society can be successful in a changing world (Feb. 26–Mar. 7).

"This year's Community Summit, Brave New Work, asks a critical question: 'How can we thrive in the changing world of work?' says Janet Webber, executive director at SFU Public Square, a community engagement program at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Brave New Work The Community Summit, a week-long event, is meant to make audiences aware of various current issues in the world of work, prompt to action and work together to find solutions for a better future.

"We hope to appeal to a broad base of attendees, inviting as many people into the conversations as possible, with the goal to bring increased and focused attention to the issue over the Summit week," says Webber.

This year, Brave New Work encourages audiences, from as many sectors as possible, to discuss the topic of how technological growth is changing what we do and how we do it.

"One of the biggest challenges in responding to this new world of work is creating a shared understanding of the issues. This is why knowledge mobilization is vitally important," she says.

According to Webber, in order to thrive in this new world of work, individuals, businesses, governments and educational institutions must collaborate. The summit's organizers hope to provide an environment where everyone will feel welcomed, valued and heard.

The future of jobs

We need to be looking at how to retrain people whose jobs may be shifting as technology leaps across different parts of our economy," says Sarah Doyle, director of Policy and Research at the Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, an institute that aims to advance the growth of the innovation economy in Canada through research, piloting work and bringing together stakeholders from different sectors.

Representing the Brookfield Institute at Brave New Work, Doyle will be talking about the future of work in Canada.

"I'm excited about what our colleagues at SFU are doing, this topic deserves attention," says Doyle. She explains having conversations about economic growth, innovation and inclusion for a better future.

According to Webber, in order to bring increased and focused attention to the issue over the Summit week, says Webber.

The summit's organizers hope to provide an environment where everyone will feel welcomed, valued and heard.

The future of jobs

We need to be looking at how to retrain people whose jobs may be shifting as technology leaps across different parts of our economy," says Sarah Doyle, director of Policy and Research at the Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, an institute that aims to advance the growth of the innovation economy in Canada through research, piloting work and bringing together stakeholders from different sectors.

Representing the Brookfield Institute at Brave New Work, Doyle will be talking about the future of work in Canada.

"I'm excited about what our colleagues at SFU are doing, this topic deserves attention," says Doyle. She explains having conversations about economic growth, innovation and inclusion for a better future.

According to Webber, in order to bring increased and focused attention to the issue over the Summit week, says Webber.

The summit's organizers hope to provide an environment where everyone will feel welcomed, valued and heard.

The future of jobs

We need to be looking at how to retrain people whose jobs may be shifting as technology leaps across different parts of our economy," says Sarah Doyle, director of Policy and Research at the Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, an institute that aims to advance the growth of the innovation economy in Canada through research, piloting work and bringing together stakeholders from different sectors.

Representing the Brookfield Institute at Brave New Work, Doyle will be talking about the future of work in Canada.

"I'm excited about what our colleagues at SFU are doing, this topic deserves attention," says Doyle. She explains having conversations about economic growth, innovation and inclusion for a better future.
Later this month, the Vancouver Heritage Foundation will be hosting Heritage Week 2018, an annual series of events that honours and shares the rich history of our city. One of the upcoming events is the “Sharing food, sharing history” event, which will be held at the Punjabi Market, which will be an opportunity to learn about the history of South Asians in Vancouver, take a tour of the Punjabi Market and eat some good food.

Taking place on Feb. 25, the event will begin with a conversation and talkback at All India Sweets & Restaurant, a long-time social hub and landmark within the Punjabi Market. Naveen Girn, cultural researcher and co-founder of the South Asian Canadian History Association, will be one of the speakers.

Sharing stories

“This event is an opportunity for storytelling,” says Girn, “and for learning about the history of an area that sometimes gets forgotten. Specifically, it will be about how the market emerged – around 40 years ago – from a light sprinkling of South Asian shops to a major focal point for the community.”

A walking tour will showcase some of the important shops and stories of the market. For Girn, who has fond memories of visiting the market with family and friends when he was younger, this is a way to help keep these stories alive.

“It’s important for people to share these stories because it’s an opportunity for people to learn,” he says. “And at the same time events like this also keep memories alive. It’s important for people to understand the history of the market, and why it’s important for the community.”

And Girn doesn’t believe the history and stories of the Punjabi Market should be restricted to only one community.

“Even if one has never come to the Punjabi Market, the talk will be a great opportunity to learn about the cultures in Vancouver, learn about the city as it has changed over time. If we can find connections between different communities, that empathy can be a way of building a greater sense of home for everyone,” he says.

A special place

For Steve Ram, owner of All India Sweets & Restaurant, Feb. 25, 2018 will be a day where he can share the history and meaning of a place and community that has always had a place in his heart.

“(Going to the Punjabi Market) was an experience,” says Ram. “You’ll go and you’ll think ‘wow, look at this part of Vancouver.’ It was an amazing experience for both the people living here and the people visiting. As a kid, I used to love going to All India, never knowing that one day I’d own it.”

Ram has owned All India for eight years, continuing the rich legacy of the establishment. In some ways the restaurant is one of the defining features of the Punjabi Market; a few years ago, when the Vancouver Heritage Foundation selected the market as one of the sites for the Places That Matter project, it was All India that accepted the plaque on behalf of the market. Ram says that unfortunately though, the market is not the same as it once was.

“The Punjabi Market is quite diminished from what it was, say ten years ago,” says Ram. “Costs is one of the reasons: Vancouver real estate is not cheap. Some people have retired, some have moved, some couldn’t afford the rent... it’s a bit of dying market, but the history is still there.”

Ram says that despite the shrinkage, the spirit of the community is still very much alive, and he was reminded of that recently when All India had to relocate. When he announced the original building was to be torn down, Ram was overwhelmed by the reaction from the community.

“The amount of support and the amount of people who cared was just amazing,” he says. “It’s what makes what we do fun.”

One thing that Ram says he learned quickly after he bought the restaurant is that the restaurant is not just a business. Its meaning goes deeper, by the reaction from the community.

“Everyone social hub and landmark. Within the Punjabi Market. Naveen Girn, cultural researcher and co-founder of the South Asian Canadian History Association, will be one of the speakers.

Sharing stories

“This event is an opportunity for storytelling,” says Girn, “and for learning about the history of an area that sometimes gets forgotten. Specifically, it will be about how the market emerged – around 40 years ago – from a light sprinkling of South Asian shops to a major focal point for the community.”

A walking tour will showcase some of the important shops and stories of the market. For Girn, who has fond memories of visiting the market with family and friends when he was younger, this is a way to help keep these stories alive.

“It’s important for people to share these stories because it’s an opportunity for people to learn,” he says. “And at the same time events like this also keep memories alive. It’s important for people to understand the history of the market, and why it’s important for the community.”

And Girn doesn’t believe the history and stories of the Punjabi Market should be restricted to only one community.

“Even if one has never come to the Punjabi Market, the talk will be a great opportunity to learn about the cultures in Vancouver, learn about the city as it has changed over time. If we can find connections between different communities, that empathy can be a way of building a greater sense of home for everyone,” he says.

A special place

For Steve Ram, owner of All India Sweets & Restaurant, Feb. 25, 2018 will be a day where he can share the history and meaning of a place and community that has always had a place in his heart.

“(Going to the Punjabi Market) was an experience,” says Ram. “You’ll go and you’ll think ‘wow, look at this part of Vancouver.’ It was an amazing experience for both the people living here and the people visiting. As a kid, I used to love going to All India, never knowing that one day I’d own it.”

Ram has owned All India for eight years, continuing the rich legacy of the establishment. In some ways the restaurant is one of the defining features of the Punjabi Market; a few years ago, when the Vancouver Heritage Foundation selected the market as one of the sites for the Places That Matter project, it was All India that accepted the plaque on behalf of the market. Ram says that unfortunately though, the market is not the same as it once was.

“The Punjabi Market is quite diminished from what it was, say ten years ago,” says Ram. “Costs is one of the reasons: Vancouver real estate is not cheap. Some people have retired, some have moved, some couldn’t afford the rent... it’s a bit of dying market, but the history is still there.”

Ram says that despite the shrinkage, the spirit of the community is still very much alive, and he was reminded of that recently when All India had to relocate. When he announced the original building was to be torn down, Ram was overwhelmed by the reaction from the community.

“The amount of support and the amount of people who cared was just amazing,” he says. “It’s what makes what we do fun.”

One thing that Ram says he learned quickly after he bought the restaurant is that the restaurant is not just a business. Its meaning goes deeper, by the reaction from the community.

“Everyone
Contesting culture at Stanley Park

**By Colleen Addisson**

Rena Soutar wants Vancouver’s Indigenous peoples to feel at home in our public spaces.

Vancouver has a rich cultural heritage. Minorities, though, don’t always feel welcome in city spaces such as Stanley Park, says Rena Soutar. She is aiming to change that. “There’s no such thing as a culturally neutral space,” explains Soutar, the new reconciliation planner for Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. This is especially true of places like Stanley Park, “Our taxes paid for it, and we hope that we’re going into a place where everyone feels welcome. But we’ve built spaces for everybody, which means we’re not representing anybody. In a space that expresses the dominant culture, it naturally makes marginalized people feel unwelcome.”

Soutar, along with Geordie Howe, the park board’s cultural archaeologist, will discuss culture in Stanley Park on February 27 in a presentation given as part of the Vancouver Heritage Foundation’s evening lectures series and held at the University Women’s Club at Hycroft Manor. The presentation, Stanley Park: Digging Deeper and Rethinking Cultural Heritage, explores the ways in which Vancouver’s park board is opening itself up to minority Indigenous peoples. Soutar’s role as reconciliation planner for the park board regards these peoples. Soutar’s role as reconciliation planner for Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation.

In order to rectify some of the difficulties in the past, Soutar and her fellow park board employees are working with representatives of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. Soutar’s role as reconciliation planner involves looking at how Indigenous peoples feel in the park and at how the park board regards these people. “People haven’t traditionally looked at how organizations designed to support the villages that were there.”

In a space that expresses the dominant culture, it naturally makes marginalized people feel unwelcome. Rena Soutar, reconciliation planner for Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation.

**Indigenous perspectives**

Soutar has long been involved with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia. Her previous work included a stint with the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games, for which she sourced Aboriginal artwork. She is also the author of Songhees, a book about the Coast Salish people whose traditional territory includes parts of Vancouver island, San Juan and the Gulf Islands. “It’s a cultural 101,” she says. “It’s a view for outsiders of who these people are, their resilience and where they intend to go – how they’re trying to steer their children so that they have a strong future rooted in tradition.”

**Colonial systems**

Like many, Soutar believes Stanley Park is a key example of a public space that represents dominant white culture. “The architecture is from another tradition entirely and all of the activities that we do inside the park don’t come from here,” Soutar says. “We’re not playing traditional Aboriginal games. We’re not gathering and skinning fish. So culturally it’s not built to look as if any other people were here. That’s not a complete picture of Vancouver.”

Stanley Park is famous as an untouched preserve of nature, but in fact, the reality is very different. “[Indigenous peoples] were summarily ousted from the park. There were several villages, and by the time they were removed they were a little bit multicultural. There’s a lot of archaeological evidence of all the millennia of occupation. It was a pretty lively place,” says Soutar.

Calling Stanley Park untouched denies the past of these peoples, a past that continues to touch denies the past of these peoples. A past that continues to touch...

The park board treat the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh territory we’re on,” she says. “And also the urban population of First Nations, Métis and Inuit ancestry. What is it about our systems that make us colonial?”

**A new vision**

“We’re not gathering and skinning fish in a space that expresses the dominant culture, it naturally makes marginalized people feel unwelcome. Rena Soutar, reconciliation planner for Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation.”

For more information, please visit www.uwcvancouver.ca.
All eyes on NDP's provincial budget

It's budget week in B.C., and the expectations on the NDP provincial government couldn't be higher. Under the Liberals, housing costs grew out of control in a widening overheated real estate market. The result was windfall profits for the former government's corporate donors, and unprecedented increases for renters, the middle and low-income people.

All eyes are on Premier John Horgan, Finance Minister Carole James and Housing Minister Seลina Robinson as they introduce the budget this week. The government has already telegraphed a number of important steps in the right direction: anti speculation measures designed to cool the demand side that has seen the housing market turned into an international casino; a series of revisions to tenancy law that will give renter's stronger protections against so-called rennovictions and demovictions; additional money for child care, seniors' spaces and new initiatives to build more temporary and permanent social housing.

All good steps, but more drastic and systemic measures are needed. To see the bigger picture, we need to understand that for the past four decades there has been a sustained attack on homes, of diminishing our economy, of eroding the public sector's share of the market and failing to build sufficient public and social housing. The federal government effectively abandoned the field back during the austerity years of Finance Minister Paul Martin in the 1990s. Trudeau recently announced a new "national housing strategy," but it's still heavy on market solutions and it's unclear how much truly social and affordable housing it will help deliver. Much of the federal plan depends on matching funding from the provinces. With so much riding on how the provincial NDP tackles the largest question property speculators from numerous groups came together on Feb. 18 to hold a rally at Vancouver's Jack Poole Plaza in hopes of putting some last minute pressure on the NDP to take stronger measures in the budget. The rally organizers issued an ambitious call to action: "Unregulated global capital and widespread real estate speculation have driven up housing prices and driven out long-time residents. Empty houses dot our landscapes while homelessness and housing affordability continue to climb. Whistleblowers pointing to corruption emerge almost daily. Enough is enough. All of this has to change." Where can this overdue change start? One important way that the government could raise more revenue for necessary public investments in housing would be to implement a progressive property tax. If applied at the right levels and combined with anti speculation measures like new taxes for flipping properties, this could both generate revenue for social housing, and other non-market housing, and cool speculative activity in the market.

In the municipal by-election, both OneCity and Jean Swanson's campaign promoted versions of a progressive property tax. Swanson called hers a " Mansion Tax," and even held a rally in front of the home of billionaire Chip Wilson on Vancouver's west side to highlight the need to make the rich pay more of their fair share. The BCGEU, one of the province's largest public unions, is advocating a land value tax.

Where can this overdue change start? One important way that the government could raise more revenue for necessary public investments in housing would be to implement a progressive property tax. If applied at the right levels and combined with anti speculation measures like new taxes for flipping properties, this could both generate revenue for social housing, and other non-market housing, and cool speculative activity in the market.

In the municipal by-election, both OneCity and Jean Swanson's campaign promoted versions of a progressive property tax. Swanson called hers a "Mansion Tax," and even held a rally in front of the home of billionaire Chip Wilson on Vancouver's west side to highlight the need to make the rich pay more of their fair share. The BCGEU, one of the province's largest public unions, is advocating a land value tax.

Where can this overdue change start? One important way that the government could raise more revenue for necessary public investments in housing would be to implement a progressive property tax. If applied at the right levels and combined with anti speculation measures like new taxes for flipping properties, this could both generate revenue for social housing, and other non-market housing, and cool speculative activity in the market.

In the municipal by-election, both OneCity and Jean Swanson's campaign promoted versions of a progressive property tax. Swanson called hers a "Mansion Tax," and even held a rally in front of the home of billionaire Chip Wilson on Vancouver's west side to highlight the need to make the rich pay more of their fair share. The BCGEU, one of the province's largest public unions, is advocating a land value tax.

Where can this overdue change start? One important way that the government could raise more revenue for necessary public investments in housing would be to implement a progressive property tax. If applied at the right levels and combined with anti speculation measures like new taxes for flipping properties, this could both generate revenue for social housing, and other non-market housing, and cool speculative activity in the market.

In the municipal by-election, both OneCity and Jean Swanson's campaign promoted versions of a progressive property tax. Swanson called hers a "Mansion Tax," and even held a rally in front of the home of billionaire Chip Wilson on Vancouver's west side to highlight the need to make the rich pay more of their fair share. The BCGEU, one of the province's largest public unions, is advocating a land value tax.

Where can this overdue change start? One important way that the government could raise more revenue for necessary public investments in housing would be to implement a progressive property tax. If applied at the right levels and combined with anti speculation measures like new taxes for flipping properties, this could both generate revenue for social housing, and other non-market housing, and cool speculative activity in the market.

In the municipal by-election, both OneCity and Jean Swanson's campaign promoted versions of a progressive property tax. Swanson called hers a "Mansion Tax," and even held a rally in front of the home of billionaire Chip Wilson on Vancouver's west side to highlight the need to make the rich pay more of their fair share. The BCGEU, one of the province's largest public unions, is advocating a land value tax.
Mother languages: a key role in identity and connection

by Vinh Nguyen

A worldwide observance, International Mother Language Day (IMLD) has been held annually on Feb. 21 since 2000. According to the United Nations, languages have complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development. This year’s theme IMLD is Linguistic diversity and multilingualism: keystones of sustainable and peace.

Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) will hold a mother languages celebration on Feb. 21, 2018 at the Melville Centre on KPU’s Richmond Campus. The International Mother Language Day celebration will include traditional songs, poetry, readings and dance, showcasing French, German, Halkomelem, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, Vietnamese and more. Beverages and snacks will be provided.

For Duong Tran, a junior UX/graphic designer in Vancouver, the importance of her mother language – Vietnamese – and why it reminds her of her birthplace is crucial.

“It reminds me of my origin and defines me as a Vietnamese,” Tran says. “It also helps me understand my community better.”

Identity, history and language connections

Mother languages connect people to their cultural heritage, their history and their identity. For Joshua Kim, Tran and Julia Choi, their native tongue helped them explore various aspects of their identities.

Kim, a KPU student in his second year studying psychology, was born in Canada but moved to South Korea with his family when he was 6 years old, inheriting both Canadian and Korean cultures. The Korean language played an important role in Kim’s daily life in South Korea, which also brought him life philosophies he never thought about before.

“The strength of the Korean culture comes when there are and questioning everything, including the things I think I know,” says Kim. “I guess there’s some obsession in my love for Korean.”

Kim also says he has a strong sense of the history underlying the Korean language.

“I would say, in case of the Korean letter system [Hangul], it has philosophical value,” he says. “Hangul was developed under King Sejong’s order during the Joseon dynasty era to standardize the writing system for Korean [as a spoken language], which was complicated and varied through regions. Since it was easier to learn, Hangul allowed for educationally neglected classes to communicate with ease.”

When it comes to the presence and bonding in the Korean community, Kim says Koreans have fostered and nurtured the mother language.

“The strength of the Korean language connects them with a heritage unique to them.”

Kim also says he has a strong connection to Korean letter system [Hangul], it has philosophical value,” he says. “Hangul was developed under King Sejong’s order during the Joseon dynasty era to standardize the writing system for Korean [as a spoken language], which was complicated and varied through regions. Since it was easier to learn, Hangul allowed for educationally neglected classes to communicate with ease.”

When it comes to the presence and bonding in the Korean community, Kim says Koreans have fostered and nurtured the mother language.

“The strength of the Korean culture comes when there are

[The Vietnamese language] reminds me of my origin and defines me as a Vietnamese.

Duong Tran, a junior UX/graphic designer from Vietnam

For more details, please visit www.kpu.ca/art/ language-cultures/imld

The Source 5
Filipina Vancouverite wins design contest for Brain Awareness Week

By MASHA RADEMAKERS

Marianne Claire Bacani designed a prizewinning sticker for Brain Awareness Week 2018. Brain Awareness Week will be celebrated March 12–18.

The director for Neuroethics Canada wasn’t expecting that her design would be a winner. “[I] was so surprised and honored to be picked as a design hobbyist to be the winner of this contest,” says Bacani.

Global sticker design contest

Every year, the New York based Dana Foundation, known for its yearly event, “face” for its yearly event. As an annual event, Bacani is organizing the event this year at UBC and was so committed to the cause that she decided to join the contest using the latest tools at her disposal.

“Growing up in the nineties, I enjoyed drawing and playing around with Microsoft Paint to pass time. Now that there are more sophisticated programs, designing is more interesting, and still my favorite outlet for creativity and relaxation,” she says. It was an exciting month for Bacani. Her design was published on the social media page of the Dana Foundation, where people from around the world could vote. “Out of the top five, my designs received the most votes. That feels very special,” she says.

A boon for the Filipino community

Bacani, who studied psychology at the University of British Columbia, knows about the importance of keeping the brain healthy.

“I immigrated to Canada from the Philippines as a second year university student. Right away and because everyone has a different background here, especially at the university, integrating wasn’t that difficult. There were lots of opportunities provided to new Canadian students,” she says.

The strong presence of the Filipino community made it easier for Bacani and her family to adjust during their first months as immigrants in Vancouver.

“We could still eat our own food and celebrate important cultural days with our own community. It is great that it is possible to have so much cultural diversity within the city. Adjusting to the Canadian culture was not too challenging because I felt very accepted,” she says.

Bacani’s winning design for Brain Awareness Week will be featured on all branding material of the global event.

“Winning wouldn’t be possible without the votes and support from people; that’s why I want to thank everyone who voted and participated in the campaign” she says.

Upcoming talk

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Neuroethics has a special talk in store.

“Experts in brain science will give talks throughout Vancouver to discuss interesting insights related to brain research. It will be an engaging week between the public and academic community, and people can learn about the latest developments about, for example, medical aid in dying,” says Bacani.

Neuroethics Canada organizes the Annual Distinguished Neuroethics Lecture, where Professor Jennifer Chandler LLM (Bertrand Job Research Chair and Professor, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia), among other guest speakers, will talk about medical aid in dying in Canada. The lecture is open to the public and will take place in downtown Vancouver on March 15.

For more information, please visit www.neuroethics.med.ubc.ca

[Image: Marianne Claire Bacani, director for Neuroethics Canada.]
The Source
Vol 18 No 15 | February 20–March 6, 2018
7

A taste of Japan in Canada with iaido

By ISHA DALAVA

When it comes to Japanese martial arts, most people have heard of kendo or aikido. Less known, iaido is nevertheless interesting and beautiful to its practitioners. The Source met two iaido experts who also happen to be husband and wife: Martin and Judith Farncombe, respectively 4th dan and 5th dan in iaido, as well as one of their students.

When asked who introduced iaido to the other one, they laughed. They had actually both been practicing iaido before knowing each other and they met at their regular dojo back in London.

"I was looking for the men's changing room but I took a wrong turn and saw Judith, which ended up being a very good turn," Martin says, laughing.

After running their own iaido club for 12 years in London, England, the Farncombes moved to Burnaby, British Columbia, where they have been practicing iaido for more than 30 years, took it up when she was living in England.

"I mainly started martial arts because I wanted to feel safe and when I discovered iaido, I thought it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen," says Judith.

Although not a practical form of self-defence, iaido does teach mental habits that can avert an attack as well as enable better coping mechanisms, says Martin.

Iaido vs. kendo

Iaido consists of a series of solo forms practiced using a katana – a Japanese sword used by Samurai – and when I discovered iaido, I thought it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen," says Judith.

For more information, please visit www.pics.bc.ca.

Need the skills to find a job? We can help!

Design a fantastic resume and cover letter, fine tune your interview techniques, learn valuable skills to succeed in the Canadian workplace, gain insight into the job market, access special funding for skilled workers – all at NO COST. The Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society, Vancouver Branch, has been helping immigrants and newcomers to Canada for over 14 years!

Our Group Job Search Workshops are a flexible, 5 module rotating program, running weekly, with 16 sessions each month. This includes basic computer orientation, with instruction on using Word and Excel, and accessing the Internet. Workshops are held within a culturally diverse environment, led by qualified facilitators.

Past and current E.I. recipients are always welcome. Knowledgeable case managers are available to guide you through the process of reaching your career goals.

PICS Vancouver also offers one-on-one employment assistance, paid-on-the-job work experience through our Wage Subsidy program, and a one-stop Career Centre with a broad range of job hunting resources. Funding for all programs is provided by the Ministry of Social Development, Employment and Labour Market Services Division.

Please call 604-324-7733, go to www.pics.bc.ca, or visit us at 200-8161 Main St., Vancouver, to find out how we can best help you.

The Source is looking for volunteers

If you have an interest in the arts, cultural or current issues, we want to hear from you.

The Source / La Source Newspaper, Vancouver’s only bi-lingual English-French publication, is searching for outstanding writers to join its English writing team. We’re looking for journalists – or budding reporters – who have what it takes to seek out and produce articles with multicultural twists.

Email monique.kroeger@gmail.com

A martial art open to all

Sanjay Sharma, one of the Farncombe’s first students in Canada, turned to iaido for its spiritual side, rather than the physical.

"Iaido is very much linked to the Japanese concept of bushido [samurai way of life], which develops your moral character," he explains.

Sharma, who is a software engineer finds that iaido has a positive impact on all the aspects of his life.

"Especially stress control," he says.

Although there are no rules stating that iaido is more for men, you generally see few women practicing it.

"It is only in the last 150 years that women have started taking up iaido. Iaido requires great elegance and control and women are generally better at this than men," says Martin.

As for their students, the Farncombes were surprised to see that Japanese people were not very interested in learning this particular Japanese martial art. Most of their students are immigrants but not from Japan.

"We only had a Japanese student once," says Judith.

Iaido embodies minimalism in the Japanese style. To Judith, that’s the beauty of it.

"It is like doing zen meditation while moving," she says.

Coastal Jazz presents remarkable canucks and opportunities to experience some of the best things to do in Vancouver.

The Hot Sardines with the vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 8pm
Orpheum Theatre | Tickets $75/$65/$50 on sale now at www.coastaljazz.ca

“Simply phenomenal.” – The Times (London)

In the talented hands of the New York-based Hot Sardines, music first made decades ago comes alive through their vibrant, creative arrangements, striking piano melodies, and vocals from “Mel Gibson" crooner, Alex Ross, who transports listeners to a different era with the purest lift of her voice.

On the new album French Fries and Champagne (Universal Music Classics), the jazz collective dazzles its already impressive palette, combining covers and originals as they effortlessly channel New York speakeasies, Parisian cabarets, and New Orleans jazz bords.

Come hear an electrifying performance of vintage jazz as The Hot Sardines swing on the Orpheum stage with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra under the baton of maestro William Rowson.

“Superior performance” – The Province

For full concert details and information visit www.coastaljazz.ca.
Debuting author explores the in-between worlds of newcomers

Djamila Ibrahim, launches things are good now, nine fiction short stories that explore the lives of people affected by immigration.

Ibrahim emigrated from Ethiopia with her parents and five siblings when she was a teenager. Her experience taught her what it means to “fit into the in-between worlds,” where a person feels connected by place, language and culture.

Starting over

“...I don’t quite fit in Ethiopian society because in a sense I’m no longer from that place, but I feel deeply Canadian, but I also have a connection to Ethiopia through my language, culture and food.”

Ibrahim has been writing for only five years. She is inspired by other authors of African descent who have written stories about their own lived experiences.

“...I tried to express what it must have been like for my parents, or people like my parents of similar background and age, who immigrated to a new country, says Ibrahim. “The challenge of starting over is complicated because there are often language and cultural barriers, as well as religious differences.”

As in the real world, Ibrahim’s protagonists are often deeply flawed. She creates characters who view the world through their own reality. For example in the story ‘You Made Me Do This,’ a grieving mother struggles to come to terms with the violent death of her teenage son. The family immigrated to Canada looking for a better life only to have their dreams shattered with the pain and loss of their son’s death.

“The notion of losing a child is universal, but it’s also specific to a group of people and a real-life occurrence,” says Ibrahim.

A writer’s gameplay

Ibrahim loves video games. She basically wrote her book while playing Starcraft II, breaking fatigue and writer’s block by raging war with other galaxies.

“Playing video games is like having a cup of coffee,” said Ibrahim. “When I feel sluggish or I’m losing focus, I go kill some aliens until I feel revived.”

She also enjoys reading science fiction between writing sessions. For Ibrahim, sci-fi allows her to escape her tendency as a writer to evaluate the technical structure of a story.

“Science fiction is great because it’s so different from what I’m writing,” says Ibrahim.

Exploring a changing world

Ibrahim is now working on a novel. The characters are based on one of her short stories ‘Head ing Somewhere,’ a love story between Sarah and Omar who are pushed into the tides of global migration.

“Our understanding of the world has changed because of immigration,” says Ibrahim. “I want to explore what it means to be part of this changing world in my next book.”

Identity is an important part of my characters’ development.

Djamila Ibrahim, author

Identity is an important part of my characters’ development,” says Ibrahim. “Before they were immigrants, they were also mothers, wives, brothers, sisters and friends. All of these pieces come together to form who they are and their relationships with each other.”

Ibrahim will be visiting Vancouver Feb. 28 as part of Incite, an event presented in partnership with the Vancouver Library and Vancouver’s Writers Festival.

www.writersfest.bc.ca
Exploring Sami culture in a positive way

by ALISON MCGARRE

With her first-ever Canadian performance, Norwegian-Sami artist Stina Therese Lorås Hessaa brings her world premiere to this year’s Coastal First Nations Dance Festival from Feb. 27–Mar. 4.

Known as a dancer, performer, playwright and theatre director, 41-year-old Hessaa comes to Vancouver from Trondheim, Norway. Her work has toured stages and festivals in countries all around the world, including India and Bangladesh. She will participate in the Indigenous Dance Artist Panel and perform twice on the festival stage at the Museum of Anthropology (MOA).

“I like making new things,” Hessaa exclaims. “It’s exciting for me.”

Having never been to Canada before, Hessaa is looking forward to meeting new people. She is keen to see festival performances by other Indigenous performance groups and wants to meet other Indigenous people at the event. She will be the festival’s first-ever Norwegian-Sami artist, allowing for the showcasing of Indigenous stories, song and dance from the Pacific to Scandinavia.

Ongoing journey of learning about heritage

Hessaa learned about her Sami heritage as an adult about six years ago when discussing a project about refugees with her 80-year-old grandmother. Her family has roots in the northern tundra of Norway which was largely destroyed by the German forces at the end of World War II, she says. Before the war, 95 percent of people in the region identified as Sami; after the end of the war, hardly anyone did.

There came a period of assimilation where Hessaa’s grandmother, who had spoken Sami during her early childhood, began to attend school and was not permitted to speak her own language. There was so much shame in her Sami heritage that her grandmother didn’t tell anyone about it until she was 80 years old.

When Hessaa finally learned of her Sami heritage, she went on a journey of her own by creating several plays and performances inspired by her discovery including her most recent work, Heritage, which is still touring in her home country. It was a process that expanded to include the Norwegian-Sami artist’s whole family. Her mother, as a painter, has begun to explore Sami themes. And her two older children are learning of their heritage along with Hessaa while her two younger children will grow up knowing of their Sami roots.

“I needed to work through this myself by learning about both the positive and negative aspects of my heritage,” Hessaa says. “I needed to work through this myself by learning about both the positive and negative aspects of my heritage.”

A story to tell

Hessaa has created a new piece explicitly for Vancouver audiences.

“It is not about assimilation. It is just about Sami culture,” she says. “I feel it is aimed at young people and it even has a touch of the #metoo movement. I want it to be relevant. I’ve come to the point where I can work with the positive parts of my culture.”

Hessaa will be weaving together various elements of the theatre, dance, storytelling and sound to create her newest work. She will also be performing the traditional Sami singing form known as joik, which has been compared to the chanting of some North American Indigenous cultures. Before her trip to Vancouver, she is going to take exams in joik — yet another step in her cultural journey.

The Norwegian-Sami artist looks forward to the challenge of creating a new piece. Her choreography can be very technical but she also aims to be expressive. With training that began in ballet, Hessaa’s interpretation of her own culture is about telling a story.

“I have a story I want to tell. I try to find the best way to tell it,” she says. For more information, please visit www.damelahamid.ca.

A Stina Therese Lorås Hessaa in southern Norway with a professional copy of one of the few Sami drums still in existence.

Photo by Sigbjørn Hessaa
Cultural Calendar

February 20–March 6, 2018

by simon yee

The days are getting longer, and the weather a bit warmer; spring is just around the corner. Soon you will be able to frolic outside while the cherry blossoms are in bloom, the fresh spring air shines down on you and the allerg- 

ies return. But, there’s one more month of winter left, and it’s not that warm out yet, so why not check out some of these indoor events and festivals happening now around town.

**Onegin**
Feb. 20–March 2
Surrey Arts Centre
www.surrey.ca/culture-
recreation/4257.aspx

Inspired by a poem and opera from the dawn in which hand- some rogue Evgeni Onegin visits the Larin family estate (his ro- mantic charms stirring passions long forgotten by its residents), Onegin creators Amiel Gladstone and Yoda Hille have turned the story into a hit musical that’s a rock concert, back kitchen party and love poem. The seven-men- ber cast, sharing the stage with three musicians, begins with a wild opening number where they tell the audience “We hope to prove that we belong to charm, we hope to break you open.” This play will run until March 3 at the Sur- rey Arts Centre. Visit the website for tickets and more information.

**Ballet BC: Romeo and Juliet**
Feb. 22–24 (Preview Feb. 21)
Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver
www.balletbc.com

A fresh retelling of Romeo and Juliet by Ballet BC. Peter A. Allard School of Law at UBC, University Endowment Lands www.idac.org/BCA-Humanitarian-

Law-feb2018/

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) limits and prevents human suffering in armed conflict. Attend the IHL conference as they exam- ine the challenges of enforcing IHL in a fast-changing world. Confer- ence sessions include an introduc- tion to international humanitarian law, an overview of the forms of justice, enforcement of IHL and real stories from real people im- pacted by war. Speakers include Canadian Red Cross advisor Jon- than Somer, Allard law professor James Stewart and Immigrant Legal Director Fazinéh Keita. To register, please visit the website.

**Vancouver International Film Festival**
Feb. 24–March 4
Various venues, Vancouver
www.viff.org

The Vancouver International Film Festival, Canada’s premier food and wine event, returns to the city for the 40th time to cele- brate the finest wines throughout the world. This year’s event cele- brates wine from the two Iberian countries: Portugal and Spain, featuring 59 winemakers and 22 events from the Iberian penin- su. There will be educational wine seminars, lunch minglers, gala dinners and, of course, wine tast- ing! For a complete list of events and winemakers in attendance, check out the festival website.

**2018 Vancouver International Dance Festival**
March 1–24
Various venues throughout Vancouver
www.vidf.ca

The Vancouver International Dance Festival returns to the city with a diverse and dynamic roster of internationally celebrated artists and local favourites, pre- senting three weeks of endlessly enriching performances, work- shops and a host of dance activi- ties this March at various venues throughout Vancouver. Catch the Shen Wei Dance Art at the Van- couver Playhouse, Goh Ballet at the Roundhouse, or Amber Funk Barton at the Scotiabank Dance Centre. Please visit the festival website for a complete list of shows.

The resilience of the human spirit is celebrated in a compel- ling program by one of Canada’s most renowned choirs, the Ele- ktra Women’s Choir. Named for a work for choir and marimba by choral composer Timothy Corfis, the concert includes a world premiere by composer Carol Barnett, sonorous polyph- ony by Ferrarese noblewoman Leonora d’Este (1515–1575) and a rich program of other liv- ing composers. For tickets and more information, check out the choir’s website.

**The Velveteen Rabbit**
March 2–17
Watteau Theatre at Granville Island, Vancouver
www.carouseltheatre.ca

A fresh retelling of Romanesque and Japan by Ballet BC.

Innovations for social awareness and visual expressions that circulate the ever-changing responses and perspectives on the relationships be- tween artists and societies, and the ever-changing responses and visual expressions that circulate through shared hopes and aspi- rations for social awareness and change.