In the modern classroom, rote methods of learning have given way to more effective techniques. When it comes to learning a new language, it is also a way to develop one's identity, form social connections and make meaning.

Balyasnikova's research focuses on senior EAL learners and Rajagopal studies young EAL learners. They show that learning a new language is also a way to develop one's identity, form social connections and make meaning.

"Language competence is important, of course, but communication takes place across different modes," says Balyasnikova. "What surprised me the most was how close the group became. It is a reminder that learning methods like drama allow us to explore the power of multiple viewpoints and bring them together through play."

Reading and writing are traditionally considered the cornerstones of education. While these skills remain important, society's views on education have changed. In 2011, British Columbia launched a revision of the province's education curriculum. The new B.C. curriculum emphasizes three core competencies: Communication, Creative and Critical Thinking, and Personal and Social Skills.

"[Reading and writing] are extremely productive ways in which to ..."
Serbian Days in Vancouver

helped organize the festival for its 28 years. “Our target has been to become more open to other spectators who show the interest to come and visit,” says Ignjatovic. “At the beginning, it was a cultural gathering of our community; but we wanted to spread that out. I called around to other cultural groups I know from their festivals, Greek and Russian, Polish and Mexican, and I invited them to come and attend our festival. We went around door to door.”

Vancouver and Serbia alike are all welcome to participate in the festival.

“We have Serbian food, which consists of lots of meat. There is a traditional lamb roast. Roasted lamb and pork. What we are most known for is cevapi, which is grilled meat but looks more like little sausages. We have lots of desserts, it’s very traditional that in every family, they bake a lot, pastries, cakes, made of walnuts, chocolate, custard. And sweet,” she adds, laughing.

Dance is not the only activity featured at Serbian Days, as there is a soccer tournament on both days, with players possibly coming from the FC Serbia United teams and the Serbia White Eagles Soccer Club. Chess and boccé will also be played at the festival.

A Canadian adventure

Serbian Days is the biggest festival of the Serbian community in Vancouver, but there are others. The St. Sava Serbian Orthodox church, at which the festival will be held, has cel ebrations throughout the year, including a goulash contest on Pentecost Sunday in May. Sing ers perform at the end of June to celebrate St. Vitus’ Day and the fall of Serbian martyrs at the 14th century Battle of Kosovo.

Ignjatovic and her husband came to Canada in 1993 as a young couple from Serbia, then the process of splitting away from former Yugoslavia.

See “Serbian Days” page 10

North Shore Polish Association Belveder
cordially invites you to:

Polish Festival
Shipbuilders’ Square and Pipe Shop: 115 Victory Ship Way, North Vancouver

September 09
1:00pm - Official opening of the Polish Festival
Market in The Pipe Shop

Puppet Theatre Jester - Theatre Plays for Kids
Games, Arts and Activities for Children
Polonaise - Polish Folk Dance Group
Roma Goy - Dance Group

Traditional Polish cuisine ( pierogies, sausages, pastries and more) and beverages (Polish beer).

We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.
A critical conversation

by RAMAN KANG

“When you start getting into those scary, emotional and trigger conversations, that’s where the most revolutionary education happens; that’s where you change a person’s perception,” says Maria Ishikawa, program assistant for Friends of Simon Tutoring Program, Simon Fraser University (SFU).

Born and raised in Washington State, Ishikawa is half Japanese half Polish. Her article, Validating Cultural Identity in the Classroom, published in the BCTF Social/Justice Newsletter addresses issues of cultural identity, oppression and discrimination. “It’s not something talked about, but it’s very apparent,” she says.

Subtle discrimination

Ishikawa recalls a memory from first grade regarding subtle discrimination toward her Japanese heritage. “I brought a bento box to school, a little Japanese lunch box with rice, soy sauce and sushi,” Ishikawa explains. “When the bento box leaked soy sauce in a bin of lunch boxes, in front of the whole class, the teacher said ‘that’s why you don’t bring that kind of food to school’.”

Ishikawa says that was one of the first times she felt that being Asian and bringing my Asian food is not accepted. So during her high school and middle school years, she recalls pushing her culture aside to fit in. “I look half white and I remember people saying, ‘you’re cool because you act really white.’ At the time it was awesome,” she said.

“I brought a bento box to school, a little Japanese lunch box with rice, soy sauce and sushi,” Ishikawa recalls. “When the bento box leaked soy sauce in a bin of lunch boxes, in front of the whole class, the teacher said ‘that’s why you don’t bring that kind of food to school’.”

“I don’t have a voice. I don’t feel like I have power or that I can change anything and that’s kind of what I wanted to bring to life,” she says.

Ishikawa says her education in her younger years was very factual, reciting teachings about Japanese internment camps. “To that student who is learning that factual way, on a very subliminal covert conscious level, it was like a Japanese person being put into an internment camp is just normal,” she says.

A shift in thought

It was at SFU when taking a Social Issues and Education class she read the book Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire. “Reading that and learning about identity and culture, about the oppressed and the oppressor, hegemony and ideology, is how I got my foot into these kinds of topics.” It was then Ishikawa realized how colonial representations are influencing curriculum and how she was being subtly discriminated against for being Japanese.

“Reading that and learning about identity and culture, about the oppressed and the oppressor, hegemony and ideology, is how I got my foot into these kinds of topics.”

She wanted to open up to teachers who were sincere about these issues, not like that teacher in first grade who embarrassed her. She credits her mentor Eleonora Joensuu for pushing her to have meaningful, critical conversations. Ishikawa

“...trying to open up to that of another person. Accept that what seems simple and logical is not so for the one facing me. And that it does not matter. I don’t always understand. But I try, just as I hate hearing someone criticize France and the French, although I am the first one to do so, I tell myself that I am nobody to pass judgment on another culture. And even if I had never had the impression of doing it before coming to Vancouver, I believe that there is a difference between keeping silent and offering an attentive ear; between staying still and lending a hand.

What I like above all in Vancouver is those inhabitants who love this city...but who also love their roots. Those who admit loudly that their country of origin is not where they would live to like, for various reasons, but who are nevertheless enthusiastic about going back for a short visit.

These persons make me understand that I have the right not to like everything in France, while still loving her with all my strength. I have the right to feel at home in a city very different from where I grew up, while constantly missing my birth city.

Vancouver gives me hope. If I have become able to open up to others, then anyone can. Here, my idealism seems to me almost realistic.”
Mathematics: beyond abstraction

by JAKE MCGRAIL

While it is something that is essential to our everyday lives, mathematics often has negative connotations attached to it, especially among students. Math Catcher, an outreach program run out of Simon Fraser University, works with students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 to try to fight the idea that math is abstract and just boring work they’re forced to do in school.

Veselin Jungic, professor of mathematics at SFU and coordinator of the Math Catcher program, has taught mathematics for forty years and he is not surprised many students struggle to engage with math given how it is often taught.

“We make mathematics abstract,” says Jungic. “We just put facts and techniques on the board, and we wonder why students don’t see the relationship between the math and their lives. Why would anybody see all these numbers, x’s and y’s on the board, and think that’s part of their life?”

In the classroom

A major problem Jungic sees is just how early negative feelings towards mathematics can set in. “If I go to a Grade 5 classroom, there’s always a kid who says, ‘I hate math,’” and you really wonder what happened between Kindergarten and Grade 5 that has caused that dislike already,” says Jungic. “And that we should teach it along with some kind of cultural component.”

For that second point came Small Number, the main character in over twenty animated short films created by the Math Catcher program and SFU. He is an Aboriginal youth who uses math to solve problems in many different situations, another way that Math Catcher aims to bring mathematics to life in the minds of students.

Small Number and the Old Canoe, one of the stories that teach math.

Jungic knows that completely changing someone’s outlook on the subject in just one class isn’t necessarily going to happen, but what he does hope is that he can plant a seed of intrigue and curiosity in students, that might make them more receptive to mathematics going forwards.

“Sometimes, teachers are surprised how well students react to what we do. We bring excitement about mathematics to classrooms, and I hope that something will stay with the students in the future, some of that excitement.”

Reaching everyone

A feature of the Math Catcher program, as well as other volunteer work that Jungic does, is its strong Aboriginal component. It stems from the First Nations Math Education Workshop, a conference held in 2009 that Jungic helped organize.

“The organizers invited some elders,” he says, “and also elementary and high school teachers and a group of academics. The idea was that we talk about mathematics and Indigenous people: what is it that we need to do to improve involvement of Aboriginal students in mathematics?”

The workshop’s final report included the fact that only two per cent of BC’s Aboriginal population completed Principles of Mathematics 12 at the time, compared to 25 per cent for the whole population.

“The conclusions were that we need to start promoting and teaching mathematics earlier,” says Jungic, “and that we should make it along with some kind of cultural component.”

For that second point came Small Number, the main character in over twenty animated short films created by the Math Catcher program and SFU. He is an Aboriginal youth who uses math to solve problems in many different situations, another way that Math Catcher aims to bring mathematics to life in the minds of students. And along with classroom visits, Math Catcher and SFU hold programs like the SFU Academic Summer Camp for Aboriginal Students, and the Aboriginal Students Math and Science Workshop.

For the Math and Science Workshop,” says Jungic, “we bring Aboriginal students from all over the Lower Mainland to the Burnaby campus. They are mostly Grade 10’s, and we promote scholarships for young learners, so they see that there is support for them.”

Jungic’s goal is for more students to become mathematically literate, which he sees as key to life as an adult and citizen in our society.

“We cannot escape mathematics,” he concludes. “We are surrounded by mathematics all around us. We don’t need to be mathematicians, but we need to know that math is an important part of our lives.”

For more information on the Math Catcher program, visit www.sfu.ca/mathcatcher.

Moving Ahead

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MOSAIC Highgate Office, #350-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

Gidon 604 636 4712

Employment (Farsi/English)

September 14, 2–4 pm

MOSAIC Highgate Office, #350-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

Rafi and Tarif 604 636 4712

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September 15, 4–6 pm

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Ray 604 438 8216 | rlabue@mosaicbc.org

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Angel 604 254 9626 ext 2123 | atlas@mosaicbc.org

September 15, 10 am – 4 pm

Brentwood Community Resource Centre, 2055 Rossar Ave, Burnaby

Eliza 604 438 8214 or 604 292 3907 | echan@mosaicbc.org

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Email monique.kroeger@gmail.com or info@thelasource.com

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JUNE 2018
Connection, conversation, change: the three C’s of mental health journeys

by Katy Thompson

Mental Health and Social Justice Activist Shilpa Narayan will be a workshop facilitator at the City of Surrey’s annual Social Innovation Summit on Sept. 6 at Surrey City Hall.

Narayan’s workshop, entitled ‘How a Struggle Became a Journey: The Importance of Connection & Conversation for Youth and Mental Wellness,’ is based on her personal experiences with mental illness.

“Connections and conversations lead to change. Those are the three Cs that I run on,” says Narayan.

The workshop

Narayan’s 1 1/2-hour workshop is divided into two sections: a presentation on her own mental health journey and a hands-on discussion of mental health education, which includes ways individuals can benefit their own mental wellness as well as what can be done to create inclusive environments in different workplaces, schools and organizations.

“I get participants to close their eyes and think of one person they could go to if anything were to happen to them,” she says.

If they cannot think of anyone, Narayan encourages them to start thinking about people they can create a connection to.

“Even that one person can make a world of difference,” she says.

Using case studies of diverse groups, including foster children, students with disabilities and LGBTQ+ youth, Narayan explores what it looks like to enhance mental wellness for all individuals.

Narayan suggests that teachers make their classroom a safe space by having daily five to ten minute check-ins with their students and by talking with students about mental health and wellness throughout the year, not just at the beginning or end of term.

Connection, conversation, and overcoming stigma

Narayan says that the first person to reach out to her regarding her mental wellness was a teacher.

“That was the first time I realized that there was a strength in vulnerability. She was the first person to make me feel like it was okay to not be okay,” she explains.

The teacher told her that they would go together to the school counsellor. According to Narayan, her teacher’s inclusive language gave Narayan strength in vulnerability. She turned having struggles into a journey instead of a struggle.

“I get participants to close their eyes and think of one person they could go to if anything were to happen to them,” she says.

Shilpa Narayan, mental health and social justice activist

As Narayan explains, this simple gesture gives that person the opportunity to talk, and it might be the only ‘how are you’ they are getting all day.

“We often forget that it can be quite intimidating for someone to come up to you and say ‘you need to go do this,’ especially if you’re already at a stage where the anxiety is at a level 10/10,” she says.

Before seeking help, Narayan found herself feeling isolated due to the stigma associated with mental health challenges. Narayan believes the lack of mental health education at the time also hindered her understanding of her illness.

“We are so busy in our lives, we need to be able to connect with one another. That connection piece is the biggest part of mental wellness,” she says.

For more information about the Summit, visit www.surrey.ca/community/special-events/community-summit.aspx.

Vol 19 No 4 | August 28–September 11, 2018

The Source

British Columbia

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Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) is a network of Canadian agencies delivering online facilitated workshops to individuals abroad who have been approved to immigrate to Canada.

Connection, conversation, change: the three C’s of mental health journeys

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Shilpa Narayan, mental health and social justice activist

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Settlement Online Pre-Arrival (SOPA) is a network of Canadian agencies delivering online facilitated workshops to individuals abroad who have been approved to immigrate to Canada.
Art with a big heart

By Xi Chen

What makes a place home? Immigrants straddle the line not just between continents and oceans, but also between their past and their future, constantly reconciling their definition of home. As they look at the world through their own lens, they see and feel differently. As the proverb says, home is where the heart is.

Chito Maravilla, an artist from the Philippines, has lived in Canada for more than 16 years. He will share his unique perspective reflecting on both homes through an upcoming illustrated art talk. The event will be hosted on September 6 by the Surrey Art Gallery. “It sounds cliche to talk about being an immigrant but it is really relevant to who I am. I use my art to document my experience here and the social nature of Vancouver,” says Maravilla. “I am inspired by the city, things that amaze me. For example, the Pride Parade, to see everyone including the RCMP joining the parade. Where do you see that? It doesn’t happen in the Philippines,” says Maravilla, with a chuckle. The event inspired him to make a happy painting depicting the parade.

Through the lens of art

Maravilla seeks his inspirations from real life. When he came to Canada, the artist started drawing people he saw on the Skytrain. The drawings he made eventually became an exhibition at the Vancouver International Airport from 2012 to 2014. “I try to keep that drive, when I see something, I do a sketch immediately. I want to put in the impulse there, that way it preserves the energy and sincerity of how I see it,” he explains.

Blending surrealism and expressionism, his artworks are imaginative, dreamy and full of symbolism of people, places and emotions such as joy and love. In one of his award-winning pieces, “The City’s fireworks display”, Stanley Park is transformed into an elegant lady with the Science World uplifted by a kid like a balloon in the sky, and a happy multicultural couple on the side celebrating the fireworks with champagne.

In another one of his paintings, DiverseCity, the word “love” is formed from different hand gestures by people from different ethnic backgrounds.

For each of my artwork I tend to have a diversity theme through symbols. They say the place shapes the people, but I think it is vice versa, that people shape the place,” says Maravilla.

Influenced by diverse experience

Maravilla’s love for art started when he was in grade school in the Philippines, fuelled by a passion to draw. He has had a diverse and successful career since, with a portfolio ranging from fashion design, playground design to graphic design. The diverse commercial experiences have made him a versatile and thoughtful artist.

For a young age, I have had the passion to understand the aesthetics of abstract art. I try to work on concepts, influenced also by my long term working experience in the advertising agency,” he adds.

Aside from painting his new home, the artist also paints his experiences in the Philippines. He has two upcoming exhibitions, one in Ottawa in September at the Philippine Embassy and a solo exhibition in the Philippines next year in May.

“I want to uplift my fellow Filipinos through my work. I want to show the beauty of my country. In the end, as an artist, I hope to travel through my art and paint for the world,” says Maravilla.

For more information, please visit chitomaravilla.com.

Paintings of an immigrant

By Natalia Balyasnikova and Harini Rajagopal

What makes a place home? Immigrants straddle the line not just between continents and oceans, but also between their past and their future, constantly reconciling their definition of home. As they look at the world through their own lens, they see and feel differently. As the proverb says, home is where the heart is.

Rajagopal and Balyasnikova are PhD candidates in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at UBC. "ESL" from page 1

EAL learning is an opportunity to nurture these competencies. Learning through multipotential artists

Rajagopal and Balyasnikova are interested in multimodal learning, a process that engages the learner not only through text, but also aurally, spatially and visually.” The acquisition of language unfolds very differently in older learners,” says Balyasnikova. “When working with seniors who are learning an additional language, we need to create learning opportunities for them that take advantage of all the modes of communication and encourage them to be creative. This is why arts-based language learning, such as some delivered at the UBC Learning Exchange, holds so much promise in older adult language classrooms.”

For example, through acting, older language learners may benefit from muscle memory connecting vocabulary to movement. This could make it easier to recall language in social situations outside of the classroom. Multimodal learning also comes more naturally.

“As human beings, we communicate with gestures, music, images, videos,” explains Rajagopal. “These different modalities are all part of our communication landscape.”

Over the course of a year, Rajagopal followed of a group of second grade students where some students are EAL learners. Along with their elementary school teacher, she created exercises to develop skills emphasized in the new B.C. curriculum. One example is a photography assignment where students took photos of what they love and discussed the photos in class. As importantly, students were also responsible for negotiating the rules of the assignment. This created a forum for them to discuss issues of respect, reciprocity, expectations and fairness.

The exercise revealed that second graders have much to say on these topics. Furthermore, many children who struggle with reading and writing contribute enthusiastically and are shown to be excellent communicators. Rajagopal prefers the multimodal approach because it motivates children to learn by building their confidence.

“It moves [learning] from the space of focusing on the parts where children may be struggling to focusing on the parts where they bring value,” she says.

Students as teachers and teachers as listeners

The photography project also demonstrated that students could be good teachers to each other. Children possess diverse experiences gained from outside of the classroom. With encouragement, they provided insightful feedback to their peers, even on seemingly advanced topics such as photography framing and composition.

“It speaks to our understanding of childhood, our image of children and, in general, the value of what children bring,” says Rajagopal. “They bring perception, fresh eyes, and a range of experiences and resources whether it is linguistic, cultural, or familial.” She believes that these experiences should be valued in the classroom.

Balyasnikova draws similar conclusions from her research and her work at the UBC Learning Exchange.

“As teachers, we tend to set objectives and lay out procedures for the class,” she says. “But at times we need to be a listener instead of trying to control the narrative of our students. Let’s go a little bit and to honour their search for meaning.”

She believes that teachers need to listen to and embrace the life stories of their students. “I have never considered myself a storyteller,” she says. “I call myself a ‘story listens’.”

For more information on the UBC Learning Exchange, visit www.learningsexchange.ubc.ca.
La Chanson de Tadoussac

Arriving near Tadoussac, Quebec, we were immersed in fog, which spread across the breadth of the St. Lawrence River. Crossing the Saguenay River by the free public ferry, one could see just the tops of other vessels. This cold foggy shroud enveloped the little community of Tadoussac until mid-morning. When the fog lifted, we were in one of Quebec’s most beautiful villages located on the shore of the St. Lawrence where it merges with the Saguenay River. It’s about a 3-hour drive north of Quebec City. The core edifice of this village of around 800 inhabitants is the charming Hotel Tadoussac, featured in the 1984 film, The Hotel New Hampshire. It’s near the confluence of the two rivers and fronts on a beautiful sandy bay. The air is sweet with floral smells, and the lawn chairs beckon you to relax.

The main event in town at this time (June 28–July 1, 2018) was the 35th Festival de la Chanson de Tadoussac. It consists of writers, composers, performers and musicians from Quebec, other French speaking regions of Canada and international artists. It features new performers on the scene along with better-known participants in a variety of venues. The festival has won the Félix Award for the Best Event of the Year and a gold Quebec Tourism Award. The music is eclectic and mostly in French, well, intermarriages were fostered. They treated Aboriginal with respect as human beings.

Tadoussac, although small, features several historic buildings and many delectable bistros and restaurants. One of the main attractions is whale watching since the confluence of the two rivers creates an ideal feeding ground for Beluga whales. Many other whale species, dolphins, seals, Greenland sharks and sea birds also frequent the waters. Blue whales and Belugas in this area are considered endangered species. Consequently, the waters around Tadoussac, which include part of the Saguenay Fjord and St. Lawrence River estuary, form the 20-year-old Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park. Treated by the governments of Quebec and Canada. Its purpose is to protect the whale and marine life and regulate activities in the park to ensure sustainability of the area.

“The Chanson de Tadoussac” or “The Song of Tadoussac” has its roots much further back than the festival. “Its song has been sung” for over 8,000 years of Aboriginal habitation in the area. Its strategic location made it important for fishing as well as an important trade route via the Saguenay River for Aboriginal people. French and Aboriginal relationship. The French took full advantage of the network of Aboriginal trade routes. However, it was not simply bartering goods back and forth. In order to procure the furs, which the French were dependent on Aboriginal people for harvesting, processing and transporting, a relationship of trust had to be established. The French became deeply involved in Aboriginal society and politics. There was an interchange of technology and materials, as well, intermarriages were fostered. They treated Aboriginals with respect as human beings and did not compete with them for land.

The fur trade began to decline in the early 1800’s because of over hunting and fish stocks were also becoming depleted. Lumber companies came in and agriculture began. By the late 1800’s logging had been exhausted. In 1864, the first Hotel Tadoussac was built, and following a fire the second was rebuilt in 1942 on the same site. Tourism thrived for nearly a hundred years until ship lines stopped serving Tadoussac in 1966. In the 1960’s Chauvin’s Trading Post was established as a museum. In 1996, the Hotel Tadoussac was established as a protected area of monuments of national significance. All these events, including the Festival de la Chanson de Tadoussac, have contributed to Tadoussac’s re-establishment as a major tourist attraction. A visit to Tadoussac would not be wasted. Please enjoy more photos on The Source website.
The Source
Vol 19 No 4 | August 28–September 11, 2018

Nikkei Matsuri: A celebration of Japanese heritage

By Vinh Nguyen

Joining in the celebration of Japanese heritage, the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre will be holding the annual Nikkei Matsuri Summer Festival from September 1–2.

Roger Lemire, Nikkei Centre’s executive director, shares his experience with various cultural aspects. He first explains what the term “matsuri” means to him.

“It basically means festival. And in Japan, [it means] the matsuri festival. There’s one in every town in Japan and everywhere,” says Lemire.

The word matsuri refers to culture, food and the traditions that are all celebrated in Japanese culture,” she says. “The Mikoshi is usually carried during Matsuri by the people of the festival to carry the spirit of the Shinto god.”

“Yagura” is another essential component in Japanese culture, Lemire explains.

“A lot of celebration activities revolve around Yagura. But it’s not really a stage, it has a more cultural representation to it. It has to have the colour and design as opposed to just a stage of a local event,” Lemire adds.

For some people, the traditions of the “Bon-Odori” festival is a rather new concept. Nakagawa carefully explains the traditions celebrated on this occasion to newcomers.

“Odori means Dance. Bon means the summer holiday Obon in Japan, which is a very important holiday in Japan,” explains Nakagawa. “It’s a holiday to honour our ancestors.”

The festival happens depending on the lunar calendar new year. It usually happens around July/August in Japan, according to the education program coordinator.

“And it’s a huge event because Japanese people all go back to their home villages where their families are from to greet the souls of their ancestors,” she adds.

She boils down the term to basically dancing to celebrate that one is alive today because their ancestors all came together to bring them here.

Another activity that Nikkei Centre provides is related to “Mikoshi.”

“Mikoshi is a reference to the Shinto shrine. It’s usually brought out during the time of celebration,” Lemire says. “It carries the Shinto spirit and it’s held in high regard.”

Carolyn Nakagawa, education program coordinator at Nikkei Centre, elaborates more on this topic.

“Shinto […] is indigenous to Japan. It’s a really important part of Japanese culture,” she says. “The Mikoshi is usually carried during Matsuri by the people of the festival to carry the spirit of the Shinto god.”

“Yagura” is another essential component in Japanese culture, Lemire explains.

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She boils down the term to basically dancing to celebrate that one is alive today because their ancestors all came together to bring them here.

Another essential item in any matsuri is the Happi coat. Nagakawa describes the robe as a jacket bearing a resemblance to the Kimono. The coat allows one to perform physical activities more easily with freedom of body movements.

“They are worn in Matsuri, […] by Taiko drummers especially as well as other kinds of groups. For example, in Japan, sometimes firefighters will wear them,” she says. “And they have some kind of emblem to show you what group you’re part of when you wear a Happi coat.”

Nikkei Centre and Nikkei Matsuri invite everyone to learn more about the wonders of Japanese culture.

For more information, visit www.nikkeimatsuri.nikkeiplace.org.
Desi Sub Culture performs immigrant bass music. Their South Asian fusion sound mixes Punjabi folk songs with global beats.

The name ‘Desi Sub Culture’ is an homage to the Asian Underground in 1990s UK. It is also related to the fact that they are “Desi’s doing stuff off the beaten path” as Sanjay Seran, the vocalist of the band, states.

Seran, electronics/tabla player Tarun Nayar and the dhol/dholak player Ravi Binning have known each other for over 15 years. Sanjay, born and raised in Richmond, is proud to lead the band on its presentation on Richmond World Festival, on August 31st.

“All three of us were born in Canada to families that emigrated here in the 1970s. We grew up in immigrant households. The biggest challenge growing up and into my early adult life was identity. Trying to find out how we fit in, not only in society but also in our own heads,” says Seran.

While Binning was born in Montreal, Nayar was born in Richmond like Sanjay. The Canadian trio have known each other for over a decade. They decided to form Desi Sub Culture as a side project from their other band, Delhi 2 Dublin. Seran, Binning and Nayar have just visited the American Midwest on tour. As the band is fairly outspoken about immigration, they believe in creating a new narrative and representing more stories that are not frequently told.

“Getting over the embarrassment of being different was a huge challenge. I’m so happy to be past that point in my life. Being a Punjabi is so awesome. I want the world to see how awesome my culture is. It is very important for me to be able to showcase that,” Seran says proudly.

Growing up between worlds inspired Desi Sub Culture to search for a unique sound, which reflected their own experience as the second generation of immigrants.

“The word immigrant alone generally has a negative connotation. Being from an immigrant family is rarely considered cool, that’s why we need a new narrative because it actually is cool,” Seran explains.

Electronic Dance Music

The EDM movement is continuing to grow all over the globe. Desi Sub Culture decided to take on a worldwide trend and incorporate folk songs, trap beats and tabla rhythms to build their own take on EDM.

“I can imagine more integration with technology and develop this to become much more of a sensory experience as well as it continuing to be a sweaty dance release,” says Seran. “It is cool that we can really be experimental with this project as it is more of an art piece for the three of us rather than the traditional band that we are trying to get off the ground so that we can hit the road and tour.”

Seran believes their own take resonates a lifetime of experience as kids of immigrants. Connecting people through bass is their motto.

“We are creating the people’s music. The people will relate to our sound. It will speak to them,” he says.

While the trio is only two years old, Seran, Binning and Nayar hold big plans for the band in addition to the September tour.

“We are set to start releasing some singles in the near future followed by an EP,” says Seran. For more information, visit www.desisubculture.com.
The odyssey of a djembe

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Master drummer Bolokada Condé will be hosting a series of djembe workshops at the Britannia Community Centre and CBC’s Studio 700 from September 6–9.

In addition to being one of the most highly-regarded djembe players, Condé has also been celebrated as one of the most important teachers of West African drumming, having taught at universities throughout the United States, as well as having led workshops for other djembe teachers.

Growth and passion

Bolokada Condé is one of the world’s most celebrated djembe players. Having performed and taught internationally for decades, he has been working towards sharing his experience, knowledge, and love of West African drumming with the rest of the world.

But while Condé’s expertise seems only natural now, he credits much of his opportunity to study and practical of the djembe to his parents, as well as his native community of Moroya, Guinea.

“I’ve always loved this kind of drumming since I was a little boy. My mom would help and encourage me, because she wanted me to be a fole. She would show me other drummers and try to teach me to grow up like that, so I’ve always loved djembe,” says Condé. “My village’s people told my family, ‘we want Bolokada to play djembe for us because he has a very special energy. We want Bolokada to be a djembe player.’”

Despite the encouragement, Condé notes how his father was initially concerned: although he was interested in his success, the prospect of Condé becoming a professional djembe player would mean time away from working at home.

But Condé says that his community was committed to his growth as a djembe player. Many of the people in his village stepped forward to volunteer to work for his father in his stead, so that he could focus on mastering his craft.

“My dad let me play for them, and many of my village’s people, women and men, worked with my dad for five years, because I played djembe for them,” says Condé.

Sound and energy

From then on, Condé’s career as a professional djembe player began to take shape. While touring other smaller villages in Guinea, the mayor of Kissidougou – a larger city in Guinea – came across Condé and was taken aback by his talent. He enlisted him to come play and perform on a larger scale in the big city.

Since his big break, Condé has gone on to perform at an international level for the national ballet company of Guinea – Les Percussions de Guinée – as well as teaching West African drumming at multiple universities across the United States, including teaching other djembe teachers across the country. For Condé, one of the most rewarding experiences of his career has been to share his love for djembe with others.

“So I grew up, and I know now how teaching is very important, and now I see the importance of making everybody happy,” says Condé. “You make the community strong, you bring people together. It makes people smile, and brings good energy to people.”

Condé says that a good teacher can introduce a number of key concepts in a beginner’s djembe course – such as solo and accompaniment rhythms and phrases, and creating different tones and sounds with the drum – but notes that true mastery of the djembe can take decades. Despite appearing simple on the surface, one can spend an entire lifetime studying and performing djembe.

But the master drummer says that starting is much simpler. “For Condé, all it takes is a love for djembe, and a passion that is sure to grow as one discovers the sound and energy of the drum.”

“The first important part of playing and learning djembe is that you have to love it. If you love it, that love is gonna push you along, and push you to find a teacher to teach you,” says Condé. “That love is gonna push you to a workshop to learn the rhythm and to play it together with your friends. That same love is going to push you to make smiling easy.”

For more information on Condé and the event, visit www.drumming.ca.

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Under Paris Skies: La Musique d’Edith Piaf

"As Piaf, Edie Daponte gives everything to us on stage. The performance is magnificent! Bravo! La femme, Edith Piaf would be pleased with this remarkable homage." Dominique Weneick, La Societe Francophone de Victoria

Saturday, September 29 - 7:30PM Kay Meek Centre, West Vancouver www.kaymeek.com 604-981-6335

Sunday, September 30 - 3PM Centre Stage at Surrey City Hall www.surrey.ca 604-501-5566
A great opportunity for Vancouver area singers

PACIFICA SINGERS

AUDITIONS

AUDITIONS ARE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH

Pacifica Singers is a select vocal ensemble which exists as part of the Vancouver Chamber Choir organization. The ensemble performs with the Vancouver Chamber Choir each season and also presents independent concerts with its own director, Fiona Blackburn.

We are looking for experienced choral singers – tenors and baritones, in particular – to join this advanced level ensemble. Prospective singers should have extensive choral experience and a high level of sight-reading ability.

Rehearsal ranges from the Renaissance to 21st century works. Opportunities for this season include performing Handel’s Messiah this December, and Vaughan Williams’ Five Mystical Songs, on Good Friday, with the professional musicians of the Vancouver Chamber Choir and Orchestra at the Orpheum. The 2018-2019 season will also celebrate Mezzo Jan Wastuba’s final year as Artistic Director of the Vancouver Chamber Choir.

AUDITION FOR PACIFICA SINGERS

All roles (SATB) are invited to auditions: Sunday, September 16.
Please contact Fiona for an appointment at fiona@fionablackburn.com

ABOUT PACIFICA SINGERS

Pacifica Singers provides an ideal performance venue for experienced and motivated choral singers whose goal is to make music at a very high level. By providing direct exposure to the world of professional music making, it is an excellent environment for singers intending to make a career in music.

Current members live throughout the metro region, with many serving as conductors, music educators, and professional singers and players in their communities.

Weekly rehearsals are held on Thursdays from September to May, with occasional weekend rehearsals and additional dress rehearsals as required.

For more information, please email the director, Fiona Blackburn at fiona@fionablackburn.com. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, please email pacificasingers@vancouverchamberchoir.com to ensure your message is received.

Please forward to any singers who may be interested

Pacifica Singers is an Associate Choir of the Vancouver Chamber Choir

Advertise in The Source’s print or digital versions.
Email info@thelasource.com
Welcome back everyone! I hope everyone had an amazing summer break full of sunshine, good times and memories. Even though fall is around the corner, there’s still plenty of summer left to enjoy. Take your friends and family to see the many cultural events and festivals in the twilight of summer. See you in Autumn!

Tom Hu:
Here, under our tongue
Aug. 9–Sept. 22
Burrard Arts Foundation, Vancouver
www.burrardarts.org

Photo courtesy of Vancouver Latin Film Festival

August 28–September 11, 2018
films focusing on the Peruvian region. Special attention will be paid to the Indigenous peoples between the pines and the cultural linkages and women’s traditional role within it. Opening night will be at 7 p.m. on Sept. 12. Please check out the festival’s website for more information.

Richmond World Festival
Aug. 31–Sept. 1
Minoru Park & Richmond Cultural Centre Plaza, Richmond
www.richmondworldfestival.com

The Richmond World Festival returns to Minoru Park for the fourth time, showcasing the city’s cultural diversity through food, music, sport and art. Featuring performances from over 90 musicians, culinary cook-offs, media film and art galas, and sporting exhibitions, there will be something for everyone of all ages. Admission is free! For a complete listing of performers and events, please check out their website.

TaiwanFest 2018:
Fête with the Philippines
Sept. 1–3
Vancouver Art Gallery Plaza
www.taiwanfest.ca

TaiwanFest is a family-friendly event that showcases the best of Taiwanese and Asian cultural arts, food and lifestyle and it’s happening on Sept. 1–3 at the Vancouver Art Gallery Plaza. This year’s theme honours the Philippines and the cultural linkages between the Indigenous peoples of the two Asian island nations. There will be plenty of performances, exhibitions and cuisine to experience at the festival. Please visit the festival’s website for a complete schedule.

Festival of Recorded Movement
Sept. 8–15
SFU Woodwards, Vancouver
www.o-r-m.ca

The third Festival of Recorded Movement is happening Sept. 8 at SFU Woodwards’ Goldcorp Centre for the Arts and was created as a platform for movers and filmmakers to share and create short films that revolve around the body in motion. F-O-R-M presents films that deliver strong imagery of the human body in motion, exploring the limitless nature of our physical capacity both creatively and athletically, and offering a sense of choreographic investigation between camera and movement, regardless of form. For a complete schedule of events, please check out the festival’s website.

August 31–Dec. 30
Il Centro Italian Cultural Centre, Vancouver
www.italienculturalcentre.ca

The Italian Cultural Centre Museum will be hosting the exhibition, Women’s Work: Reflections on the History of Women in Textile, featuring a sense of choreographic investigation between camera and movement, and offering a sense of choreographic investigation between camera and movement, regardless of form. For a complete schedule of events, please check out the festival’s website for more details.

Women’s Work: Reflections on the History of Women in Textile Exhibition
Sept. 22–Dec. 30
Il Centro Italian Cultural Centre, Vancouver
www.italienculturalcentre.ca

The Italian Cultural Centre Museum will be hosting the exhibition, Women’s Work: Reflections on the History of Women in Textile, featuring a sense of choreographic investigation between camera and movement, and offering a sense of choreographic investigation between camera and movement, regardless of form. For a complete schedule of events, please check out the festival’s website for more details.

Ho Rui An:
Sun, Sweat, Skirt, Fan
Sept. 8–29
Centre A, Vancouver
www.centrea.org

Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. He writes, talks and thinks around images, with an interest in investigating their emergence, transmission and disappearance within contexts of globalization and governance. Centre A will be hosting a curated exhibition of his work in September. An opening reception will take place at 7 p.m. on Sept. 7. Please check out Centre A’s website for more details.

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