VIFF brings refugees to the big screen

by FERNANDA FRIEDRICH

This year, the Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) shines a light on refugees and migration. The worldwide crisis is portrayed by directors from all around the globe.

Here is a look at three films presented at the festival. The 2018 edition of the festival runs Sept. 27 to Oct. 12.

Central Airport THF

Director Karim Ainouz has been familiar with refugee issues since he was born. His father fled from the Algerian War, met his mother in the US and settled in Brazil, where he was born.

“When I was a teenager my family moved to France. People would treat me differently because of my Algerian background,” he says.

During that time, Ainouz was portraying the refugee is himself as Brazilian. But living in France, he realized that he was indeed Algerian, and consequently felt what it meant to be an outsider.

Ainouz, who now lives in Germany next to the Central Airport in Berlin, came up with the concept behind Central Airport THF, a film that focuses on the people behind the statistics.

“I was sick of how the media was portraying the refugee issue. I was seeing lots of numbers, but I wasn’t seeing enough people. I thought the media coverage was stripping the refugee’s humanity,” he says. “The weapon I have is my camera. I decided it was time to take action and tell a story in a nonfictional format.

“I believe filmmaking is a political act. But sometimes you have to be humble enough to understand that some stories don’t need to be re-created. You just need to tell them in their raw form. This is a story that had to be told in that way,” he says.

Eldorado

Eldorado weaves the director’s own childhood memories with the present day European refugee crisis. “It is not easy. When you live this story as a child it turns into a scar you never lose,” says Markus Imhoof.

During WWII, Imhoof was just a boy. His family took in an Italian refugee girl, a bit older than him. She was called Giovanna.

“A young Imhoof struggled to understand why Giovanna had to leave. The memories of that period never left his mind. “Every morning I read the news about boats full of people fleeing from their homes. I knew I needed to talk about it again,” he says.

After continuously witnessing the crisis aggravating, Imhoof decided it was time to deal with the open wound.

“What happened in the Second World War was harsh and cruel. What worries me is that I see no change. I see the pattern repeating,” he explains.

Imhoof believes telling his personal story is going to reach people.

See “VIFF” page 7

A childhood dream come true...

by MARIE-ATHENA GAUDÉ-ESCOFFIER

As a child I dreamed of travelling, exploring new horizons and learning other languages. Whenever my parents took a trip I always hoped that they would take me along on their journey, at the very last minute. Their travels were a time of long absences and tearful goodbyes.

Wanting to escape myself, I came up with a dialect that I shared with my little sister. I did not understand why we only spoke one language at home. I would have loved my mother, by virtue of her origins, to speak to me in Greek, but my grandfather, who arrived in France at the age of 18 to study medicine, did not want to pass it on to his children. To be fully integrated into society, it was important, he said, to speak only French. It was another era!

Growing up, I wanted to move with the times. I wanted to go on an adventure. With its two official languages, Canada seemed to be the ideal country. I would be able to improve my English in the English-speaking provinces and speak French while on vacation in Quebec. During my first Canadian experience in Toronto in 2012, I was impressed by the city’s cultural diversity and energy. I had the impression of changing countries by changing neighbourhoods: absolute happiness. In addition, I truly felt that I was in an English-speaking territory. I did not have an opportunity to speak French.

Heading to Vancouver this year, a region far removed from my expectations, I naturally longed for the return of my childhood friend, a language I have never uttered since I grew up.

See “Verbatim” page 8

Also in this issue

Two brothers’ take on biblical story Page 7

A Japanese band’s psychedelic sounds Page 8
A look at the Slovak community

by MENAKA PREMKUMAR

The Slovak community in Vancouver is small and close-knit. “When we quizzed people about the estimated size of this community in the lower Mainland, we got numbers ranging from 2,000–20,000,” chuckles Jozef Starosta, a member of the local Slovak community of Cultu

quiltam and New Westminster and founder of Slovo z Britskej Kolumbie magazine. “But the actual number is only around 6,000–7,000.”

There are several Slovak soci
eties and organizations here in Vancouver.

“One of the oldest ones is the Slovak Parish which was found
ed around the 1960s,” says Sta

The Czech and Slovak Asso
ciation of Canada is another as
sociation which was founded back in 1960 and is still active. Family-oriented events such as hikes and picnics are organized during the summer. The festivi
ties reach an apex during the fes
tive season, especially around Christmas when there are ba
zaars and dance balls.

Folklore, singing, dancing and traditions that character
ize the Slovak community.

Cultural Spotlight

Photo courtesy of Marika Kovalcikova

A look at the Slovak community

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The City of Nations Society was founded five years ago to increase awareness of and promote the art and culture of diverse local and international groups, and to aid collaboration

tions between artists.

“I came here in 1995,” says Marika Kovalcikova, execut

tive and artistic director of the City of Nations Society. “Re

The program is titled Pictures of Life in Myslava and it repre

Culture Days performances

In its first collaboration with Culture Days this year, the City of Nations Society will be pre

senting a poetic exhibition of Slovak art and culture. Entitled Arts and Culture from the Heart of Europe, this consists of two distinct performances by local musical group Hurhaj! (Hoor

hail) and international village folklore group Vinica.

Vinica aims to portray the joyful and community-based life that is the foundation of life in Myslava, in eastern Slovakia. Village folk commune in the evenings to craft and sew. This marks the origin of the beauti

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Satellite kids: negotiating two worlds

by Colleen Addison

Mainland Chinese people have been emigrating from China for years, and yet, the recent experts of mainland Chinese immigrant families have been largely ignored, says Henry Li.

"[Mainland Chinese] make up the biggest group of incoming immigrants into Canada for the last 10 years," says Li, a Master's student in Simon Fraser's sociology department who recently completed his thesis, 'Life in the Air: Examining the Experiences of Mainland Chinese Satellite Children in Vancouver.'

It's very important to understand this group that's coming into the country, that's changing everything, Li says, speaking about these predominantly middle-class Chinese who have recently immigrated. "Especially right now, we're seeing parents folding into the narrative experiences of the mainland Chinese.

The mainland experience

Although Li notes that the situation is changing, he also points out that Chinese in general and in particular the middle-class families who now form the bulk of the immigrating population are often not seen in tales of BC's cultural history. Telling these stories is crucial for the maintenance of cultural identity, says Li. "The [mainland Chinese] should have literature to read," he says. It builds a sense of community, of history. When we don't have [this literature], our experiences are not important. We're just Chinese immigrants. We belong to that 'other' category.

One element that should be revealed is the cultural contrast between the mainland Chinese experience and that of other Chinese—Taiwanese or Hong Kong immigrants. These different cultures are usually combined into one, says Li. "By grouping everyone into this sino-centric field it's disingenuous to the actual experience. There are classifications of American-Asian-Canadian.

An important aspect that sets the Mainland Chinese immigrants apart from others is their experience of living in a communist country. "[Mainland Chinese] carried with them memories of growing up unbelievably poor," says Li. "Every one of my participants had stories to tell: 'my dad slept in a bed with all of his siblings,' when there was a famine in the village, my dad had to steal pigs, and 'my dad used to carry peanuts from Shanghai.'

Satellites and astronomers

Another idea central to the Chinese immigrant experience is the notion of astronaut parents, who work in the country of origin and visit their wife and child or children (termed "satellite kids") who reside in the new country. "Satellite kids" live with a "landed parent" who is usually the mother, while the primary breadwinner, usually the father, sees his family only every few months.

It is difficult to know how common this satellite experience is for Canadian immigrants, as such families often self-report as either single parent or complete families, Li notes. While immigrant children still have access to parts of their culture through their landed parent, the knowledge is incomplete. "When immigrant families move here, the family surrounds itself with aspects of home," says Li. "With only one parent, the passing on of cultural knowledge becomes fragmented. One of my participants talked about when a family member died, [and] his mother told him to put a string around his arm, but he didn't understand the significance.

According to Li, this incomplete enculturation can lead to self-suspension. There is a conflict between the traditional cultural ways that the child is taught versus the differing values in which the child is immersed. "One participant's father didn't want her to work through school. She was very conflicted. She did work part time but she couldn't work throughout the year, because studying was very important to the family. Despite their difficulties, Li comments that his satellite participants remain optimistic about the future for themselves and their families. "They say, 'well, we'll just work things out,'" Li adds.

Li himself, a former "satellite kid," grew up in Vancouver with his mother and twin brother, while his father commuted from China. He, too, is hopeful about his future. "For the last couple of years, I learned Chinese and read Chinese books. I'm interested in reconnecting with China. That's a large part of me that I missed out on."

Li's study of satellite children illustrates a little known Chinese immigrant experience, and helps bring some clarity to the Chinese-Canadian-Chinese population. Yet Li stresses that many more mainland Chinese stories need to be told. "Not everyone can afford to be an astronaut family," he explains. "We need more research on this unique group."

Henry Li, Master's student in the Sociology department at Simon Fraser University, has recently completed his Masters thesis on mainland Chinese-Canadian immigrants.
“Digital natives” don’t all speak the same language

By KATY THOMPSON

UBC Public Scholars Award recipient Ron Darvin is researching the diverse ways in which students use technology. His work explores the potential impact that varying levels of digital literacy has in society.

Darvin worked as a language instructor, teacher trainer and university lecturer in Manila, capital of the Philippines, and Vancouver before returning to school to complete his PhD in Language and Literacy Education at UBC. In his volunteer role as a mentor for Filipino high school students in Vancouver, Darvin gained a better understanding of some of the challenges faced by immigrant Filipino students.

“Through my interactions with these Filipino students, I became particularly interested in the integration of technology in schools, and how these innovations impact the lives of students who have unequal access to resources,” says Darvin.

The research

Darvin conducted interviews with recently immigrated Filipino students, teachers and parents in three Vancouver high schools. Over a period of one and a half years, he observed the differences between their use of digital devices.

Darvin argues that these differences have implications for teacher training and the integration of technology into the curriculum, one that is not enough. You need to know how to use Facebook, YouTube or other social media platforms is not enough. You need to know how to produce digital media texts for school or for work, disseminate information, curate your online identities and expand your social networks.

Darvin explains that many factors influence the approach to using technology. “How they access information on the laptop versus the five-inch screen of a phone, how much time they can spend with a laptop that they share with four other family members and whether they have a quiet space at home to do work online: all these shape how they use technology,” says Darvin.

Darvin warns that not all components of digital literacy are valued equally in a school setting. Students who only associate technology with social media platforms or online games are at risk of developing digital literacies that lack more critical thinking skills, such as being able to distinguish fake news from real news.

“What happens when kids who have different digital literacies go to school and teachers have their own assumptions of what these ‘digital natives’ should already know about technology?” asks Darvin.

Teaching digital literacy at school

Technology has become crucial for social mobility; job postings, social networks, and government and medical services are increasingly found online. However, as Darvin explains, it is not enough to have a digital device with connectivity—it is also necessary to possess the relevant digital literacy skills.

“You need to have the right language, choose the right images, press the right buttons for specific contexts and purposes. This is what comprises digital literacy,” says Darvin. “Knowing how to use Facebook, YouTube or other social media platforms is not enough. You need to know how to produce digital media texts for school or for work, disseminate information, curate your online identities and expand your social networks.”

Darvin explains that these skills can be taught in the classroom, to students of any and every cultural background. In the modern technological age, schools are becoming more interested in employing educational technology tools, such as online quizzes and educational apps. However, Darvin explains that there is a difference between using learning management systems in the classroom and teaching digital literacy skills to students.

“If employment opportunities and government and medical services are increasingly accessed through online platforms, those people who have no devices of their own and have not been able to develop relevant digital literacies would not be able to access these resources,” warns Darvin.

More public computers are being added to many library spaces in order to accommodate the growing need, and librarians are increasingly called upon to help patrons navigate the web. However, Darvin emphasizes that a more systematic method for acquiring digital literacy is needed. He also advises that opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to gain these skills should have priority over services such as city-wide free wi-fi or new app promotions.

“If we want to prepare our students to play a productive and transformative role in today’s digital world, we need a more comprehensive and strategic approach to integrating technology into the curriculum, one that doesn’t just promote the use of educational technology tools but enables students to develop more critical digital literacies,” says Darvin.

For more information about Ron Darvin’s research, visit community/meet-our-students/darvin-ron.
**Public Service Announcement: October 1 – 15, 2018 Free Community Activities**

**Vancouver Civic Elections Workshop ( Cantonese)**

Join us for a two-day workshop to prepare for Canadian citizenship. The sessions will be facilitated by MOSAIC staff. We will talk about topics such as Canada’s history, symbols, government and geography, as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Free services. Registration required.

**October 12 & 15, 5:30 – 8:30 pm**

Tom Douglas Burnaby Public Library, 7311 Kingsway, Burnaby

[Angél 604 254 9626 ext 2123] || atsv@mosaicbc.org

**Tenants’ Rights (Cantonese)**

- What should I say attention to when renting a house
- Lease agreements
- Tenant rights and responsibilities
- How to complain to the landlord

**October 10, 10 am – 12 pm**

CCCM Centre, 2nd Floor Crystal Mall, 4500 Kingsway, Burnaby

[Angél 604 254 9626 ext 2123] || atsv@mosaicbc.org

**Francophone Language and Culture Sharing**

Learn more about the francophone language and culture. Exchange ideas and knowledge.

**Fridays, October 5 – November 30, 6:30 – 8:30 pm**

MOSAIC Surrey Office, #200-7134 King George Blvd

[Peace 778 591 9394 ext 105] || Tollkano@mosaicbc.org

**MOTION MOVING**

**BC Medical Care and You ( Arabic)**

- October 2, 10 am – 12 pm
- MOSAIC Highgate Office, #310-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

[Amal] 604 636 4712

**BC Medical Care (English/Swahili)**

- October 10, 10 am – 12 pm
- MOSAIC Highgate Office, #310-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

[GR] 604 636 4712

**Parents’ Rights and Responsibilities in Canada (Arabic)**

- October 12, 10 am – 12 pm
- MOSAIC Highgate Office, #310-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

[Amal] 604 636 4712

**MULTICULTURAL WOMEN’S GROUP**

**English Conversation Circle for Persian-Speaking Women**

Join this free conversation circle for women to improve your English. Persian-speaking volunteer assistants provide support to Persian-speaking women of all English levels. Topics are relevant to everyday life and chosen by the group.

- Tuesdays, 10 am – 2 pm
- MOSAIC Head Office, 5575 Boundary Road, Vancouver

[Mahrad] 604 254 9626 ext 1013 || maslkar@mosaicbc.org

**SENIORS CLUB ACTIVITIES**

**Activities at MOSAIC 5375 Boundary Road, Vancouver**

**English Conversation Circle (Lower Beginner)**

- When: Thursdays, September 27 - December 6, 10 am -12 pm
- English Conversation Circle (Intermediate)**

- When: Thursdays, September 27 - December 6, 2-4 pm

**Kettling Circle**

- When: Tuesdays, September 25 - November 27, 1-3 pm

**Arts and Crafts**

- When: Wednesday, October 3 – November 7, 10 am -12 pm

**Activities at MOSAIC 5902 Kingsway, Burnaby**

**English Conversation Circle (Upper Beginner)**

- When: Thursdays, September 20 - November 8, 9:30-11:30 am

**Activities at Burnbrae Community Resource Centre, 2055 Rossen Avenue, Burnaby**

**English Conversation Circle (Beginner)**

- When: Wednesdays, September 19 - November 7, 9:30 am -11:30 am

**English Conversation Circle (Beginner)**

- When: Fridays, September 21 - November 23, 1-3 pm

**Wai Dan Song**

- When: Fridays, October 5 - November 30, 9-10 am

**Tai Chi**

- When: Fridays, November 21 - December 9, 10:30 am -12 pm

Contact: Elsa 604 292 3907 or elsa@mosaicbc.org

Jennifer 604 254 9626 ext 1157 or jgd@mosaicbc.org

[Direct] 604 254 9626 ext 1005 or dina@mosaicbc.org

MOSAIC is a multilingual non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society.

**Cultural intelligence builds empathy**

**by Susan Hancock**

Progressive organizations across Canada engage employees through diversity and inclusion programs.

“The business community is motivated to develop intercultural competency (IC),” says Taslim Damji, an intercultural practitioner and core developer and facilitator for MOSAIC, Multi-lingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities.

Understanding cultural diversity and learning to empathize and embrace differences is key to building strong relationships in a community. Progressive organizations are taking a leadership role in building cultural intelligence that has the capacity to filter into every aspect of that employee’s life.

“Some people live in very hierarchical societies, while others live in very egalitarian societies. These types of societies can make a difference in how a person participates at work,” says Damji.

Catherine Gordon, director of human resources at David Suzuki Foundation, recently organized IC training for 30 employees through MOSAIC. She thought the course effectively taught staff how to function successfully in their new community, “Participating in our IC training have a desire to invite other people to be part of their community,” says Damji.

“People who participate in our IC training have a desire to invite other people to be part of their community,” says Damji. Gordon explains that IC training offers an opportunity to learn about diverse cultures. Sometimes this means coming to terms with their own position of power and privilege. “It can be difficult for people in a place of power and privilege to acknowledge and share their power,” says Damji. “Often they want to remain the same because they are comfortable with how they are positioned in society.”

Building a healthy economy and society

Gordon explains that IC training is part of David Suzuki Foundation’s overall commitment to diversity and inclusion. As a non-profit organization, the staff work with volunteers and donors in communities across Canada. The ability of their staff to respect and appreciate cultural differences is key to identifying not just one solution, but many unique ways to be innovative, resourceful and forward-thinking.

“The benefits of diversity and inclusion is that it allows us to learn about different perspectives; a fresh way of thinking; a way to approach a community in a different way,” says Gordon. To learn more, please contact mosaicworks@mosaicbc.org.
Upcoming art performance
Poets in the Kitchen is a part of the Culture Days Week-end, which will take place on September 29 alongside the Journey of a Salmon exhibition where artists explore the epic life cycle of salmon. The event will be hosted by Johnny Trinh and feature spoken word poets Johnny MacRae, Anjialica Solomon and Andrew Warner. Poets in the Kitchen will combine spoken words with culinary actions.

“I have always been interested in the context of the art of people gathering together and their relationships therein, and food has been a huge part of that," Trinh says. A communal space for artists BC Culture Days creates a space that allows the public free access to art and cultural experiences. "It creates a holistic communal identity. Where we recognize that I might be different to you because of our identities but we are all part of the same space," Trinh explains, being one of eight selected artist ambassadors and the MC for this year. The idea to combine food and poetry first germinated when Trinh was in his graduate program and evolved over the years to become live performances with online streamings. "I am really interested in social media and a lot of social media is about food. I want to merge the two," he says. "The food is a way of communication in my family. It is a culture tie. In a multicultural place like North America, we are often equated to our foods." Speaking of the similarities between food and poetry, aside from both being creative acts, Trinh believes in creating a space of compassion where we can recognize humanity in each other through his art practices. "It comes back to what I care about. I care about building community. I care about bringing people together," he says. "I also teach yoga. It is about being generous. If we humans can behave the way we breathe, we can be very generous. When we breathe, we use ten percent and we give back the rest. What if life was like that? You take what you need and then you give back the rest."}

“In a multicultural place like North America, we are often equated to our foods.”

Johnny Trinh, artist

by XI CHEN

Vancouver — The UBC School of Music is excited to announce its 2018-19 season. Scientific research is confirming what music lovers and musicians have known since the dawn of time: our brains are hard-wired to respond to music, which serves to ease pain, evoke memories, stir emotions, change our physiology and more. This year, our concert offerings continue to explore the power of music, with performances by our large and small ensembles, faculty and guest artists.

Concert of Winners: Showcasing the School of Music’s brightest young pianists
The Beginning of the Season with a Showcase of the Winners of the Inaugural Robert and Ellen Sherman Piano Concert Competition held last March, the competition was a brilliant success, and we are thrilled to present this concert of the winners, each performing with the UBC Symphony Orchestra at the Chan Centre on September 23rd. The grand prize winner Benjamin Hoykis performs Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4, while the other prize winners, Eugenia Rabinovich, Ayumi Sagara and Aydan Con, will perform selected movements of concertos by Beethoven and Mozart, all conducted by Dr. Jonathan Girard.

The Power of Music: A Pulitzer Prize-winning opera and Stravinsky’s L’Histoire du Soldat
Two events exploring the unifying and healing power of music in response to the horrors of war, and the International Effort of human beings. On Nov 9th and 10th and 11th, the UBC Opera Ensemble will perform the Pulitzer Prize-winning opera Shogun Night by Kevin Puts, which recounts the remarkable true story of the 1994 Christmas Truce, a spontaneous cease-fire during World War I. In a joining performance, the music of a soldier’s vioins is a key theme in Stravinsky’s L’Histoire du soldat: it explores the ancient story of making deals with the devil in the hope of happiness and fortune. UBC’s Director of Bands, Dr. Robert Taylor conducts a chamber ensemble of faculty and guest artists with a narrator and custom projections on UBC’s Music on the Roof series on March 12th.

Chamber Music: Intimate Conversations | Collaborations and Intersections
You are invited to “listen in” on the intimate conversations of musicians in many chamber music concerts throughout the season. One highlight is a recital by internationally-recognized artists Jason Frisch-Bollette, clarinet, and Jane coop of works by Brahms, Schuman and Weber in our Music on the Roof series on March 3rd. In February, Ronan Scharf leads a two-day event of concerts and workshops entitled “Collaborations and Intersections,” which explores ideas about the Chamber Music realm, and collaborations with Mathematics, Medicine, Medicine, and more.

New Energy and Perspectives
The School is pleased to welcome new faculty member Valerie Whitney, horn, who will bring her energy and fresh perspective to our explorations. Whitney is featured in a solo recital on January 25th and perform chamber masterworks by Dohnanyi and Prokofiev with faculty and guests on November 21st. Both on our popular Wednesday Noon Hour series.

The Piano – A powerful tool of communication in the hands of masters
Piano recitals are plentiful this season, ranging a wide range of voices, emotions and messages. Concerts include solo piano recitals by faculty members Mark Anderson and Corey Han, with Anderson playing works by Boulez and Brahms on October 24th, and Harms performing pieces by Prokofiev, Dutilleux, Pugno, and Kapustin on January 18th. Guest performers David Jabeitn and Dougies Fitch will also give solo piano recitals.

Inoking peace, introspection and jubilation this holiday season
On December 9th, the UBC Chorus and UBC Symphony Orchestra co-present contrasting themes in performances of Poulenc’s Gloria and Vaughan-Williams’ Don Noble among, conducted by Jonathan Girard.

Scheduling note: On December 9th, the Chorus and Orchestra concerts at the Chan Centre have new start times this year: 7:30 pm (previously 8:00 pm). The above is a small sampling of our many exciting concerts and events. For more information, please visit www.ubcmusic.ca

"Ah, music," he said, wiping his eyes. "A magic beyond all we do here!"
- Dumbledore in J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone

"Traditions are a big part of my culture. Unfortunately, so is diabetes.

Bernie, First Nations counsellor
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 services 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. The program 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 I.E. 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, part-on-one pair work experience through the Wage Sharing 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.

Brotherly relationship

by Jake McGrail

Directed and performed by Aryo and Arash Khakpour, Cain and Abel is a physical, movement-heavy performance inspired by the biblical story.

The show, set to perform at the Firehall Arts Centre from October 3-6, takes a look at our society through the lens of the rivalry and violence between the most famous pair of brothers in western society.

A look at brotherhood

The development of Cain and Abel first began in 2013 when Aryo and Arash Khakpour, brothers and co-founders of the company, the Biting School, were commissioned to create a piece to be performed in Harbour Green Park next to a statue of a king and a queen.

“We thought [the statue] could be seen as Adam and Eve,” says Aryo, “and so, since we are brothers, we decided to make a 10-minute piece about Cain and Abel. From there we performed at other festivals, and formed it at other festivals, and we decided to make a 30-minute piece and now a 60-minute piece.”

Given their relationship, Aryo and Arash were interested in looking into how exactly brotherhood works. And they don’t see its definition as limited to a nuclear family, but rather expanding to cover everyone on the planet.

“That every other human being is your brother and sister,” says Arash, “so using the Cain and Abel story made a lot of sense, it is such an important story in the Bible. It deals with the first murder, how we learned to deal with things through violence, and how the person who killed his brother built the first civilization. The building of civilizations came from killing our brothers.”

While that description makes the show sound very dark and violent, there are other forces at play. There are humorous moments mixed in through-out, with elements of clowning about. “We think it’s dance. The show sound very dark and violent, there are other forces at play. There are humorous moments mixed in through-out, with elements of clowning about. It’s the Khakpour brothers’ way of creating a more well-rounded show, with the blend of styles leading even the two of them to disagree as to what genre to classify the piece.

“I think it’s theatre,” says Aryo, “Arash thinks it’s dance. The first half is non-verbal, gesture-based and movement-based, which makes it dance, but it’s also very character-driven, and that makes it theatre.”

A unique twist

Whatever the genre, the goal for Cain and Abel is not just to entertain the audience, but also to challenge them in a way. This is evident in the second half of the show, where Aryo and Arash switch from the masculine battle of two brothers to a side to the story that’s not nearly as prominent: the female side.

“We just felt the absence of women,” says Arash. “In the story the whole world is built by a man, the two brothers are men and we rarely hear anything about the women. There’s only a little bit about the sisters, and most people don’t even remember their names.”

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“We wanted the audience to feel a little bit about the sisters, and most people don’t even remember their names.”

“People say we lose our values when strangers are coming to our land, but what is that worth when we are losing our values by mistreating them?” he says.

Inside my Heart

Inside my Heart portrays the story of families forced to flee Syria and Afghanistan.

The director is Vancouver-born filmmaker Debra Kellner. After living in France for over two decades, Kellner is happy to screen her film at VIFF.

“I wanted to show initially that these people are just like everyone else,” she says.

Kellner felt that among the numbers and the bold footage largely distributed on mainstream media the human aspect of the crisis was left out. She knew there was an opportunity to tell the stories of refugees with another perspective: utterly as human beings.

“No matter the social background, whether you are wealthy or not. Other people about that, but we also believe when people watch these stories they feel compelled and filled with empathy,” she says.

By connecting empathetically with the humanity in the stories, the audience can better understand the plight of others. “When we can project ourselves we can understand their struggles. Spectators are intelligent, they are able to engage their own emotions,” she says.

Inside my heart took three years to make from start to finish. In that time, Kellner met many families during the peak of the refugee and migrant crisis. “The families reached out to me. I met them individually, slowly. I didn’t feel like I chose them. I feel like they chose me,” she says.

As a filmmaker, Kellner believes “sometimes stories call to us.” For her, the crisis is every-one’s problem.

“I always think about what can I do as a woman filmmaker that makes my role different from a male filmmaker. I believe in this case I was able to have access to women in a different way,” she explains.

Kellner felt Muslim women were being left out of the conversation, not getting enough coverage from the media.

“People are being harsh on them, questioning about the up-bringing of their sons. But they were not listening to their struggles,” she says.

Refugees, migration and displacement seem to be the new norm. Cinematographers around the world are working to keep a humanitarian lens on the situation, sharing stories instead of numbers.

That desire for the show to be provocative is echoed by Arash, who in fact relishes this aspect of the story. “I think what we are approaching is controversial and can be read in a very wrong or negative way,” he says, “which made me want to pursue it. We can use this to allow people to judge us, question us and have a conversa-tion about it. It’s about the conversation, after the statement being made. The statement be-ing the performance itself.”

Wanting the audience to feel a level of discomfort might seem to run counter to what a show would normally aim to do, but the brothers see it as a way for people to open up and truly gain something from the experience. “It’s very unlikely for us to learn a lot in too much comfort,” says Arash. “In disagreement is when we can say, I’m thinking this,” or, “why are you thinking this?”. And if I’m open enough to look up and be willing to change my mind, that’s what I can truly change and lead to more tolerance.

For more information, visit www.firehallartscentre.ca

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For more information, visit www.viff.org
Psychedelic sounds of a Japanese rock collaboration

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Psychedelic rockers Kikagaku Moyo bring their wavy, kaleidoscopic sound to The Imperial on Oct. 6. Since forming in 2012, the Tokyo-based five-piece band led by drummer Kurosawa and vocalist Go Kurosawa has released three full-length albums, with their 4th upcoming record, Masana Temples, set to release on Oct. 5.

Kurosawa became involved in music at a young age. He began piano lessons at just five years old and continued playing for the next decade into his teenage years. Kurosawa said that as his passion, creativity and his musical repertoire grew – Kurosawa has since honed his vocal and drumming skills – he became more interested in the prospect of a collaborative musical effort.

It was just after he finished studying abroad that he met Tomo Katsurada, a passionate singer-songwriter, and they began to play together at a street corner where he was recording the sound of a vending machine for his solo project. Byu [Kurosawa, Go’s brother] was in India and just came back after he learneditur from a guru,” says Kurosawa.

Kurosawa notes that the themes of travel and collaboration have underlined not only the band’s history and formation, but also their intentions. “[It’s] not really a goal, but we feel great if we can inspire someone or encourage someone to make some art. Through music, we can learn other cultures and be more open minded,” he says.

Creativity and spontaneity

Though Kurosawa says that although the band has an interest in being engaging and inspiring, he insists that any objectives the band has are rather loosely defined and far from being set in stone. Instead, he notes, the driving force behind Kikagaku Moyo might more so be spontaneity, adaptively performing in the moment.

“Live performance, we are always trying to listen to each other carefully and change the direction according to our moods,” says Kurosawa. “It’s like flock of birds flying together in the sky.”

Even when it comes to their album material, Kurosawa says that the band has stayed true to their original MO of never re-recording more than two takes of a given song, noting that even a mistake can become an interesting ing and engaging part of the musical experience. Kurosawa says that ever since the beginning, the band has insisted on staying genuine and being in the moment, sometimes out of necessity.

“We used to play on the street in Japan because we had to play to play. We didn’t like the system, and as long as we play on the street, we can play as long as we could, until the police would come,” says Kurosawa. “We enjoyed the challenge of having no set times in front of audiences. We learned how to improvise, how we can make our listeners think what we are doing is making sense rather than that we’re just playing notes forever.

Whether it’s getting a vibe for the concert venue and making a setlist minutes before getting on stage, or improvising and running along with any unintended factors, musical or otherwise, Kurosawa says that Kikagaku Moyo aim to stay fresh and authentic throughout their career, remaining constant only in their dynamism.

“When I perform, it makes me feel I am losing myself and for a very special feeling, I love it,” says Kurosawa.

For more information on the event please visit www.imperialvancouver.com.
Beneath the surface of New Delhi traffic lies acceptance. One might easily miss it amid the cacophonous honks, the strain of overworked engines and the veil of smog, but it is persistent. You find it on the face of every driver who is cut off (and honks) or crosses on red (while honking) or slices between a lorry and concrete barrier (honking frantically).

It is not the face you would expect in these situations. No, the Delhiites’ countenance is inappropriately passive, far removed from the grinding, masochistic anguish of navigating a city of 25 million people.

A Delhi state of mind and taxis find space to drop off additional troops who are immediately bustled to the front lines by the Bhangra rhythm. To have heard a procession is simply a well-understood figure of speech; they are, and must be, felt.

Average annual levels of pollution in Delhi surpass Beijing – an easily confronted fact when one notices that lingering ring of smog never lifts. But drivers, being at once minor culprits and ongoing victims, wear no masks and, beyond newspaper forecasts and over-the-top exposés, are blissfully unaware if today is a respiratory onslaught or mild peppering. To this base of fumes is added the frequent culinary delights vended at roadside and sewerage, all brought to a pungent stew by the trapped heat.

Perhaps acceptance is borne of this sensory plunge. Stretched every which way, a mind must adapt and, amid the stubborn liveliness, find a narrower bandwidth from which to take it all in. The very real, immediate threat of serious harm, if not death, to both pedestrians – in a Frogger nightmare – and drivers is no doubt an obstinate incentive. Karma, possibly, has a role to play in placating would-be road rage and perfectly level-headed panic: a shared belief that our actions, and what we intend, make an indelible difference in how our future pans out. Being cut off and forced to make space for a fellow rickshaw would not put a damper on the day, but rather divine some slither of space in a coming bind.

In a communal society like India, one begins to imagine that even the stress has been socialized. As if small, manageable dollops have been meted out to everyone instead of the imposing command of “I mustn’t be late” and “You’re in my lane.”

Whether any, all or none of these explain the acceptance found in New Delhi traffic is irrelevant. A newcomer is soon soothed by it, willed along if one so chooses, and finds irresistible pleasure in the deeper calm on offer.

First-timers, thrown into this heady mix, find their senses overwhelmed. Visually, Delhi’s road are bracketed by sidewalks and demarcated by lanes, but these are soon found to be only decoration. From above, the flow of traffic resembles darting schools of fish – tightly gathered but jockeying except that livestock, bicycles and wedding processions gum up what flow there is. Beyond the diversity of locomotion, one finds along the edge of each lane an unabashed corridor of opposition merrily making its way upstream and into hard-to-reach driveways.

Not to be outdone, the auditory experience crowds out and distorts the other senses. With careful practice, one can begin to distinguish the beeping horns from the truck bass from the rowdy bells. As it so often happens, after a day or two, you’ll think you’ve heard it all. Then, from behind, comes an emergency vehicle siren and nobody budges. It goes by and you find you’re the only one in disbelief that it’s just an emergency-less sedan. “But, what if…” and flashbacks of Jack crying “Wolf!” are eventually suppressed.

Weddings are worthy of a case study in and of themselves. They meander along – drums in tow so deafening that one's chest bursts in synchronous pops – while launching full-scale fireworks aimlessly by hand. Around them, either to complement the ruckus or simply by habit, vehicles step up their already feverish honks and taxifinder space to drop off additional troops who are immediately bustled to the front lines by the Bhangra rhythm. To have heard a procession is simply a well-understood figure of speech; they are, and must be, felt.
Cultural Calendar

By Simon Yee

Autumn is here! Looking for interesting ways to kick off the crisp autumn season? There are many events, festivals, art exhibits, and performances to check out around the city. Let your inner poet explore the Word Vancouver Festival. Afterwards, put on your Vulcan ears and nerd out at VCON 42 in Richmond. And, if you’re feeling fit, stretch your legs and go for a 5-kilometre run around Granville Island to support the Greater Vancouver Food Bank. Have a Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

* * *

Silence and Oneness: Luke Potter & Peter Hudoba Sept. 25–Oct. 4 Silk Purse Arts Centre, West Vancouver www.silkpurseartscentre.ca The Silk Purse Arts Centre in West Vancouver will feature meditative studies in black and white with photographer Luke Potter and calligrapher Peter Hudoba until Oct. 4. Potter’s series Silence in Schools captures scenes of empty classrooms exemplifying the physical effect teaching and learning can have on an environment and just how these spaces feel once devoid of pupils, teachers, activity, and sound. Hudoba presents graceful examples of Tao (oneness) Calligraphy using a single continuous line. Forty of the province’s best craft breweries and their freshly hopped beer will come together at the B.C. Hop Fest, an annual festival dedicated to supporting family farms around the world class processing and distribution of high quality B.C. grown hops to breweries, culinary experts and hop heads everywhere! Eat and drink among hops still on the vine, kick up your heels to live music and talk to your favourite brew master. For tickets and further information, please visit the festival website.

* * *

PumpkinFest 2018 Sept. 22–Oct. 31 Various venues around Vancouver www.pumpkinfest.ca Come and celebrate the harvest season at PumpkinFest – an old fashioned, community-style day of spontaneous excitement. For more information, please visit the Turkey Trot Run’s website.

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PumpkinFest 2018 Oct. 3–7, 7:30 p.m. Chan Centre for the Performing Arts at UBC, University Endowment Lands www.chancentre.com A. Kealoha, Hawai’i’s first official poet laureate. The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts will welcome Hawai’i’s first official poet laureate Kealoha at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 3, 2018. The innovative artist’s one-man show will transport audiences on an exploratory journey of social consciousness as he explores themes of unity. Kealoha will utilize the transformative power of spoken word and movement to present an evening of barrier-breaking, multidisciplinary work. Armed with boundless energy, positivity, and a deep-rooted respect for the environment, the Hawaiian native brings his provocative art form to Vancouver audiences. His explorations of social and universal themes stem from personal and philosophical stories of his own life. Kealoha’s powerful prose speaks to the complex and challenging narratives of Indigeneity and is imbued with both sensitivity and urgency.

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Granville Island Turkey Trot Run Oct. 7 (Kids), Oct. 8 (Adults) Granville Island, Vancouver www.turkeytrotrun.ca The Turkey Trot Run returns to Vancouver to bring families of runners together in a spirit of Thanksgiving and community pride. There will be two races: a 1.1 km kids run at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 7 and a 10 km run for everyone else 7:30 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 8. Be sure to celebrate with other participants after the run with food, entertainment and door prizes! Please visit the Turkey Trot Run’s website for more information.

20th Annual Vancouver International Improv Festival Oct. 9–13 Various venues around Vancouver www.vancouverimprovfest.com The Vancouver International Improv Festival is one of North America’s longest running improv festivals. The annual festival features over 40 unique performances, inspiring public workshops and an opening night gala to celebrate Vancouver’s booming improv scene. Music, physical theatre and a whole lot more will be on show as Vancouver’s top improv troupes showcase their own style of spontaneous excitement. For a complete lineup of performers and shows, please visit the festival’s website.

* * *

VCON 42 Oct. 5–7 Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel, Richmond www.vcon.ca VCON is the oldest volunteer-run general-interest science fiction, fantasy and gaming convention in Canada. The convention has promoted the interests of science fiction and fantasy culture in the metro Vancouver area since 1975, offering events, exhibits, presentations, discussions and workshops focused on a variety of science fiction and fantasy fandom interest areas such as literature, art, media, music, costumes, comics, tabletop games, electronic games, etc. This year’s VCON pays tribute to British author Douglas Adams and British influences on the sci-fi and fantasy genres.

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