Fostering literacy, offering opportunity

by KATY THOMPSON

Literacy is a skill that opens the doors to opportunity for Canadians and increases their chances of success in the modern world. Organizations such as Decoda Literacy Solutions in Vancouver show their commitment to literacy and learning through their work in the community.

Decoda Literacy Solutions was born on May 30, 2011 as a result of the partnering of two local literacy organizations: Literacy BC, and the literacy department of 2000 Legacies Now. Literacy BC had previously offered training, resources, tools, and support for adult literacy, while the literacy department worked with the Province of British Columbia to help develop literacy in communities across the province. Decoda continues the efforts of both organizations, providing resources, training, and community-based literacy programs to over 400 communities province-wide.

“Our mission is to increase the literacy and learning skills of children and families, youth, adults, and seniors to improve their quality of life at home, at work and in the community,” says Margaret Sutherland, executive director of Decoda Literacy Solutions.

Literacy Month events

This year marks Decoda’s 5th Annual Literacy Month. The B.C. literacy organization will be putting on a number of activities in September based on their theme, Fostering Literacy.

Among Decoda’s key initiatives include a Literacy Matters Fact Sheet and Infographic, a Fostering Literacy Tips Calendar featuring tips on ways to nurture literacy for each day of the month, and a Celebrate Literacy Month Context. Decoda staff will also be offering tips on ways to foster literacy at home and in the community during public service announcements aired on CBC Vancouver throughout the month.

“Our vision is a British Columbia where everyone has the literacy skills they need,” says Sutherland. B.C. mayors and city council will also be making Literacy Month proclamations, and B.C. landmark buildings will commemorate International Literacy Day on September 8th by lighting up purple.

“Purple is the colour for literacy,” says Sutherland. “We are encouraging everyone to #PutOnYourPurple and upload a picture on Twitter or Facebook, using the hashtags #PutOnYourPurple, #FosteringLiteracy and #LiteracyMonth.”

More than words

Literacy can be defined in part as having aptitudes for reading, writing and oral communication. As Sutherland explains, however, literacy also encompasses some skill sets that are less commonly associated with the term, including numeracy and technology skills.

“Essentially, literacy is a set of skills we use every day to get things done,” says Sutherland. “Literacy affects every aspect of our lives.”

For example, Sutherland states that individuals with stronger literacy skills tend to be healthier due to their better understanding of health information and consequent ability to make health-related decisions.

Verbatim

The move to Canada

By PRASHANT BHARDWAJ

One day I came home from work and opened my Gmail to find the golden email from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) – a request to submit my passport at the nearest Canadian High Commission. Finally, a new adventure was about to unfold. I was going to be a Permanent Resident in Canada (Kanedaaaaa!). I left my job and spent a few months with my parents and friends in India, all this while packing and preparing myself for the BIG move. I was feeling somewhat anxious, a little excited and a tiny bit scared too. But the adventurer in me had high hopes, and as always, those hopes were overwhelming every other feeling.

After almost a 14-hour flight from New Delhi and a 3-hour stopover at London Heathrow, I landed in Vancouver on September 10, 2017. A new land, new people and just two familiar faces, a cousin and a childhood friend, both of whom I hadn’t talked to for ages. Some would call me courageous; some a fool. I guess there’s a thin line between the two, I guess. It’s just sometimes I get confused on which side I stand. Anyway, both my cousin and friend helped me get set up things and find a place to live. Things were going fine but then came the test of survival, “The Pursuit of Happiness” turning point in my life. I was spending through my life’s hard-earned savings in what seemed like an instant. It was time to search for a job. I looked through Craigslist, various job sites and career pages of known companies in my field of work and applied to them all hoping to get a response and land an interview from at least one, but strangely, things didn’t go as planned. And I had no idea what it was that was keeping me from getting a job or an interview call.

I have more than two years of experience working for an...
A sweet and Jewish September

by Colleen Addison

Sept. 9 marks the beginning of the three-day Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It’s a time when connections are strengthened, when Jews think about how ties bind them to others in Jewish society and to the environment sustaining that society, says Michael Schwartz.

“New Year’s in a secular culture is just ‘get drunk and dance,’ pure celebration,” says Schwartz, a long-time member of Vancouver’s Jewish community and director of community engagement at the Jewish Museum and Archive of British Columbia. In the Jewish New Year, by contrast, “there’s a thread of environmentalism, of social justice.”

The New Year is a great time to consider how the next year can be better, says Schwartz.

A month of holidays

Rosh Hashanah marks the start of a full September of Jewish holidays, Schwartz continues. Ten days after Rosh Hashanah, Vancouver’s Jews will celebrate Yom Kippur, the high holiday of the three-day Rosh Hashanah festival and a big community feast. The whole month is a time when social ties in the Jewish community are reinforced, when Jews have Sukkot, the harvest festival, and a time when connections are made, when social justice is part of the meaning.

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year, by contrast, “It’s made from an animal, signifying the link Jewish people feel with nature. ‘In the very earliest times, Jewish society was agrarian,’ Schwartz explains. ‘It was very connected to the land. It works nicely to have Rosh Hashanah in the fall, because it does feel with the weather and the environment, like an ending and a beginning. Summer’s coming to a close. We’re entering into the fall, an inside time, a reflective time.’

As a celebration of their connection with the earth, Jews at Rosh Hashanah eat treats made from natural products, apples with honey and challah. “Apples in honey bring about a sweet new year,” says Schwartz. “Apples are in season and honey is from bees, from nature. We’re the stewards of this land. If we do a good job, we get to have sweet things, like honey.”

Challah, or egg bread, is important both for reasons of the community and the environment. “Part of the meaning is that God gives us wheat, but we can’t do anything with it without our labour,” Schwartz comments. “Grain to bread requires people, requires us to use our hands [together].”

But challah is also a present from the earth. “It’s symbolic of our general relationship to the world. We’ve given this beautiful blue ball with all of its treasures but we’re responsible for it.”

“Rosh Hashanah is the start of a month of holidays, says Schwartz. “If you feel you’ve wronged someone or things ended on a sour note, then you have to reach out and try to smooth the waters because you’re not allowed to come before God until you’ve made your peace with the humans in this world.”

During Rosh Hashanah’s religious service, members of the congregation gather to pray and blow the shofar, a ram’s horn that was once used as a tool for village-to-village communication.

“It’s made exactly the way they did it 3000 years ago,” marvels Schwartz.

“Grain to bread requires people, requires us to use our hands [together].”

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“You’re supposed to be going through this period of reflection,” says Schwartz.

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Exploring Muslim youth identities and their sense of belonging in Canada

by OZLEM SULEYMAN

With the growing number of Muslims in Canadian schools, Neila Miled, a PhD Candidate of the Faculty of Education at UBC, explores how Muslim youth negotiate their identities as Muslims and Canadians. She looks at how they express their sense of belonging in particular within Metro Vancouver.

Miled was born and raised in Tunisia, a Muslim country with a secular culture. She started her career as an English teacher in Dubai, an Islamic non-secular city. She was perplexed at the different interpretation of Islam.

Diversity in Islam

Miled delves into diversity among Muslim youth from an intersectional perspective: sex, gender, social class, socio-economic class, education, and country of origin.

The purpose of my work is to resist the homogenization of what we call "Muslims," Miled explains. "When I say 'intersectional perspective' I mean we take into consideration the (axes) of identities are different.

A recent Canadian survey asked Muslims if they felt more "Muslim" or "Canadian." "As if we cannot be both," Miled expresses. "This is what pushed me to explore first of all how school experiences impact these particular Muslim youth.

Miled is exploring how these experiences affect the students (who are between 14 and 19 years old) both inside and outside school and how they impact their sense of belonging in Canada and their ‘Canadianness.’ Miled found that sometimes religion becomes an invisible marker of a student’s identity.

"If you talk to a Somali woman, she will tell you, ‘I am excluded because I am black, not because I am Muslim,’” explains Miled. According to Miled, the religious identity of a Muslim white woman from a region like Sarajevo is one of invisibility. She is never perceived as a Muslim, even by fellow Muslims.

"[It] is especially used with marginalized communities,” she says. "I wanted this type of research to inspire these young girls to ask questions and to understand the regions.

There is also [a huge difference between the students who were born in Canada or who were young adults when they came to Canada],” Miled says. The Muslim students who came to Canada speak English fluently. She also points out that the experiences and lives of Muslims in Canada have been impacted by political refugees coming to the political environment and the media.

Photo voice project: Can the displaced speak?

During her project, Miled noticed a group of refugee and new immigrant Muslim girls with limited English language skills. To include these girls in her research, Miled came up with the photo voice project, an art project that uses photography to promote discussion of diversity among these students.

"This group of girls who were originally in the regions.

"I was raised in a country where you don't have to wear the veil. It doesn't mean that you are invisible, you just don't wear it. Where you don't have to wear the veil, says Miled. "I was raised in the regions. She was perplexed at the differences between the students who came from Dubai, an Islamic non-secular city, and the students who came from Muslim countries.

"As if we cannot be both,” Miled expresses. "This is what抵抗了 我 探索第一 反来的 学校经验 影响这特定的穆斯林学生.

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Read More...
Promoting social change through the media

by RAMAN KANG

Joanna Chiu is a journalist who serves as the editor and founder of WAM! Vancouver (Women Action and the Media), a non-profit dedicated to creating gender justice in the media, and NiVoices, an international editorial collective that focuses on self-identified women's work in China. Chiu will be speaking at the Peace and Conflict Studies Lecture Series: Transforming Culture for Social Change at Langara College on Sept. 19.

“The media is so influential. It’s how people learn about the world, says Chiu. “I can’t advocate for people to think in a certain way as a journalist, but I can try to make sure that I give people the information to make up their minds.”

Getting into journalism

Born in Hong Kong, Chiu came to Canada with her family at the age of two when they no longer felt safe living there. She explains that her interest in China grew when learning about the dark issues of the country in middle school. This led her to study Chinese history and Asian studies at the University of British Columbia. Chiu eventually went back to China as a foreign correspondent. While there, she used what she considered to be her relative safety and privilege as a Canadian to tell a range of stories that Chinese journalists struggle to tell safely.

“I went into this field because it was a way for me to put together my passions and natural talents,” Chiu says.

As a journalist, Chiu believed she could make a positive contribution with her writing. She wanted to do it in a way that could make an impact because trust the mainstream media organizations can be a problem. “Journalism is a balanced and credible way to make people think about issues without telling them exactly what to think,” she says. “Journalists can’t really start a bunch of petitions but we can do our best to make sure what we write and who we write about is done in a good way.”

Sources of diversity

“In my experience as a journalist, finding more diverse resources and experts and being aware of negative stereotypes about people or places. When speaking to female journalists, Chiu found many of them admitted to heavily quoting male experts and it wasn’t something they were happy with.

“Having a directory and network where people are encouraged to find more diverse sources is a good way for them to create the kind of media they want to see in the world,” she says.

Thus, NiVoices created a directory of 900 female experts in Greater China to encourage and aid people in finding more diverse sources.

Changing the media

Throughout her career, Chiu has written about human rights, women’s rights, LGTBQ rights civil society and politics to name a few. In her lecture, “Promoting social change through media and the arts,” Chiu will reflect on what some media organizations and journalists aren’t doing as much as they can to make sure they’re putting out there is something that they want to see,” Chiu says.

According to Chiu, the change can start with being aware of how many women versus how many men journalists quote, being a foreign correspondent and discussing leaving her full-time job to pursue WAM! Vancouver and NiVoices. Through these organizations, Chiu aims to change the way the media frames issues in the hopes that media becomes more diverse and free of negative stereotypes.

“I’m cognizant that everyone has bias. Every journalist chooses and frames stories in a certain way; that’s why I got involved with starting up WAM! Vancouver and NiVoices,” says Chiu. “Writers and artists are really influential, and we do have a powerful say in what gets out there.”

For more information, please visit www.langara.ca/news-and-events/events-calendar/180919-pccn-lecture-series.html
Design a fantastic resume and cover letter, five-tune your interview tech-
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When I first started writing I
struggled with the idea that I felt
I had to be put into a box labeled
Asian Canadian writer. In some
ways I was operating under a
delusion that my ethnic iden-
tity shouldn't be factored at all
into who you are. I think in the
last seven or eight years of my
writing career I've tried to make
peace with that, and know that it
is not something I can get away
from, that is really a part of me.
Chong says this wasn't an
entirely smooth transition, as even
he came into his career with pre-
conceived notions of what Asian
Canadian writing should be.

The festival's schedule is an-
chored by two panels, both of
which are free and feature many
of the artists together. Tham be-
lieves that this public and more
interactive format is a great way
to engage and stimulate those in
the audience.

For more information, visit

"The festival was started by
the Canadian Asian Writers' Work-
shop," says Tham. "There are still
relatively few minori-
ties involved in Canadian litera-
ture, and as such, the festival functional as a way of giving
attention to Asian Canadian writers in order to
promote and showcase their work."

Since its inception, LiterASIAN
has featured dozens of both up-
and-coming and existing Asian
Canadian talents, and is focused
on spreading writers' work and
to ideas, but the festival does not
want to exclude anyone from at-
tending or being involved.

"While Asian Canadian read-
ers are aware of our diverse target audience, everyone inter-
ested in Canadian literature is
welcomed to the event," Tham
adds.

"There is something special
about getting a group of ex-
erts together and letting them
respond to questions and talk
amongst themselves," he says.
"Our goal is for the public to have
a better idea of each writer's
thoughts and personal philoso-
phies, but we also hope that the
writers will leave the festival with
new ideas as well."

In addition, there will be mul-
tiple workshops led by some of
the authors individually, relay-
ing their expertise and experi-
ences in a way that Tham hopes
will be insightful for attendees
and beneficial to those who
want to write themselves.

"We hope that people will
gain a deeper love for Asian
Canadian literature, and we would
also like to nurture new emerging
talents," says Tham. "Some of our
featured writers felt into writ-
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talents," says Tham. "Some of our
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ing through a variety of hands-
on experiences, and workshops
are a good way to provide that
sort of experience to festival go-
ers. Perhaps the next big name
in writing is somewhere in the
crowd!"
Haggling in India

It feels as though everyone in India is an entrepreneur. A fair assumption when travelling the country is that no product or service is too insignificant to bargain over. Even those already in employ, such as IndiGo baggage charge collectors, appear somewhat disappointed not to be cajoled. An expectant look, daring you to twist their arm, is included in the fare.

Enterprising ways give theatrical and surprising turns to mundane chores. Groceries promise a thrilling twist. Servicing your car can feel like a hostage crisis. A taxi ride can take more turns than the road even offers.

Take the example of my friends and I needing 10 bouquets shortly before the start of a wedding.

At an otherwise nondescript street corner, we found a photography – the window left down, the door not quite closed – that solicited an acceptable offer shouted from a block away. How hard can it be to haggle, and wanting a chance to lead the haggle, I visit the vegetable street market to buy fruit. In my first of many mistakes, I pick out a pitiful old woman on her haunches, encircling a bucket’s worth of produce, and ask for four oranges and two bananas.

In my head I’m busy converting the price I’d expect to pay in Vancouver into rupees and readying myself for an exaggerated lob that I’ll undercut with gusto. Game, set and match. So you can imagine my surprise when I snap back to find her unloading everything she’s got into my hands. There are fruits I have never seen before and, I think, some rocks in there. As things turn busily-threading flower walla (shopkeeper) tending to two customers. Shekhar, the savviest amongst us, leads price negotiations around, and often over, enquires from other passers-by. Meanwhile, our semi-attendant walla weaves vines and sparkling ribbons around lavish hydrangeas with the dexterity of Goddess Durga. After 10 minutes it all ends in a flurry and, before I know it, we’re back in our taxi high-tailing it down the street.

Do we really have time for this? I come all this way for an Indian wedding and spend the night in florist trade talks. Perfect. Suddenly, we’re thrown forward as the taxi lurches into reverse and, back at the walla’s makeshift worktable, he’s preparing our order with a juggler’s precision. I’m dumbfounded. What just happened?

It dawns on me that was the negotiation! Worthy of a Penn & Teller finale, I was misdirected by what appeared to be a breakdown when there was never any thought of us leaving the table, so to speak. Our bid was the abruptness of that indignant wheel spin. As I rewind events, I marvel at the choreography – the window left down, the door not quite closed – that solicited an acceptable offer shouted from a block away. How hard can it be to haggle, and wanting a chance to lead the haggle, I visit the vegetable street market to buy fruit. In my first of many mistakes, I pick out a pitiful old woman on her haunches, encircling a bucket’s worth of produce, and ask for four oranges and two bananas.

My protestations fall on suddenly – or perhaps genuinely – deaf ears, and my attempts to reiterate (in Hindi, mind you) my order are rebuffed by hand shooing and head rolling. Realizing the situation is now beyond saving, I pull the only manoeuvre I can think of and make for the nearest escape, handing her rocks back as I turn.

Not guilefully, as I was shown by Shekhar, or presciently, assuming she would reform her tactics, but out of sheer embarrassment and failure. Whether insults, actual offers or the delayed onset of pity for my feeble attempt, she shouts after me for what seems an eternity.

Wherever you may view yourself, or end up, on the haggle-o-meter, give it a whirl. Who knows, maybe your neighbourhood grocer is up for sparring over the price of grapes, but nobody ever asked.

CARL DENSEM
by BRITTANY THOMSON

Vancouver-based artist Germaine Koh describes her work as “an attempt to be attentive to the poetics of daily life.” With the help of the City of Vancouver, Koh plans to show Vancouverites how poetic their city really is. Known for her See-Saw Seat off of Main Street, Koh plans to impress her audience with an even bigger exhibit this year. Koh’s exhibit Home Made Home will run from Sept. 15–Nov. 4 at the Evergreen Culture Centre in Coquitlam.

As the City of Vancouver’s Engineering Department’s first Artist-in-Residence, Koh is expected to get her projects off the ground. Koh’s work will point out the systems around us within our city’s infrastructure. The city plans to start with three consecutive artists-in-residence and hopes it will become an ongoing project. Koh herself will not fabricate the projects but will help with conceptualization and design.

“They do a lot. We have no idea about all the amazing infrastructure that supports our daily lives,” says Koh about the City of Vancouver’s Engineering Department.

Public space appeal

Over her career Koh has found herself pulled towards public art versus the typical gallery art. She found herself frustrated with how inaccessible the gallery world was. Koh believes that it is worthwhile to put ideas out into the public realm for debate.

“In my mind the essence of putting out ideas and intriguing situations will further the ideas,” she explains.

Public art allows Koh to engage with a larger public than what one normally finds in an art gallery.

Exploring living small

Home Made Home can best be described as a “DIY project.” Making up the bulk of the exhibit is a collection of structures Koh has built that highlight the idea of “living small.” The exhibit will include a sub-exhibition of architectural panels. Each panel has a different image and corresponding text of a different builder and designer local to the Pacific Northwest. This project will focus on accessible and affordable housing, especially in smaller forms.

“I’m aligning what I’m doing with a long history of people taking the initiative to find solutions to the housing challenges,” says Koh.

Koh does not credit Vancouver’s current housing crisis for her inspiration for this exhibit, but there are underlying concerns on which her work shines a light. She feels that the current crisis makes the work more pressing, furthering the argument that we should be expanding our ideas that could be a partial solution to the problem. Ideas like laneway houses, co-housing projects, social housing and even houses made out of shipping containers could, in her view, really make a difference in Vancouver.

“This is a long history in my work of doing projects that are concerned with basic survival,” she says.

Something new emerges from the old

Along with her exhibit, Koh is also working with the City of Vancouver on another building project. Due to Vancouver’s new by-law where every house built before 1940 must be dismantled rather than demolished, Koh has plans for those housing materials. Timber and other building materials will be used to build smaller structures that could serve as small pop-up stores, artist’s residences, information kiosks, etc. She plans to highlight the uses before the material finds its way into a landfill.

Koh hopes that by the time her career is done, she will have made a difference. She hopes to have made things people will remember.

“I guess as I get older my desire to make a difference becomes stronger. I’ve become more willing to be an activist in my work. I’m in as good a position as anyone to make a difference and make stuff happen,” she says.

For more information, please visit www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca.

Home sweet home


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AU CSF, le français, c’est bien plus qu’une langue!
Silence, suspended

by PETRA GIFFARD

Ontario-based artist Xiaojing Yan, known for fusing together traditional Chinese artistic techniques with contemporary practices, will be presenting In Suspended Silence, an installation work based on symbolism.

Yan’s first solo art exhibition in Metro Vancouver will run Sept. 14 to Nov. 10 at Richmond Art Gallery (RAG). “This exhibition will be a unique experience” says Xiaojing Yan. “The gallery space is quite different to other places I have exhibited. There are going to be two installation works – Mountains of Pine II and Lingzhi Girl. [Mountains of Pine II] is made with pine needles pierced through silk organza. These are then layered and suspended to form a landscape. The silk organza is translucent... It will be like mountains in the mist.”

For the piece entitled Lingzhi Girls, Yan has cast eight busts using wood chips containing Lingzhi mushroom spores. The mushrooms then grow out from the busts. “So each sculpture has a different form” says Yan. “These two [works] are intertwined with each other. People can go into the organza landscape to discover the figures, and the people visiting then become part of the work.”

Symbolism and suspension are central to this exhibition. “I used Lingzhi mushrooms and pine needles to create the work and both symbolise fragility” says Yan. When asked about the title of the show, Yan explains: “Suspension for me is both an aesthetic method and a way of overcoming the idea of being suspended in two different cultures. Art gives me freedom to see the world in a different way. It is a way for me to communicate. I see colour, form, materials and even display methods as my vocabulary,” she says. Yan is heavily inspired by her Chinese heritage and her experiences of moving to Canada from China. “Chinese Culture and tradition have always inspired my work” she says. “I am drawn to Chinese materials and traditions but I give them a new identity and contemporary context.” However the work has not been made purely for a Chinese audience. “People from different backgrounds can associate with the work. It is talking about life and death and the human-nature relationship,” she says. Intercultural exchange RAG curator, Nan Capogna agrees. “I am looking forward to bringing Xiaojing’s work to B.C. – specifically to Richmond” she says. “Richmond has a large Chinese community. But even if you have no experience of China I think anybody who walks into the space will hopefully have the aesthetic experience of this environment that is dream-like, tranquil and meditative. The materials that she uses are pretty unusual and a bit provocative, and I’m looking forward to seeing what that does to our visitors in the gallery. According to Capogna intercultural relationships, exchange, fusion as well as cultural hybridity are the main elements at the heart of the show. “Humans on the move is clearly a global condition and one that more people are experiencing. The aim is to bring work to the gallery that will resonate with the gallery visitors,” she says. “Do they see themselves in this exhibition? Do they relate to her experience? Has this work made them curious to learn more?”

In Suspended Silence opens on September 13, with an artist talk and tour. The exhibition will also coincide with the 2018 Culture Days, Sept. 29-30. “We will be running multi-lingual tours in Mandarin and Cantonese on those days” says Capogna.

In addition the gallery is also planning other special events to coincide with both the Xiaojing Yan exhibition and the Wen-Li Chen exhibition that will be running at the same time. For more information, please visit www.richmondartgallery.org.
Afrobar, a young singer-songwriter from Uganda

by Xi Chen

Hailing from Uganda, Afrobar, a young singer-songwriter with a soulful voice, came to Canada just three years ago. He has already made a splash in the local music scene and made it to one of the top five finalists in the Cumberland Music Festival Artist Challenge this summer and was recently on the radio with the Medicine show.

With a new recording project launching late September, he also does live performance at Guilt & Company and has an upcoming show on Sept. 17.

Born to sing

Afrobar, a catchy name that has nothing to do with a drinking venue, is actually a combination of the two things that the artist is proud of: Afro, for his African identity and bar, from part of his real name.

The artist says he has been living and breathing music practically since he was born. He started performing on stage when he was just seven years old.

“I was already singing before that. There was this kind of tree that grows in Uganda and it looks like a microphone. When I was about four years old, I would use it to start singing and I found people had an interest in listening,” he says.

“Music is something I appreciate and it is very valuable to me. I probably will be on my deathbed and I will still sing,” he says.

Afrobar loves creating music across all genres, though most of the time he focuses on R&B and soul music. Citing influence from Michael Jackson, he says he wants to do something innovative and groundbreaking in music.

“I just love writing music. I can listen to a certain beat and I start writing on it. I could wake up and want to write a song, or write about a kind of experience that I had. It is a natural thing; even in my dreams sometimes I write music,” he says.

Music with a perspective

Steeped in emotions, the artist feels he has a style and interpretation of music unparalleled to his age, reflecting his mature perspective on life.

“If I don't accept what I have already, I won't have a happy life. Everyone has had a hard life, and in the future there will be tougher or easier times. Accepting what is happening, that is fulfilling,” he says. “As a kid from Uganda, if I look at my life from ten years back, I can

If I can do that then that is an achievement. I want to have a charitable organization like an orphanage or an Afrobar foundation one day,” he says.

The artist is thankful for his experience in Vancouver, despite some initial difficulties adjusting to new customs that he was not familiar with.

“Vancouver is an open place. I have performed in front of a crowd that was mostly rock-based, but I feel they just love whatever you throw at them. The place is so welcoming, as long as you are here and doing the right thing, you will feel like [you are] home,” he says.

To check out more of Afrobar’s work, please visit www.facebook.com/afrobarmusic.

Guilt & Company and has an upcoming show on Sept. 17.

Afrobar, young singer-songwriter from Uganda
By Simon Yee

The 2018 Fall Equinox begins on Sept. 22, ushering in the end of summer and the start of autumn. The summer days may be over for the year, but the events continue! From art gallery exhibits and folk dancing to theatre nights and musical performances, there are plenty of festivities, celebrations, exhibits and shows to see and attend throughout the city. Have a great September, everyone!

Ayumi Goto and Peter Morin: how do you carry the land? Until Oct. 20
Vancouver Art Gallery www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Ayumi Goto and Peter Morin: how do you carry the land? is currently on display at the Vancouver Art Gallery until Oct. 20. The exhibit is a dialogue between two artists, presented via their individual and collaborative performances. Ayumi Goto and Peter Morin’s work begins with their respective positions as a Japanese diasporic woman and a Tahltan First Nation man, reflecting on the ways in which their bodies and experiences are inscribed by colonialism. The exhibit is complemented by explorations related to the land, Goto and Morin ask how cultural knowledge and history inform the human experience of place and our perceptions of others.

Kim’s Convenience by Ins Choi Sept. 7–Oct. 6
Pacific Theatre, Vancouver www.pacifictheatre.org

The Pacific Theatre is currently showing the play that inspired the hit TV show at 8 p.m. Wednesdays to Saturdays until Oct. 6. Mr. Kim is proud of his store, Kim’s Convenience. After thirty years of selling lottery tickets, catching hypothetical players and reporting illegal parked cars, he tries despairedly to get tickets to convince his artist daughter Janet to take over the store. For a list of the cast and to get tickets, please visit the theatre's website.

Tales of an Urban Indian Sept. 19–30
Presentation House Theatre, North Vancouver www.phtheatre.org

Featuring comic Craig Lauzon, Tales of an Urban Indian, playing at the Presentation House Theatre, Sept. 19–30, is a deeply personal and darkly comic telling of the life of Simon Douglas, an Indigenous man born on a B.C. reserve and raised both there and in 1970s Vancouver. Told entirely from a personal perspective, the show conjures up an array of characters that come in and out of his life as seen through Douglas’s eyes. For tickets and showtimes, please check out the website.

Thai Dance Company Sept. 20, 12 p.m.
Scotiabank Dance Centre, Vancouver www.thedancecentre.ca

The Discover Dance series by the Scotiabank Dance Centre offers informative and inspiring shows by B.C. dance companies, which combine performance and question-and-answer sessions with the artists and sometimes even audience participation. On Sept. 20, discover the elegance, beauty and precision of Thai dance. Originating in the Royal Court of Old Siam, this exquisitely detailed form of dance has a strong sacred element, and many dances are performed during ceremonial events. Artistic director Mega-

ra Solloway teams up with renowned Ottawa-based Thai classical dancer and choreographer Kait Whitcomb to present a collection of dances, in homage to their spiritual and cultural traditions.

2018 Mid-Autumn Moon Festival: Music Under the Moon Sept. 21, 7:30–9:30 p.m.
Vancouver Chinese Garden www.vancouverchinesegarden.com

The Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden invites you to be serenaded under the moonlight by local musicians and artists at the 2018 Mid-Autumn Moon Festival! In Chinese culture, music is seen as an expression of the perfect harmony between the earth, human beings and the heavens above. Under the celestial and transcendent power of the moon, many ancient Chinese scholars composed music and poetry that capture the spirit of the moment in time.

Escape to India Sept. 22, 7 p.m.–9 p.m.
North Burnaby Neighbourhood House www.facebook.com/events/1867501656889998

The North Burnaby Neighbourhood House will be hosting a charitable fundraiser Escape to India on Sept 22. This Indian pop-up market will feature all things Indian, including various food, snacks, handicrafts, clothing, music, henna artists, performances and much more. The event benefits three local charities: Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Cameray Child and Family Services and Surrey Food Bank. There will be a local brew-ery and a five-star B.C. wineery on site as well as some Indian-inspired cocktails. The event will be exploring ways to repurpose beautiful and gently used Indian clothing and fabrics, with the proceeds going into projects that impact change locally and abroad. Check out their Facebook page for more info.

Leap and the Loom Will Appear Sept. 21–Oct. 13
1359 Cartwright St., Granville Island, Vancouver www.soldvl.com

Leap and the Loom Will Appear is an upcoming exhibition by 82-year-old, world-renowned Canadian fibre artist Sola Fiedler, known for her intricately woven tributes to cities that have hosted Olympic Games. Each hyper-realistic tapestry takes the artist as much as five years to complete. Self-taught, Sola’s method is as impressive as the final piece. Using yarn from recycled sweaters, she meticulously weaves large-scale cityscapes in pinpoint detail, from the number of floors in a building to the colour of the trees and water. Her work captures the architectural elements and spirit of each city at that moment in time.

Kamloops Sept. 25–Oct. 6
The Cultch, Vancouver www.thecultch.com

Come along for the ride to Kamloops, the largest powwow on the West Coast, showing at The Cultch from Sept. 25 to Oct. 6. This high energy Indigenous matriarchal story follows two urban Indigenous sisters and a lawless trickster who face the world head-on as they come to terms with what it means to honour who they are and where they come from. How do you discover yourself when Columbus already came from? How do you discover yourself when Columbus already did that? Bear witness to the courage of these women as they turn to the ancestors for help in reclaiming their power. Kim Sen klip Harvey explores the fearless love and passion of Indigenous women reconnecting with their cultures, ancestors and stories through her exciting approach to Indigenous theatre.

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