Newcomers to B.C.: towards a better integration

by CURTIS SEUFERT

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA) has released an immigration strategy plan outlining a series of recommendations for the provincial, in contrast to the federal, government.

With immigration policy largely falling under federal jurisdiction by default, the recommendations are directed at the provincial government with the hopes of leading to a more British Columbia-focused immigration plan.

Creating a comprehensive plan

Ryan Drew is the Director of Integrated Services for Newcomers at S.U.C.C.E.S.S. – one of the member organizations of AMSSA’s Immigrant Integration Coordinating Committee that helped to fund and put together the strategy plan. In discussing the goals behind the report, Drew explains that B.C.’s current policies around immigration are largely informed by federal policy and recommendations and that the provincial approach to immigration could be improved by this idea of implementing policies more tailored towards a British Columbian context.

“Currently, the immigration strategy is being driven by the federal government [who] have come out with a multi-year plan for immigration and settlement. But really what we’re trying to get out here is that the province itself needs to have its own strategy and its own plan,” says Drew.

Drew says the plan itself is made up of twelve general recommendations, such as allowing access to free education regardless of immigration status and creating public awareness campaigns about the benefits of immigration.

The creation of a B.C.-specific immigration strategy represents the first of four key calls to action outlined in the plan. “It’s not a simple solution. It’s a complex animal, so to speak,” says Drew. “So it needs to be”

See “Immigration” page 3

Emigration to Vancouver

A study in other cultures

by GRIATIANNE DAUM

To those who ask me to describe it, I like to compare Vancouver to the forests that surround it and through which I travel so often. Cedars, pines, cypresses – so many varieties make up this green ensemble. One who takes the time to look can distinguish all the nuances, where each variety has its place and contributes to a healthy ecosystem.

I emigrated to Vancouver for access to the mountains and all the great outdoors. Although located on the west coast, I expected to find some biculturalism, however faint. I became aware of the socio-cultural dimensions of the city first by force but then by choice.

From the beginning, my group of friends were made up of English-speaking Canadians. I remember our first conversations when one of them exclaimed to me: “Ah these Chinese, with their rudeness.” The tone was polite, as befits Canadians, but these words had challenged me. I had never been in touch with this culture before.

Anti-Chinese sentiment has grown in recent years, but hostility, even as subtle as my friend’s remark, is longstanding. Their morals can upset. That is difficult to dispute from a Western point of view. I was...

See “Verbatim” page 8

Forty years of work: a retrospective

Page 8

Persepolis in images

Page 7
**Cultural Spotlight**

**Christmas in the forest**

by RANAN KANG

Waldweihnacht, literally meaning “forest Christmas” in German, is one of the most popular events the Swiss Society of Vancouver puts on, due to the fact that it’s a family event, says Aio Haberli, president of the Swiss Society.

“Waldweihnacht attracts a lot of people,” Haberli adds. The event, happening on Dec. 16 on Mount Seymour, will bring people together for a night of singing Christmas carols, drinking hot chocolate and visiting with Santa Claus.

The forest

An annual event, Waldweihnacht is a way for people to get together, celebrate and pass down cultural traditions, says Haberli.

During that time of the year, it’s usually snowing in Switzerland and to celebrate people go out into the forest, pick out a nice tree and adorn it with candies.

“It’s a thing that a lot of people do back home when it snows,” Haberli explains. “While holding torches people sing Christmas songs together and when they get too cold, they head indoors to warm up their hands and drink wine, hot chocolate and have things like nuts and candies.”

Indoors there will be music, a roaring fireplace and hot chocolate, clementines, nuts and chocolate to eat and drink, says Haberli.

“This year we’re trying to introduce a traditional Swiss dish, raclette cheese, melted and served over potatoes with pickled onions,” adds Haberli.

The society, says Haberli, is organized into a number of different clubs including a Seniors Club, the Swiss Choir, an Outdoors Club and a Youth Club. Seniors in the Seniors Club get together and watch after movies, celebrate birthdays and have luncheons, while the Swiss Choir enjoys singing Swiss folk music and yodeling. The Swiss Outdoors Club which is organizing Waldweihnacht, also plans monthly outings such as hikes, bike trips and ski tours, but, Haberli notes, because a lot of the members are getting older, participants for those events have declined.

The younger generation

“Many people moved to Canada they wanted a social network and the societies were good for helping people who were newly arrived,” says Haberli.

Younger generations coming to Canada from Switzerland prefer to immerse themselves in Canadian culture, Haberli explains.

As a result, the Society is trying to revamp their events, focusing on smaller events where turnout has been good.

“What we see is younger Swiss people are more interested in the family events where they can pass on the cultural values [such as] Waldweihnacht,” says Haberli.

For more information, please visit www.swiss-society.org.

Erratum

In “A discussion on racial stereotyping and mental health” by Susan Hancock (Vol 19 No 10), Sukhmani Gill’s name was misspelled. The Source apologizes for the error.
Innovative projects lead to award

by VICTOR VAN DER MERWE

Alex Beim, founder of Tangible Interaction and this year's recipient of the Business Entrepreneur Award at the Inspiration Awards, brings a different perspective on immigration policy and integration.

The Inspirational Latin Award acknowledges remarkable individuals who have made striking contributions to British Columbia's Latin American community over a significant period of time.

Moving for love

Beim had no intention of leaving his home country of Uruguay, but when an old girlfriend reached out to him in 1998 the then-27 year old graphic designer left his home country and came to Canada. “My background is in graphic design, which is amazing because it is a profession you can work in even if you do not know much English. The work speaks for you,” says Beim.

After learning a bit of English here in Canada, Beim landed himself a job with the international advertising and communications firm, DHM, in their online division, Tribal World Wide. He worked for DDH for ten years and rose to the position of associate creative director. In 2008, Beim started his own company called Tangible Interactive. After eighteen years together, Beim and his girlfriend separated, but they share friendship and two children.

The Zygote Ball

In 2006, while still working for DDH, Beim had the idea of a beach ball at concerts that lights up when you touch it. This was twelve years ago and the idea of something like that being possible seemed far-fetched. “Nowadays we are used to seeing this stuff, everything is touch screen and it is expected to be interactive, but twelve years ago that was very new. It was a game changer for the show industry because there was nothing like that before,” says Beim about his light up beach ball. Some of the first clients to take on the Zygote Ball were the internationally famous performers known collectively as Blue Man Group.

Beim’s reason for this invention was what would become the motivation for all his work. “I wanted to create a piece that changed the way we participated in shows and concerts. I wanted people to feel included and a part of the show, instead of just watching,” he says. His biggest challenge in creating the Zygote Ball was that he had the creative idea, but no technical notion of how to begin creating something like this. “I had no knowledge of electronics or industrial design; all I had was the idea that I wanted a ball to light up when I touched it.”

Beim was encouraged to pursue his idea from a Tentative backers and they immediately saw the potential.

“I had never used it with people. There were about twenty of us on a squash court. There was a lawyer and when he played with the ball, he just lit up,” he says. Beim saw then that he had something special.

After Tangible Interaction was established, and the Zygote Ball became a success, many other innovative projects followed. It has become a bit easier, but the values are the same as with the game changing Zygote Ball.

For more information, please visit: www.latinoculture.ca www.tangibleinteraction.com

I knew it was possible, but I had no idea where to go,” he explains. He knocked on doors and asked for advice. “Nowadays we are used to seeing this stuff, everything is touch screen and it is expected to be interactive,” he says. Beim’s reason for this invention was what would become the motivation for all his work. “I wanted to create a piece that changed the way we participated in shows and concerts. I wanted people to feel included and a part of the show, instead of just watching,” he says. His biggest challenge in creating the Zygote Ball was that he had the creative idea, but no technical notion of how to begin creating something like this. “I had no knowledge of electronics or industrial design; all I had was the idea that I wanted a ball to light up when I touched it.”

strong suit for the B.C., actually getting the word out about opportunities beyond Vancouver is something to work on. “Maybe we are attracting people to Vancouver, but how do we attract people to other parts of the province, even let them know that there are options outside of Metro Vancouver?” says Drew.

Additionally, while Canada continues to compete on a global scale to attract immigration, Drew says secondary migration in Canada – migration within a country or province – needs to be addressed in order to create a smooth immigration transition process. “[People] will land in other parts of Canada and then decide to move here. Which is great; that’s an attraction piece, but then we see a lot of people deciding to move out of the province because of cost, because they aren’t necessarily able to settle as easily as they thought they would in the local economy,” says Drew. “So it’s really taking a look at how we get the word out that B.C. is an entire province not just Metro Vancouver.”

Workforce development strategy for newcomers

The last key recommendation is perhaps one of the most talked about aspects of immigration and labour: skill transferability. It’s often complained that despite Canada being able to attract high-skilled labour, people often cannot transfer their skills to a Canadian context. But for Drew, much of the issue around transferability of skills isn’t just in training newcomers to the province, but also in communicating with employers and businesses to realize the potential of skilled workers. “It’s taking a better approach to not only training newcomers to work in our labour market here, but also really working with employers and helping train them and their HR people to help make that bridge in a really intentional way,” says Drew.

Looking forward

A statement from Bruce Ralston, the provincial Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology, states that there aren’t currently any plans to reinstate a Ministry of Immigration and Multiculturalism. However, Ralston points out that immigration continues to be a priority for the B.C. Government, as the province values new perspectives, talent and experience that help to grow our labour force and economy.

“To help ensure that newcomers receive the resources they need to thrive, we have increased our investment in settlement support to $12 million this year, an increase of 60% and the highest level since 2014. This investment will be used to provide easy access to programs like employment counselling, language training and improved credential assessments,” says Ralston.

Drew says that the provincial government has been taking the strategy plan into consideration, and is hopeful that they will implement some of the report’s recommendations into policies. “It’s an evolution, but it takes time. But I think [it’s] a real opening to having conversations and moving everything and everyone forward,” Drew says.

Drew says the strategy plan represents an essential step in creating a mutually beneficial relationship between the province and newcomers. “Having newcomers in our communities helps strengthen them, helps to enrich them to where we have very strong and vibrant communities. So the takeaway is that yes, we need to welcome newcomers here, but at the same time, we need to have some really great supports for them to facilitate that piece. And it’s not just on them, it’s on us as well,” he says.
Towards a utopian vision
by JAKE MCRGAL

The Institute for Humanities at Simon Fraser University (SFU) and its affiliated publication Contours Journal will be hosting Utopian Spaces, a free conference organized and led by SFU graduate students and open to the general public.

The two days of presentations and discussions, on Nov. 23 and 24, will aim to open up dialogue about the concept of "utopian" specifically both physical and imaginative spaces that can be considered utopian.

Looking forward

The conference will be an opportunity for constructive discussions about both our present world and different futures we can imagine for it.

"This idea," says Morgan Young, chair of the conference's graduate committee, "that there are alternatives to what there is now, we think it's an important topic to speculate about at this point in time, and important to look at concrete examples that can be considered utopian attempts at making the world better."

Given that it's all about a better, more desirable world, the term "utopia" has some large negative connotations attached to it.

"There is a history of what I would call 'bad utopias,'" says Young. "These are conceptions of perfect or idealized societies that have been exclusive, or based on the suffering of others. I think that particularly after the Second World War and the Holocaust, 'utopia' earned a bad reputation, built on the suffering of others. I think that particularly after the Second World War and the Holocaust, 'utopia' earned a bad reputation, built on the suffering of others."

"We have to wean ourselves off of utopian models, that mean opposition for negative, dehumanizing ideas," she says. "We're still working things out, we're still researching and deciding on things and learning things. That's part of what we want this conference to be: an exploration of what we're all talking together, talking through these ideas together to open up possibilities."

Practical plans

Ajamu Nangwaya, PhD and lecturer at the University of the West Indies, will be one of the keynote speakers at the conference. His speech will focus on the practical issues of a utopian society: what we - as a society - can do today to facilitate and prepare for what we want to build towards.

"It's not enough to complain," says Nangwaya, "what are we for? And how can that manifest itself in the lives of the people? How can the ideas that we have get translated in concrete ways, in the here and now, to the people who are suffering?"

The Institute for Humanities will be open to all talking about both our present world and different futures we can imagine for it.

Toward a utopian vision
by Morgan Young

"We feel it is important to discuss practical attempts people are doing to make things better, and see a different way we could live in the world. At this current moment in time, things can seem pretty hopeless, and people can feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of problems we face globally, so discussing what we can do is very important."

And besides providing a forum for more positive, forward-thinking conversations, Young sees Utopian Spaces as an opportunity for herself and her fellow students to make useful connections with each other.

"It's an opportunity for us as graduate students to meet and talk to each other and share our ideas," she says. "We're still working things out, we're still researching and deciding on things and learning things. That's part of what we want this conference to be: an exploration of what we're all talking together, talking through these ideas together to open up possibilities."

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Nangwaya believes that in order for us to make real progress towards a truly utopian world, we have to first find a way to overcome the negative, pervasive structures that still exist in our society.

"We have to wean ourselves off the dominant ideologies in our world," he says. "Racist ideologies, patriarchal ideologies, heteronormative ideologies...they will negate a humanistic future we're trying to build. Any ideas that go against human freedoms, we must wean ourselves off of them."

Like Morgan, one of the key benefits of the conference Nangwaya is looking forward to is the opportunity to connect with those who attend.

"Like-minded people can see hope, and see how we can be better organized to execute this utopic vision we have."

Ajamu Nangwaya, keynote speaker at Utopian Spaces

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Ahm-music, he said, wringing his eyes. “A magic beyond all we do here!”

— Damoaham in J.R. Rowlings’s Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone

A FOX of the online season and up-to-date online event listings are available at music.ubc.ca. Digital photos of UBC faculty, student ensembles, and guest artists are also available upon request. -30-

PHOTO BY ERROL YOUNG

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

Berne, First Nations counsellor

For more information, visit www.contoursjournalconference2018.wordpress.com.
Exploring the notion of a Muslim world

by ABDUL BASIT

To discuss the idea of a ‘Muslim world,’ a second lecture is being delivered at Simon Fraser University (SFU) as part of the 2018-2019 lecture series. The talk will discuss assumptions about the united Muslim world while looking at how those assumptions became so widespread.

“Narratives about the Muslim world evolved dramatically, though this change is seldom recognized,” says Cemil Aydin, PhD and professor of history at the University of North Carolina.

According to Aydin, the assumption of a clash between Islamic and the western world is being reinforced by the policies of certain world leaders. At SFU Harbour Centre on Nov. 29, the talk will discuss one of the professor’s latest books titled The Idea of the Muslim World, A Global Intellectual History.

An idea of unity

In 2002, Aydin completed his PhD in history and Middle Eastern studies at Harvard University. He focuses primarily on modern Middle Eastern history and modern Asian history. He currently teaches at the University of North Carolina and has made significant contributions through this book.

According to Aydin, there is no single Muslim or non-Muslim understanding of ‘the Muslim world,’ however, it is more likely for non-Muslims to consider the Muslim world in racial and geopolitical terms. When Muslims think of the Muslim world, it is more probable for them to correspond to the notion of ummah, which means the community of believers of Quran and followers of Prophet Muhammad.

“As a term, the Muslim world is comparable to the terms such as Africa, Asia or the Western World and not necessarily similar to ‘Ummah,’” says Aydin. “Because, historically, until the 19th century, ummah meant a non-territorial and non-geopolitical connection among pious believers. It did not mean hundreds of millions of Muslims occupying a certain geography between Europe and Asia, for example.”

The evolution of an idea

“In present day, the idea of a Muslim world holds a different meaning compared to the meaning that it had a couple hundred years ago,” says Aydin. “In the 1980’s, the British Empire was viewed as the greatest Muslim empire in the world because it ruled half of the world’s Muslims countries. Pan-Islamic solidarity was not meant to make a conflict between Islam and the West.”

During a time of secularist nationalism from the 1990s to 1960s, Pan-Islamism and Caliphate were almost a thing of the past while the Cold War was ongoing and empires had come to an end.

“Pan-Islamism was first re- evoking that Saudi Arabia’s position against secular Arab monarchies was a response to the Cold War,” he says.

Aydin states that it can be impor- tant to think about the different sectors in Islam and how they have affected each other over time. There was unity amongst Shia and Sunni Muslims up till the 1970’s when Iran and Saudi Arabia were competing for leadership of the new imagined Muslim world.

“After the 1990s, anti-Muslim hostility in Europe and America revived the idea of a threat of a Muslim world menace, even perceived innocent Muslim work- ers and citizens in Europe as a sinister intrusion of the Muslim world into the Christian white world,” he says.

While talking about the idea of Muslim unity in present day, Aydin states that it can be important to think about the different sectors in Islam and how they have affected each other over time. There was unity amongst Shia and Sunni Muslims up till the 1970’s when Iran and Saudi Arabia were competing for leadership of the new imagined Muslim world.

“Then Iran claimed leader- ship of the Muslim world, the Saudi-American alliance began to emphasize their Shia sect to isolate Iran. Since then, the Shia-Sunni division deteriorated with developments in Iraq and Syria,” he says.

According to Aydin, Saudi Ara- bia would emphasize their Shia sect to isolate them when Iran claimed leadership of the Muslim world. Since then, the Shia Sunni division became further aggravated by developments in Iran and Syria.

“The Muslim world is a mod- ern geopolitical invention,” he says.

Aydin believes that it has evolved significantly in recent times and it could keep evolving with the shifting circumstances in the world.

More information, please visit www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html

Youth for a Change and the LGBTQ+ leadership in Surrey

by MATTHEW FRASER

Under the guidance of LG- TIQ+ activists over the years, the greater Vancouver area has become an increasingly progressive and inclusive re- gion. Jen Marchbank, profes- sor of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies at the Simon Fraser University (SFU), and Sylvie Traphan, co-founder of Youth for a Change, have made Surrey the main focus of their efforts.

Marchbank will take part in a discussion panel tracing the his- tory of LGBTQ+ activism in Sur- rey on Nov. 27 at SFU.

A look back

From the start, former Surrey Pride chairwoman Jen March- bank outlined the history of queer activism in Surrey, look- ing back at James Chamberlain’s 1998 fight from a Surrey kinder- garten classroom against the Canadian Supreme court as the seed that helped grow it all. That monumental victory changed Canadian laws and set the pre- cedence that ‘tolerance is always age appropriate.’

Tracing Martin Rooney’s sup- port by starting the Ifan the Bigots dance to help raise funds for Chamberlain’s legal battle, Marchbank marked that time as the introduction of several future Surrey activists and the birthplace of multiple organi- zations. Roughly 14 years later, in 2012, Youth for a Change was born. Founded by Traphan and her partner Marchbank, Youth for a Change focuses on the needs of early secondary school student to young adults.

“It was around the time of Dan Savage’s It Gets Better campaign, which was basically trying to give some kind of confidence and support to mostly young people in the U.S. by saying that if you can just stick it out through high school, you can survive as a gay person beyond that,” says Marchbank.

With the It Gets Better campaig- n as inspiration and the op- timism of the youth as a drive, Youth for a Change was born. Over the years Marchbank and Traphan have worked hard to empower youth and create more community activist leaders.

Youth success and continued Surrey pride

When reflecting on the journeys taken by youth encountered through the program, March- bank and Traphan are happy to note many successes including one teen who had been tempo- rarily homeless but persevered and has recently become a certi- fied youth worker.

“One young woman won many awards for her work on youth mental health. [Two] SFU stu- dents [both] won awards and social justice scholarships. They won the Carla Poppin and the Rosemary Brown awards. The group itself won the PAMA and the Order of the Maple Leaf,” says Marchbank.

Marchbank and Traphan have also collaborated with other ac- tivists to form QUIRKE, helping to create Canada’s first LGBTQ educational materials about elder abuse and various other materials on the plight of mar- ginalized elders. Their work has culminated in Basically Queer: an introduction to intergenera- tional LGBTQ+ lives.

They are also quick to acknowl- edge many of their local activ- ist counterparts including Alex Sangha, founder of Sher Vancou- ver, who, alongside two young local women have produced a documentary called My Name was January, which brings to light the life, friendships and work of a New Westminster filipina trans- gender woman whose life was tragically cut short by violence.

Marchbank will be joining James Chamberlain, Alex Sangha, Martin Rooney and members of Youth for a Change for an infor- mative evening hosted by SFU’s history department to promote a deeper understanding of Sur- rey’s fight for LGBTQ+ rights.

For more information, visit www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html

Photo courtesy of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Aydin is a PhD in history and Middle Eastern studies at Harvard University (SFU) as part of the 2018-2019 lecture series. The talk will discuss assumptions about the united Muslim world while looking at how those assumptions became so widespread.

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The Source
Coast Mental Health will be holding its very first Guest Chef Night fundraising event on Nov. 26 at Social Crust Café, a social venture café. The event will feature a four-course dinner by renowned chef Scott Jaeger of the Pear Tree Restaurant in Burnaby with assistance from the Coast Mental Health Culinary Program students.

The event’s goal is to support youth with mental illness who are interested in gaining culinary training. The funds raised will provide these students with the textbooks and tools they need to be successful in the program.

“An event like this one goes a long way in combating public prejudice and mental health stigma. When the public can come and see the results, and meet some of the students, people will leave with a different impression,” says program coordinator Glen Lamont, who is also responsible for student recruitment and student mental health support.

As Lamont explains, the culinary training program belongs to a bigger global organization based out of Seattle: FareStart. Catalyst Kitchens by FareStart has transformed thousands of lives hindered by issues such as poverty, homelessness and mental illness through their own culinary training program.

The Vancouver program is still small, but Lamont hopes it will grow faster with awareness raised through events such as the upcoming Guest Chef Night. The program is on its 10th cohort; the cohorts last five months each with 14 to 20 students per cohort.

“I think every year we become more and more successful. Every year we take a step back and see what is working and what’s not. We introduced in-house counselling for our students – that is really helpful. We have grown our team; we have four chefs in the cafe and four in the training side,” says Margaret Davies, culinary program manager and the head training instructor at Coast Mental Health.

The Coast Mental Health Culinary Training Program is mainly targeting youth between 19 and 30 years old with mental issues ranging from depression and anxiety to autism to drug and alcohol addictions. Its goal is to help students better themselves as well as gain important employment skills.

“From what I have seen, cooking pairs really beautifully with mental health. Cooking allows us to teach so many different skills. It helps with confidence; it helps with communication, with time management. And also it is a life skill – everyone needs to know how to cook,” Davies says.

Pilot event with a celebrity chef
Jaeger will be the first local chef to pilot this charity event. “I think mental health is a topic and an area that affect a lot of industries, and is quite prevalent in our industry. We have a lot of learning to do in this area. I would like to learn more and help others to move forward,” he says.

Jaeger worked all over the world before opening the Pear Tree Restaurant with his wife in late 1997. A member of the Canadian Culinary Federation and the president of The Chef’s Table Society of British Columbia, he has represented Canada as a member of the Canadian National Culinary team multiple times and earned numerous international accolades.

“When I first heard about this event, I was really excited to volunteer and I thought it was a great idea. For all the people with mental illness, it's going to be great to have someone who can work on the team to help with the training,” says Lamont.

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“I love the job; we get to make people happy. We cook for people and we show them a good time,” Jaeger says.

Cooking as therapy
With a strong passion for teaching and for helping people, Davies has been on the job for over four years and feels fortunate that her skills are useful for teaching youth. She believes cooking also helps with building stronger relationships among peers, with family and with the community.

Lamont, who has been working in the mental health field for nearly a decade, concurs. “It doesn’t matter where you go in the world, food always equals a sense of community and family. People form bonds over food. Also, culinary arts are very creative. Anything creative – art, writing, music – any of those things go hand in hand with good therapy,” he says.

For more information please visit www.coastmentalhealth.com/guest-chef-night-social-crust-cafe-with-chef-scott-jaeger.
A new exhibit from the dawn of photography shows old photographs depicting excavations of Persia’s past glories, photographs that were once used as promotional tools in turn-of-the-century Iran. It’s something that happens around the world; an almsgiving archway would want to be affiliated with some sort of glorious past in their history,” explains Haghighi, an independent curator and Vancouver gallery who curated this exhibition and others about the role of art in Iran’s history. “The Qajar dynasty were Turks who had taken over. The dynasty chose to photograph [the ruins of Persepolis so that] the Shahs could affiliate themselves with the story of the Persian ancient past.”

Looking at Persepolis: The Camera in Iran 1860–1925 is showing at The Polygon Gallery in North Vancouver until January 12, 2019, and forms part of the gallery’s new exhibit titled Perspectives: revealing diverse views on photography. Haghighi says, “If they had an agenda, for example, they would take photographs to promote the country to the west and around the world, she noted.

Albums of Persepolis were given as presents to foreign dignitaries. “It’s a dialogue, [a way of] getting to know your country,” Haghighi says. “If they had an ambassador in Italy, he would get an album of Persepolis. All [photo]bition] photographs were found outside of Iran, albums that lived outside.”

Later Qajar Shahs continued these practices, and the exhibit spans eighty years of excavations, ending in 1930 when the last Qajar Shah died in exile. France. The exposition begins with the early cameras, called daguerreotypes. “There are four different photographers. The [last] photographs are older, the old prints are harder to make out.”

Architects, Savangvi, Tahkheh-e zamandari (Persian), c. 1880.

Need the skills to find a job? We can help! Design a fantastic résumé and cover letter, tune your interview techniques, learn valuable skills to succeed in the Canadian workplace, gain insight into the job market, access special services for all Canadians at no COST. The Provincial Cultural Community Services (PICS) Society, Vancouver Branch, has been helping immigrants and newcomers to Canada for 14 years.

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

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

PICS Vancouver also offers one-on-one employment assistance, paid on-the-job work experience through the Wage Subsidy program, and access to the Community Resource 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. For more information, please visit www.picsvancouver.com.

We are seeing many different photographers. The [last] photographs are older, the old prints are harder to make out.”

Columns and colomannades
And what the photographs show is beautiful, says Haghighi. The Persian Empire’s artistic tradition dominated the Middle East for a hundred years before it came to an end in 250 B.C.E. “There’s three, four ancient civilizations: the Greeks, Romans, Persians, and Chinese,” Haghighi explains. “The Persian empire was very powerful. They reigned over modern Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan. Alexander the Great took over Persepolis and burned it down.”

Despite this destruction, Haghighi says, Persepolis’s glory is still visible in the ruins of the age-old city, now a UNESCO heritage site. Haghighi says, “If you take a look at the photographs, you can see the foot of a column, and, yes, you can see the whole column, eight feet tall. The city rose from underground.”

Haghighi, who emigrated with her family from Iran as a child, is proud she is able to pass on some of her heritage to her son. “It’s a comprehensive collection put together on the history of photography in Iran,” she says.

For more information, please visit www.thepolygon.org.

A new exhibit from the dawn of photography also tells of the history of Iran, says Pantea Haghighi. Looking at Perspe- lisis shows old photographs depict- ing excavations of Persia’s past glories, photographs that were once used as promotional tools in turn-of-the-century Iran.

“It’s something that happens around the world; an almsgiving archway would want to be affiliated with some sort of glorious past in their history,” explains Haghighi, an independent curator and Van- couver gallery who curated this exhibition and others about the role of art in Iran’s history. “The Qajar dynasty were Turks who had taken over. The dynasty chose to photograph [the ruins of Persepolis so that] the Shahs could affiliate themselves with the story of the Persian ancient past.”

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Pierre Vassura: New Work 1983–2018

by PETRA GIFFARD

After an artistic career spanning several decades and continents, Italian-born artist Pierre Vassura will have his first solo exhibition in Canada.

Vassura has been creating art work since the mid 1950s and many rejections from several of Vancouver’s art galleries, Vassura was delighted to be approached by curators Jonathan Middleton and Eli Bornowsky.

“They didn’t have to convince me, I was ready,” says Vassura. “I have got forty years’ worth of work.”

Vassura has lived a long rich life and it is the work that Pierre most identifies with,” he says.

Storytelling on canvas

Middleton agrees that there are recurring themes.

“The geometric abstract style that he works in, is really consistent within this large time frame. Even though the work spans many years there is a cohesiveness to it, and it is the work that Pierre most identifies with,” he says.

Exhibition aficionadi and neophytes

The curators are both keen for exhibition aficionadi and neophytes that teach us something.

“We hope that the exhibition will be both interesting and stimulating for people who are already followers of contemporary art, but we also hope that this exhibition is the sort of thing that gets people interested in art for the first time,” says Middleton.

Vassura is looking forward to his work finally being on show to the general public.

“I would like people to come and enjoy the variety and try to understand it. It was a long time of work and to me it is finished. I will have happiness if people appreciate what I have done,” he says.

For more information about the exhibition, please visit www.richmondartgallery.org.

Distribution of line and colours and a strong repetition of formal relationships.”

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“When the opportunity came [to exhibit] I took it. I have waited a long time and was not expecting it anymore.”

Geometric abstraction

Vassura himself is keen not to simplistically define his artistic style within this large body of work.

“I have got forty years’ worth of continuous artwork and at the age of 83 I did not know what to do with it. So when the opportunity came [to exhibit] I took it. I have waited a long time and was not expecting it anymore.”

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“I was really tired of playing the music of other people and I really wanted to create something that was more me. I always tell my musician friends, if they don’t really identify with what they play, then create something. Make something. Push yourself,” says Antonio.

Realizing a dream within

Born in El Salvador, Antonio moved to North America as a child with his family, who were political refugees. Antonio says he had a difficult youth surrounded by poverty, violence and racism. He grew up listening to rap and hip-hop and felt he could relate to many of the themes present in these genres of music. As he got older he became more interested in playing music and at the age of 22, he traveled to Madrid, Spain to study under the great flamenco musician, Jeronimo Maya. At this time, he also began to have an intuitive feeling that he needed to create something that was all his own.

“I had been part of different groups. Some of it was more Latino, some of it was more Flamenco, some was more like raw hip-hop, but I didn’t really find myself fully,” Antonio says.

Three years ago, he moved to Vancouver and had a realization.

“I told myself, I didn’t want another year to pass where I didn’t manifest [this] project.”

He began writing and composing his own music, pulling inspirations from a multitude of different genres that spoke to him. He wanted to incorporate his Native ancestry, his Latin roots, his internal connection to hip-hop and rap, as well as the flamenco style he had learned in Spain.

Making his music reality

One year ago, Antonio began recording some of the music, but realized that in order to make the incredibly diverse sounds he craved, he was going to need help bringing his music to life. He called up a few other musicians he had connected with and asked if they would be interested in helping him create this musical project, now known as Kin Balam.

“Kin means the path and Balam means the jaguar... Sometimes I play alone, but usually I tell people, I’m just Balam. But Kin Balam is the project,” Antonio explains.

Kin Balam consists of four core members: Colombian-born musician Alan Ruiz, Montreal-born musicians Mylés Bigelow and Sangito Bigelow and Antonio himself. Ruiz came to North America to study music and master the guitar. He has since learned the bass as well, which he often plays in Kin Balam. Mylés and Sangito are skilled musicians who Antonio

-Kristy Dockstader

Kin Balam: a multidimensional musical project

By KRISTY DOCKSTADER

Valencia’s Premier Swing Jazz Quartet Van Dijang (featuring Keith Bennett) along with special guest harmonica wiz Melanie St. Claere and vocal stylist Eve Montmari present.

Tickets available at Highlife, Tapestry & on-line at www.roguefolk.com

Visit The Source online

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WORLD PRESS CARTOON CALDAS DA RAINHA 2019

WORLD PRESS CARTOON will organize: in 2019 the 14th edition and continues to hold its main event in the city of Caldas da Rainha. Please remember the important innovation introduced in 2018: the admittance of works produced for online publications. In order to fulfill the high quality standards that are the touch of this organization, we maintain the last monetary prizes structure, with a Grand Prize that has the value of ten thousand euros. To distinguish, exhibit, promote and award the best drawings published in the world press is still our mission. Cartoons, editorial and gag cartoons that will make a retrospective view of the world’s current affairs in 2018, viewed from different cultures, drawings where the cartoonists picture and criticize the ways of the world with humour and a sharp eye. The Jury’s task is always hard: many works from various cultures and a judging quality. To make judging easier and to guarantee the quality and rigor to the final selection, it is of the most importance that the authors read carefully the regulation and present their works in conformity with the rules it defines. A universalсалон embraces a universal participation and clear and equal rules for everyone. Because the WORLD PRESS CARTOON aims at gathering the best in the international production of humour drawings published in the printed or on-line journalism every year, this is a meeting the professional cartoonists should not miss!

Read the regulations at worldpresscartoon.com

Send your works, by ordinary mail to:
Concurso Internacional World Press Cartoon
A.P. 1179 – EC Piracicaba 13600-011 Piracicaba – Brazil
If you use Express Mail, TNT, DHL, Federal, UPS, send to:
Concurso Internacional World Press Cartoon
Av. Ressano Garcia, 36, 3º Dº 1070-257 Lisboa (Portugal)

reception deadline: January 31, 2019

The Source online

thelasource.com

Twitter/Facebook: thelasource

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Cultural Calendar

November 20–December 11, 2018

**Akram Khan Company**
Nov. 21–24
SFU Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, Vancouver
dancehouse.ca

The British based Akram Khan company will be coming to Vancouver at the SFU Goldcorp Centre this November. Akram Khan’s Chotto Desh (“small homeland” in Bangladeshi) takes a stu- rybook view of Khan’s childhood, growing up under the stern eye of his authoritarian father. Freely mixing Kathak dance with story- telling and mime, Khan creates a series of worlds that run from the ordinary to the mystical. While themes of exclusion and identity are wound throughout, the work is light on its feet and filled with a luminous humanity that grounds the fantastical in the univer-
sal. For tickets and showtimes, please visit the Dance House website.

**Dancers of Damelahamid**
Nov. 22, 12 p.m.
Scotiabank Dance Centre, Vancouver
damelahamid.ca

Dancers of Damelahamid is an Indigenous dance company from the Northwest Coast of B.C. with a rich history of masked dancing, which inspires compelling per-
f ormances through dramatic dance, captivating narrative, in-
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pany’s heritage and bridges the ancient with a living tradition. The Dancers of Damelahamid will be at the Scotiabank Dance Centre noon on Nov. 22.

**21st Annual European Union Film Festival**
Nov. 25–Dec. 4
The Cinematheque, Vancouver
www.thecinematheque.ca/ euflmfestival

Pay a visit to the Cinematheque Theatre to experience the cin-
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geuese fantastical family comedy about overbearing mothers and a psychological thriller set on the island Republic of Malta. From documentary to drama, comedy to historical, there’s plenty to see. For showtimes and movie infor-
mation, check out their website.

* * *

**Turn up the Sound Systems! Generative Sound Art Today**
Nov. 24, 12:20 p.m.–2:30 p.m.
Scotiabank Dance Centre, Vancouver
www.surreyartscentre.ca/culture-
recreation/turnupthesounds.aspx

On Nov. 24, why not come on
down to the Surrey Arts Centre for this year’s Sound Think-
ing event focusing on genera-
tive sound art. With advances in computer technology, artists and composers program more complex self-generating musical structures. They use algorithms to produce new music and sound forms. In doing so, they delegate some of their authority to ma-
achines. What is at stake for art and culture with the increase of computer-driven sound prac-
tices? For artist bios and more information, please check out the website.

* * *

**Chez Nous: Christmas with Elektra**
Nov. 24, 7:30 p.m.
Shakespeare Heights United
Church, Vancouver
(www.nov.24)
Good Shepherd Church, Surrey
(www.nov.25)
elektra.ca

Join one of Canada’s most cele-
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**A Charlie Brown Holiday Double Bill**
Nov. 24–Dec. 30
Waterfront Theatre on Granville Island, Vancouver
www.carouseltheatre.ca

Good Grief, it’s twice the fun! Experience the ups and downs of everyday life in You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown. When your friends are the Peanuts gang, no
day is ever ordinary, and some-
where between Beethoven’s birthday, peanut butter sandwich,
tickets and team baseball, Char-
lie Brown and the gang learn about the joys of friendship and stumble upon the true meaning of happiness. Then in A Charlie Brown Christmas, Charlie Brown directs his friends in the school Christmas pageant. With help from his friends and a ragged little tree, Charlie Brown discovers what the season is really all about. This special double bill feature is playing at the Waterfront Theatre on Granville Island from Nov. 24 to
Dec. 30.

* * *

**Explore Ice Worlds like Enceladus at the H. R. MacMillan Space Centre.**

Cosmic Nights: Ice Worlds
Nov. 29, 6:30–10 p.m.
H. R. MacMillan Space Centre, Vancouver
www.spacecentre.ca

G r ab a friend and come on down to the H. R. MacMillan Space Centre for Cosmic Nights: Ice Worlds. We will be exploring whether life can exist on the icy planets in our solar system and beyond. Learn more about current missions and hot topics in astronomy and space exploration in this fun even-
tering of science and socializing. The centre has a custom planetarium show, guest lecturer, mu-

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**United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities**
Dec. 3
Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, Vancouver
www.roundhouse.ca

The Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre will host Vancouver’s annual community celebration of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Daytime program-
ning highlights the achievement and talent of all people with abilities, hands-on activities, well-
ness and recreation demos and an art fair and exhibition featur-
ing work by artists with disabilities. Evening program-
ning features a cabaret-style film as well as art and performances created by, for, or about individuals who live outside the box. An annual sell-out event, please visit the website to book tickets early for a night to remember!