

When art looks at utopia as a political force
Page 4



The Source

forum of diversity

Vol 19 No 16 | March 5–19, 2019

www.thelasource.com



How French was introduced into the English Language

by JESS CAUSBY

An average speaker of English knows around 10,000 French words, even before they have learnt French as a second language. How is it that individuals know so much linguistically from a different language?

The English language we know and use today would be extremely different if not for a major event back in 1066.

The Norman Conquest

The Norman invasion of England was not only a physical inva-

sion by William the Conqueror; the conquest had linguistic influences, profoundly changing the whole course of the English language. Language before the conquest is referred to as Old English, and post-conquest it is Middle English.

More than 10,000 French words entered the English language after the invasion and these new inclusions account for more than a third of the English vocabulary which we use today. Stephan Dollinger, PhD, an Associate Professor at The University of British Columbia, explains how, in Old English, “only 3%

of the language was from borrowed words. Now, 70% of our language is borrowed.”

A bit of history

With around ten thousand Normans settling in England after the invasion, French became the language of power for the next 300 years. It was used as a means of oral and written communication in the courts of law, the higher echelons of the Church, and in the homes and castles of the new Norman nobility.

“The whole elite were changed, from the King down to the monasteries,” says Dollinger.

However, the native population, numbering around one million, continued to use English in daily life. Evidence for this use can be seen through the large amount of religious writings produced in English after the conquest, as the natives were unable to understand the writings produced by the new Norman churchmen.

Gradually, the centuries following this period saw Norman French having a deeper influence on the English language. Dollinger describes how lexical words and sounds “trickled

See “English Language” page 8 >

Verbatim

Discovering the Pacific Northwest

by SANDRINE ESPIE

I remember running in the rain along the Arbutus Greenway – an old railway line converted into a pedestrian and bicycle path – and despite the pouring rain that had plagued the city for weeks, a thought kept repeating itself in my mind: I love you, Vancouver! I was living in Seattle, WA and occasionally came to visit the family of my husband who is from Vancouver. This deep affection for Vancouver counterbalanced my weariness with the American political context following the election of the new President. In November 2017 I was starting my ninth year in Seattle, and my husband and I were ready for a change. It was a big surprise when a few months later my husband accepted a job offer in Vancouver.

A year has already passed since I arrived in Canada. When I reflect on my integration and compare it to that lived in the United States, I feel a whirlwind of emotions and conflicting feelings.

These last 10 years lived outside of France, where I am originally from, have taught me that it is by sharing the social and cultural values of a community, and therefore of a city or a country, that make me feel anchored or connected to a place. I have never felt a sense of belonging to the United States. Immigrating to Canada, I believed that promoting diversity, respect for the environment and equal opportunities (such as access to health or education) were intrinsic values of this country. I respected these values and that reassured me. I envisioned that my “imprinting” would be easier in this new country. This proved to be true.

As well, my two children are of mixed race, and Vancouver is an ideal city to raise them in. The city will allow them to explore and maintain their origins by continuing to speak

See “Verbatim” page 7 >

Also in this issue

A slice of life examined with bold veracity
Page 4



Eloise: An Indigenous worldview
Page 6



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Cultural Spotlight

Making long term care multicultural

by COLLEEN ADDISON

Care for British Columbia dementia patients needs to improve, says Habib Chaudhury. Right now, he says, the main focus is on physical health, on keeping patients fed and pain-free. But a patient, even an elderly one in care, is more than a body.

“Person-centred care, a movement that started twenty-five years ago, look[s] at a person in a more holistic way, not only the

with dementia regress back in time. They may think they’re still working. If that is happening, [saying] ‘You are no longer working; you are in a care home.’ is not going to help at all. [You need to] connect with that person at his or her reality; say, ‘Yes, let’s wait for the bus.’ They may come back to the true reality.”

Staff in care homes must be better educated in these techniques and more aware of biographical information and life history including cultural and psychosocial issues, says Chaudhury.

the bath at that time as opposed to our own routine? Can somebody sleep in and have breakfast at 10 am as opposed to 8 am?”

Residents and robots

The symposium gathers together researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to share ideas and research surrounding people with dementia, says Chaudhury. There is “work on falls in care homes, and flooring to reduce the impact [and on] mak[ing] the space more homelike. If I create a residential kitchen, the patients might try to do things they have done over many decades in kitchens, wash dishes, cut vegetables.”

There’s research on calming techniques as well, adds Chaudhury.

“PARO is a robot baby seal: the person with dementia may become calm as they pat the robot, and the robot responds in a positive way,” says Chaudhury.

Specific cultural issues will also be addressed.

“SFU has a partnership with Hong Kong Polytechnic University,” says Chaudhury. “We will create a platform between Hong Kong and Vancouver [to learn] what activities have worked in Hong Kong.”

This symposium will allow fruitful communication about person-centred care, says Chaudhury.

“If you talk with care staff they will tell you it’s important but

“The care model talks about the importance of personal dignity, choice, preference, [and] life history. These are considerations that need to be taken into account.

Habib Chaudhury, Chair of the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University

physical, biological needs but also the psychosocial, spiritual care needs,” says Chaudhury, chair of the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University and one of the organizers of an upcoming symposium on dementia patients. “The care model talks about the importance of personal dignity, choice, preference, [and] life history. These are considerations that need to be taken into account.”

The symposium, *Person-Centred Care for Older Adults with Dementia in BC and Hong Kong*, looks at the issue of this type of care in care homes in British Columbia as well as in the autonomous territory of Hong Kong. It will take place May 6 and 7 at downtown Vancouver’s SFU Harbour Centre.

Dementia and dignity

“Within the care home population, 60–70 per cent of [those] who live in care homes have some level of dementia,” says Chaudhury.

He also points out that care of these patients – rather than on helping to keep them calm and happy – has mainly focused on bio-medical problems, and feeding and clothing them.

“One of the techniques is understanding the psychological reality of the person,” continues Chaudhury. “Quite often people

“Vancouver has a large Chinese-Canadian population, which is reflected in care homes. People with dementia cannot communicate verbally,” says Chaudhury. “It’s important to know their preferences through their history, through working with the family [and] social circle.”



▲ Habib Chaudhury is one of the organizers of an upcoming symposium that will examine issues surrounding the care of dementia patients.

Dementia patients should be treated with dignity, says Chaudhury, and with an awareness of the language, food, cultural beliefs and issues that they have experienced throughout their lifetime.

“Some people may want to have a shower or bath before going to bed at night,” he notes. “Do we have flexibility to provide

there are practical challenges, lack of staffing, work that they have to do which doesn’t give much time for additional thinking,” he comments. “We are very excited about this event.”

For more information, please visit www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html#!view/event_event_id/3066

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Photo credits for front cover
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Truth or stories in the age of social media – a millennial approach

by SIDDHARTH BALA

Kids These Days: Media Representation vs Lived Reality, a talk by Katie Warfield, Ph.D., professor of communications and cultural studies at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU), will be held on March 12 at the TELUS World of Science as part of the KPU & Science World Speaker Series.



▲ *Sorting out the truth from stories.*

Focusing on how social media platforms experience a rise of counter narratives that challenge the way mainstream media writes about others, Warfield hopes to address dominant discourses that center around millennials, technology and new media. By doing so, she intends to draw distinctions between what is deemed to be true and what are nothing more than stories.

The rise of counter publics

Warfield provides her critique on the classical notion of a ‘public.’

“The work of Nancy Fraser [Ph.D. Professor of Philosophy and Politics at the New School for Social Research] and Michael Warner [Ph.D. Seymour H. Knox

Professor of English, Professor of American Studies, and Chair of the Department of English, with diverse interests in colonial and antebellum America, social theory, media studies, queer theory and politics] have deeply critiqued the issues with classic ideas that the ‘public’ is a space of free speech and the free flow of ideas. Being in the ‘public view’ and being ‘viewed positively’ had always been a privilege,” she says.

She goes on to note the irony behind this classic view by explaining that despite the public being deemed an arena for un-

restricted flow of speech and ideas, it is still a very controlled process governed by institutions like media, law, policy, etc. As a result, who and what are being made seen and who gains the privilege of being in a ‘public’ is always under the control of these institutions. Hence, a counter-public, one that is not part of the space governed by these mainstream institutions and one that does not have the privilege to exist within a mainstream public space, arises.

“Counter publics exist as a result of not being present in the mainstream realm. They exist

because public space is a realm of privilege. Counter publics exist to make demands on dominant systems to change and incorporate the needs of diverse audience and diverse publics moving beyond the assumption that there is one unified homogenous public in society,” she says.

Kids these days

Warfield highlights some of the main stereotypes of millennials that she comes across in her studies.

“For several years I’ve been studying youth practices and

social media, and when I tell people this is what I study, their immediate reactions are always paternalistic and patronizing towards young people: ‘Oh, young people are always on social media,’ she says. “They need to get out more in nature. They are so solitary. They don’t know how to communicate.”

In response to these notions, Warfield replies that the talk will first address that these perceptions of the ‘younger generation’ are not new at all.

“We had the same fears about young people when TV came about – radio, rock and roll music, the telephone, and even bicycles! The horror!” she exclaims. “These discourses [about the younger generation], are really about power, and change is always portrayed as a threat to discourses.”

Warfield says her talk will include three specific case studies – conducted by her – and will have a focus on the youth exchanging or showing pictures of their body via texts, sexts, selfies and how these practices are considered maligned these days.

Fact vs fiction

Warfield is also the director of the Visual Media Workshop at KPU, where she conducts empirical research on youth culture and the sharing of visuals on social media. Her digital story telling programs aim to empower people to create more counter narratives that challenge dominant ones, while her talk intends to motivate people to think critically of themselves.

“We are often ascribed to ‘unwilling roles’ because of identifiable aspects of our identities, like it or not: we become the ditzy blonde, the flamboyant queer guy, the Muslim terrorist, the super smart Asian student,” she says. “These roles are the result of the stories we tell but the stories aren’t just passive and unaffacting. They deeply affect us; they affect how people treat us, how we see ourselves, what we permit ourselves to do and to become and more. I see it every time we run the program.”

Warfield says that through her work she is able to empower others, to help them feel strong enough to support their vulnerability.

“There is something life changing about the practice of writing yourself into being, rather than having your life scripted for you.”

For more information, please visit www.kpu.ca/scienceworld

Samson Young

It's a heaven over there

by PETRA GIFFARD

Hong Kong artist Samson Young utilizes Centre A's new location to examine Won Alexander Cumyow, utopia as a political force and the very context of the gallery space itself. The exhibition was curated by Tyler Russell and Godfre Leung.

"The show is a part of a trilogy of exhibition projects that look at utopia as a political force, both positive and negative," says Young, a sound artist who also works with a variety of artistic media. "Each of the three exhibitions have a different context and therefore different focuses. There will be photographs, some new drawings, and an animated music video."

Young's exploration of sound art began as part of a collective, but after graduate school he began creating work individually.

"Tyler Russell, the former director of Centre A, saw my work at Art Basel Hong Kong in 2016.

cultural displacement and urban change in Chinatown.

"At the time, I was thinking more and more about the Hong Kong/Canada relationship and what it meant to be in Vancouver and Canada [as a whole]," says

Young's fictionalized portrayal of Won Alexander Cumyow places him at the heart of the exhibition and utilizes his place in history to examine important themes including diaspora and identity.

initiatives of the Chinatown Transformation Project."

Complex layering

By weaving three separate lines of inquiry together, Young hopes to present the viewer with a 'mind-

“ The show is a part of a trilogy of exhibition projects that looks at utopia as a political force, both positive and negative.

Samson Young, Hong Kong artist

We started talking about doing something at Centre A pretty much right after that" he says.

As the former executive director of Centre A, Russell initiated a series of exhibitions that sought to listen to those facing

Russell. "I was concerned with both the Cantonese language and culture space as it related not only to the settler colonial space of Vancouver but also Hong Kong and Canton."

Vancouver-Chinese community

After two years of planning and preparation, *It's a heaven over there* has come to fruition. One of the key components of the exhibition is Won Alexander Cumyow, an important civic leader in the Vancouver Chinese community at the turn of the century. He was also supposedly the first person of Chinese origin to be born in Canada.

"It was strange to me that anybody could actually make such a claim, so I started digging into the Won Cumyow fonds at the University of British Columbia Library," says Young. "I found all these really fascinating materials, including the menu that was served at the banquet for the Chinese Reformist leader Kang Youwei's visit to Vancouver."

"The question Samson started with was, 'What does China mean to this person who has never been to China? What does the Qing Dynasty mean to him?'" says Godfre Leung, one of the show's curators.

Chinatown location

The gallery space itself also plays an important role in the exhibition. The Sun Wah Centre is a former retail mall built in Chinatown in the late 1980s and is similar to the mall that Young grew up near in Hong Kong.

"Sun Wah is kind of a relic of Vancouver in transition between 1986 and 1997, when the heart of Chinese-language retail migrated to Richmond," says Leung. "Of course, it also speaks to new waves of Chinese immigration to the Lower Mainland during that time and larger shifting patterns in the city's demographics and urban planning. It maybe also shines a light on current debates about Chinatown revitalization and

map' of connections between topics and tries to make sense of their juxtaposition.

"The exhibition is complex, layering the shopping mall context of the Sun Wah with shopping mall accoutrements, trans-pacific histories and notions of Utopia and the nostalgia for far away places and previous eras," says Russell.

The curators hope that visitors to the show may be prompted to consider the true complexity of the human condition. Turn-of-the-century Vancouver Chinatown, Asian exclusion laws, and the Vancouver-Chinese experience are also referenced in the work.

"But this [exhibition] isn't Chinese-specific," says Leung. "Think of how complex diasporic identity was for members of the Vancouver Sikh community around 1984, for example. To me, more than anything else, *It's a heaven over there* is about those complexities."

It's a heaven over there runs until June 1. For more information, visit www.centrea.org.



▲ Photographs from *It's a heaven over there*.

Photo by Yoko Takei Do

A story of incite and candor

by MATTHEW FRASER

Poet, short story writer, novelist, punk rock singer and mother; a series of occupations Yasuko Thanh fills on a day by day basis. Now, with the release of *Mistakes to Run With*, Yasuko Thanh will add the title of memoirist to the list. On April 3 she will be sharing some of her story at *Incite: Forged in Fire* hosted at the Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation center.

In her debut award winning novel, *Mysterious fragrances of the Yellow Mountain*, Thanh crafted a story revolving around multiple characters who clamoured to be dominant in the fictional novel's universe. For this new more introspective outing, she has had to change her style to suit the new territory.

Thanh was quick to state that work can develop in a tidier fashion if restricted to one point of view from the outset. Given that the voice had to be her own, she found it more difficult to write *Mistakes to Run With*.

"If I didn't like the way a character was developing in the novel, I could change the circumstances surrounding that char-

acter by deleting the old and rewriting. That freedom, unfortunately, doesn't exist when writing a memoir," she says.

These restrictions led her to a more honest and upfront look at the path that led to her current place. Though the topic of her youth includes some difficult truths, Yasuko is not shy about pointing to the time when she chose to live on the streets.

"I did not want to live in a group home or a foster home, so my own inability at 15 years-old to see viable options for myself is one of the factors. What does someone who is a Ward of the Court at that age yet who wants to live independently do? Back then, I thought I was being reasonable. On a more fundamental level, the desire to belong and to be understood kept me on the street," she explains.

Choices and repercussions

As a 9th grade dropout self-exiled to the streets of Victoria, Thanh was soon forced to find some way to provide for herself.

"I'd tried selling drugs, panhandling, boosting [shop lifting], and then graduated to prostitution, which, of the four had the lowest overhead and the highest return," she says.

Young, under-educated and short on survival options, Thanh

experienced many of the things that society at large often turns a blind eye towards. In so doing, she came to the uncomfortable realization that many people on the streets arrive there as a by-product of both personal choices and experiences they cannot influence or control.

"It's one point on a continuum where even if the location is the result of events and feelings, it will produce future negative points including, assault, rape, arrest, stigmatisation, etc... the original pursuit can't be lost in this; the search for love, a home and acceptance are often the driving factors," says Thanh.



▲ Yasuko Thanh, author of *Mistakes to run with*.

Because of that original pursuit a certain loyalty can be forged.

"This is one of the realities that makes rehabilitating the street-involved more complicated – when those in the helping professions pressure youth through legal or other channels to "change their evil ways" and "straighten up" they reinforce the "either/or" dialectic that requires throwing the baby, and the life-saving good of family (even a dysfunctional one) out with the bathwater of trauma," she comments.

A sincere voice from within

With a writing career both inspired and diverse in its fruits, Thanh brings a bevy of tools to the work bench for this endeavour, and though the subject is intimate and weighty the self-described introvert has an unflinchingly honest look towards the creation of this book.

"A memoir, as a more comprehensive look at the past, requires a more comprehensive approach. A different kind of honesty is necessary between me and myself as much as between me and the reader," says Thanh.

For more information, please visit: www.vpl.bibliocommons.com/events/5c6f1e74c8cde83e00a49f29

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The women who have displayed Shakti amongst us represent an inspiring account of positive social, cultural and economic change in the world. The Shakti Awards are an opportunity for us to recognize these women, quite often the unsung heroes, and share their vibrant stories.

If you would like to nominate a woman that embodies Shakti, please use the information below and email your nomination to shaktisociety2000@gmail.com no later than February 24th, 2019.

The Shakti Awards will be presented at the Shakti Awards Dinner Gala on Saturday, March 9th at Bollywood Banquet Hall at 6:30 p.m. We are expecting approximately 500 attendees. Tickets are \$50 each. For tickets, donations and sponsorship enquiries, call 604-307-8796.

Please note that nominations must be submitted via email. Submissions sent through other means, (social media, in-person or phone/text messages will not be considered).

Ensure that the description of the nominee's accomplishments reflect the category in which she is being nominated and provide clear examples of how the nominee has excelled in the specific field and why you feel she deserves the Shakti Award in that specific category.

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- Address, phone number(s) and email
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- Brief summary of reason for nomination - how the nominee's accomplishments relate to the stated category, the impact of their role, and why they should be chosen to receive a specific award.
- Identify how the nominee will contribute to Shakti: Empowerment of Women, Children and Families Society

Shamrocks & Shenanigans Improv, the Irish way

by RAMAN KANG

"Improv as an art form is very positive, joyful and celebratory, and that's kind of the mindset that we approach each of our special shows with," says Margret Nyfors, Director of Public Education and Co-Director of Rookie League at Vancouver Theatre Sports (VTS).

Together with former artistic director Denise Jones, Nyfors co-produced *Shamrocks & Shenanigans*, a show that is inspired by Irish culture and traditions. *Shamrocks & Shenanigans* will be playing on Saint Patrick's day (March 17) at VTS.

The show goes on

"The actors in the show are really experienced performers, fearless, and can absolutely deliver a great show," says Nyfors.

As with all the shows performed at VTS, *Shamrocks & Shenanigans* will be made up on the spot. The show is the brainchild of Jones, encouraged by a former employee from Dublin who convinced them Irish folklore and traditions aligned well with improv.

"He always said, 'Irish folklore and traditions are all about storytelling, having fun and being joyful,'" says Nyfors.

This is the third year VTS is putting on *Shamrocks & Shenanigans*. Nyfors states that they have so much fun doing it every year, they keep doing it. Even during intermission, the show will go on.

"The intermission is for people to mix and mingle, have a

some laughs, we'd love to see everybody there," says Nyfors.

Rolling with the punches

In improv, everyone shares their ideas; Nyfors believes that it's about listening, accepting offers and stacking your ideas on top of each others'. The biggest thing to overcome in improv, she explains, is that people think they can't do it for a number of reasons.

"They think they can't act, have stage fright and are afraid of thinking on their feet," says Nyfors. "It's about not beating yourself up for making a mistake. Mistakes are inevitable and we celebrate them."

According to Nyfors, mistakes are at the root of comedy and when you make a mistake and can roll with it, it can be very powerful.

"Most of life is a performance whether we like it or not. We're improvising all the time when we go out in public and talk to people because we don't have scripts for our conversations," says Nyfors.

The benefits of improv

Nyfors explains how important it is to have diversity in the classes they teach at VTS.

"Ultimately our goal is to have as much diversity within our program and school as possible," says Nyfors. "Improv is about stories and storytelling; the more diversity we have in terms of age and culture and everything, just leads to better stories."

People join improv for many reasons. Some want to get help with job interviews, to give better presentations or simply to add to their acting profile.



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▲ *Shamrocks and Shenanigans will celebrate Irish culture and traditions in the most hilarious way possible with green beer and lucky leprechauns.*

nice beverage and to engage in this special event," says Nyfors.

During the break, Celtic Colleen will go around improvising limericks on the spot for audience members, and Lucky Charm Leprechauns will hand out golden coins to those who can answer their trivia questions. The show will also be competitive and at the end of the night, the audience will get to decide which team won.

"It's really meant to be a fun celebration of this particular holiday. It's great for anyone who wants to come out and have some green beer and have

Nyfors, who has been a main stage performer for over 20 years, also teaches classes. For her, she began doing improv when she was doing her teaching practicum and couldn't stop crying in front of her students. The principal encouraged her to try something with a performance aspect because those kids were, in his words, 'going to eat her alive.'

"We teach improv classes to people that maybe want to add a little bit of play, creativity and improv to their lives," she says. ✍

For more information,
www.vtsl.com/show/st-paddy/

Dialogue through dance

by FERNANDA FRIEDRICH

Vancouver International Dance Festival will take on the city with its 2019 edition. From March 4 to March 30, dozens of celebrated artists perform in several places in Vancouver, showcasing powerful presentations from a diverse group of talented artists.

Jeanette Kotowich, a Vancouver based performer, is one of the talents that will enlighten

"I also listen to my ancestry. It guides my creations," she adds.

Bringing her own work to the spotlight

After participating in previous editions of the Vancouver International Dance Festival as part of group performances, she is excited to perform her own material for the first time.

"I am proud to work only in the arts – that is my full-time job. I collaborate with companies, and I am also able to create and pro-



▲ Jeanette Kotowich in *Eloise*.

duce my own performances," explains Kotowich. "However, this edition of the VIDF will be the first time I'm going to be presenting one of my own creations, *Eloise*."

A taste of local talent

"I started dancing when I was eight-years-old. As a child and a teenager, I went through different styles, from ballet to modern to contemporary dance. I knew this was my calling," says Kotowich.

Kotowich moved to Vancouver when she was 17. She intended to further her knowledge of dancing and turn the activity into a solid independent career. After attending the Simon Fraser University Dance program, she got her bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

"I'm passionate about dancing. I don't see performing as work; I see my life and my practice altogether. It is my vocation. It is the way I live," says Kotowich. "My journey with dance is, and continues to be, about healing. It's a way to pray and be connected to nature and the world around me."

Celebrating her native ancestries

Dancing is also the way Kotowich honors her Cree Métis heritage, originally from Treaty 4 territory Saskatchewan.

"An Indigenous worldview is embedded in how I approach performing and how I move my body. Through my dance, I am able to pay tribute to indigenous practices and ideologies. It is all intertwined in the way that I perform," explains Kotowich.

As a conceptual artist, she always works with a concept behind her creations.

"Everything that I envision relates back to a concept. It is where I start all my performances," says Kotowich.

In order to construct her presentations, all her movements are well conceived based on her dance practices.

duce my own performances," explains Kotowich. "However, this edition of the VIDF will be the first time I'm going to be presenting one of my own creations, *Eloise*."

When she came up with *Eloise*, she had an urge to work with characters in an unusual way.

"I wanted to explore. I love to create by referencing the contemporary, connecting with people. On *Eloise*, I felt the need to express the lands we carry inside ourselves," defends Kotowich. "As someone who has multiple homes – I have a Saskatchewan home and a West Coast home – I wanted to bring that to the stage."

The artist then searched for a different medium able to embody all the nuances she has imagined.

"*Eloise* is universal. Anyone can relate to it, for sure. It has dance, song, movement, stand up. There is something for everyone in this performance," she says.

The power of dancing

After years working, studying and living dance, Kotowich is certain the art is able to attract multiple audiences.

"My performances carry a lineage of the places I have traveled. When I go to a new territory, a land, a nation, the work is not only done on stage but connecting with the community. I always want to have a dialogue around the rhetoric so I can infuse the performance with whatever contemporary references I learn," says Kotowich. "Dancing is about connecting with people."

"I feel flattered to share this performance with the Vancouver International Dance Festival audience. I usually present my work in indigenous programs. Being able to share indigenous among other works is really special to me." ✍

For more information on the Vancouver International Dance Festival, go to www.vidf.ca.



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Coquitlam contra dance

by CURTIS SEUFERT

The Sybaritic String Band will bring the sound of contra dance – their blend of Celtic, English Country and French-Canadian music – to the Festival du Bois in Mackin Park, Coquitlam on Mar. 22 with a goal of creating a thoroughly danceable atmosphere for all.

“It’s an interesting mixture between the dancers, the musicians and the caller. A really great dance includes great music that fits with the dance... played at the right speed in the right way [to] energize the dancers,” says band member Leith Davis.

A history of music and dance

The current iteration of the Sybaritic String Band has been around for almost nine years, with the history of the band dating back even further. And the origins of music they play go back further still, even before the careers of longest-standing members Barry Cole, (mandolin, tenor banjo, guitar, harmonica) and Rich Sobel (fiddle, mandolin, djembe, podorythmie).

Bearing resemblance to square-dancing, contra dance music dates back to the 17th century, drawing from various forms of English, French-Canadian and American folk music. As Davis (string bass, fiddle, piano) notes, it’s a traditional style that’s featured some changes over time.

“They used Celtic, Scottish and Irish tunes because that was kind of in vogue [in the 18th and 19th centuries]. So you have these pretty simple-to-play tunes, and there’d be set dances for specific tunes,” says Davis. “They still maintain some of the traditions, but they’ve changed them a little bit.”

As time has passed, Davis says that contra dance took on a variety of regional influences further from its European roots, including Appalachian and French-Canadian stylings. Yet, as band member Claire McCague (woodwinds, triangle) notes, one thing has remained the same: the music is all about the dance, and vice versa.

“There’s certain music that’s written to draw attention to the performer, but with this type of music it’s about the dancers. The musicians serve the music, the

music serves the dancers,” says McCague.

Being in the moment

For the Sybarites, as they call themselves, much of the enjoyment and challenge of playing contra dance music is in adapting to the demands of the caller. In contra dance there are three main parties: the audience of dancers, the musician performers and the caller, who announces and leads various dances for the audience to perform.

For the band, there’s usually little indication before the concert as to which dances the caller is going to call, and so it’s up to the band to figure out which songs in their repertoire to perform to best match the dance that’s about to come up. For the Sybarites, this task generally falls to long-time member Barry Cole.

“What usually happens is I look at the dance card, go through our repertoire and [see] if there are some things that are really good for certain moves,” says Cole. “Sometimes the caller will give some instruction saying, ‘I’d really like old-timey with this’ or ‘this is an English country move, so maybe something a little more cultured.’ But [I] try to get balances happening at the right part of the dance.”

In finding a balance of tempo, mood and general vibe, the band says that beyond just performing the music, being a dancer is both enjoyable and essential to being able to feel and internalize the groove of contra dance.

“It’s so rhythmic, it’s so groove. You have to kind of be dancing yourself while you’re playing,” says Davis. “I’ve always been a dancer, that’s kind of what I’ve always done and playing has kind of been an extension of dancing for me.”

In the end, contra dance is meant as an enjoyable experience, whether one is responsible for calling, playing or dancing. As band member Sobel explains, it’s all about having a good time.

“For me, the only reason to play music, other than personal drive to play it, is to make people happy. If they’re not happy then I’m doing something wrong. So that’s what brings me joy is when I give joy or set the context for other people to have joy,” says Sobel. ☞

For more information, please visit the following sites:
www.festivaldubois.ca
www.thesybariticstringband.com

Ainu and Haida singers share stage and indigenous spirit

by XI CHEN

The Museum of Anthropology in conjunction with the Centre for Japanese Research at UBC will present an evening of unique music by indigenous singers from both Japan and British Columbia on March 14.

The event will showcase traditional music from Hokkaido Ainu singers Mayunkiki and Tomoe Yahata, along with Haida singer Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson and her musicians. Mayunkiki is a member of Marewrew, a female Ainu quartet, as well as an instructor of the Ainu language, while Tomoe works as a curator at an Ainu Museum. Williams-Davidson, born and raised in BC’s Haida Gwaii, is a musician, activist, artist and lawyer.

The performance also features an informative UBC workshop – Hokkaido 150: Settler Colonialism and Indigeneity in Modern Japan and beyond.

“We are excited to offer to the Vancouver community a meaningful opportunity to experience Ainu music in person, to learn from international experts on Ainu music, history, and culture, and to contemplate connections between Ainu and First Nations,” says Tristan R. Grunow, PhD, assistant professor at UBC’s Department of History. “We hope for fruitful collaborations and conversa-

tions amongst Ainu artists and scholars and the many experts of Indigenous Studies and Settler Colonialism in the Lower Mainland.”

A brief introduction of the Ainu people

According to Fuyubi Nakamura, PhD, Asian curator at the Museum of Anthropology and affiliated academic at UBC, the word Ainu means “human” in the Ainu language. The Ainu peoples are indigenous to the Hokkaidō island of Japan, as well as the Sakhalin and Kuril Islands of Russia. In Japan, most of the 25,000 Ainu people have mixed heritage, are assimilated into Japanese society, and are often unaware of their ancestry.

“[The Ainu] have language and culture distinct from the rest of Japan. They have rich oral traditions, and songs and dances are important parts of their culture. They also produce wood carvings, weaving and embroidery,” says Nakamura.

The Ainu people traditionally follow animist beliefs in which nature has kamuy (spirits). They practice bear worship and their beliefs are reflected in the music where the vocals sometimes mimic animal sounds.

The Ainu were the original residents of Ainu Moshir, known today as Hokkaido. After the Meiji government colonized Hokkaido in 1869, they enacted a number of policies attempt-

ing to eliminate visible markers of Ainu identity and culture, including traditional customs and rituals.

As Grunow explains, “Ainu were encouraged to leave their villages to live in the cities, to leave behind traditional ways of life in exchange for work on farms and in factories; young children were taught standard Japanese in school. It is a story that should sound very familiar to those of us in North American settler societies.”

A similar indigenous history and spirit

The story indeed finds an almost exact parallel in Haida singer Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson’s song “Grizzly Bear Town,” which she will be performing at the event: “Oh, but colonization was a hard time!/Decimation, segregation, suppression/Vestiges remain today.”

Williams-Davidson is the principal lawyer at White Raven Law Corporation with a focus on aboriginal-environmental law. She established Raven Calling Productions in 2006 to promote Haida culture, language and music. Singing mostly in tradi-



▲ Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson.

tional formats, she says she aims to maintain the integrity of the language, traditional music and culture, and legal traditions in all her work.

Williams-Davidson estimates that the Haida Nation comprises approximately 10,000 people, with fewer than twenty who are fluent in the language. There are also about 200 new learners at various stages towards fluency.

“I think the culture and traditions are well-preserved, but I also believe that we have a living culture, and that we must continue to grow our culture to reflect the needs of contemporary Haida peoples,” says Williams-Davidson. ☞

For more information, please visit www.moa.ubc.ca or www.ravencallingproductions.ca



▲ Hokkaido Ainu singer Mayunkiki Yahata.

► “Verbatim” from page 1

French and by being close to a large Asian community. My son goes to a francophone public school, an opportunity that did not exist in the United States.

However, Vancouver, like Seattle, faces similar social and economic challenges, such as lack of access to housing and increased poverty. As a social worker, I cannot ignore these issues. In particular, I cannot ignore the drug problem that is eating away at Vancouver. I can still recall my 5 year old son,

looking intrigued, with an empty syringe in his hand about to play in a public park. Despite the beauty of the city, destitution is clearly visible in Vancouver. In Seattle, I was shocked to see the speed with which the homeless camps were growing along the highway that led me to work. Vancouver also has its share of poverty and filthy streets.

More personally, moving to a new country also means learning to accept the inevitable moments of loneliness and daring to reinvent oneself, especially pro-

professionally. Finding a job abroad means rebuilding a professional network, evaluating opportunities that correspond to one’s skills, getting training or changing jobs. However, for the first time in 10 years, it seems to me that speaking French in a French-speaking country such as Canada could open up new professional opportunities that I could not covet in the United States.

Finally, after these last 12 months in Vancouver I have often been touched by the humble, welcoming and respectful attitude of

the people I have been fortunate enough to meet. I note that despite the difficulties and inequalities mentioned above, Vancouverites are generally interested in innovation and social progress. The protection of the environment is at the heart of social and political debates. Articles about well-being, ecology, integration and so on, abound in local newspapers and blogs.

It is therefore in this city full of paradoxes that I wish to see my children grow up – hoping they will be proud of their cultural and

ethnic diversity. I will encourage our family to embrace Canadian values of respect, friendship and tolerance. So, despite the fear of the unknown that I struggle with sometimes, and aware that there is no perfect city, when I wander along English Bay with my boots full of mud, venture into the damp and woolly paths of the UBC Endowment Lands, or rediscover the beauty of the Stanley Park shoreline for the thousandth time, I once again find myself whispering “I love you, Vancouver.” ☞

Cultural Calendar

March 5–19, 2019

by SIMON YEE

The end of the winter season is upon us! Soon there will be plenty of outdoor events, which I can and will recommend to you. But it is still winter and still pretty cold, so below are a bunch of indoor events for March for your consideration. I'll see you all in the spring, which starts on March 20!

14th Vancouver International Women in Film Festival

Mar. 5–10
Vancity Theatre, Vancouver
www.womeninfilm.ca

The Vancouver International Women in Film Festival is a showcase of films created by women and a celebration of women filmmakers from around the world. Films screened at the festival represent a diversity of films that cover a wide range of genres, lengths, characters, themes and topics. Running for six days in early March, VIWFF will be screening 49 films from 19 different countries around the world, including 18 local filmmakers. As well as film screenings, the festival offers a variety of ancillary programming including workshops, pitch sessions, panel discussions, artist talks, receptions, an awards ceremony and more. Please check out the festival's website for a list of shows.

REDPATCH

Mar. 7–31
Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre, Vancouver
www.artsclub.com

This March, the Arts Club will be presenting showings of *REDPATCH*, a historical drama that focuses on the contributions made by Aboriginal soldiers and their communities for Canada during the First World War. Between 1914 and 1918, over four thousand Indigenous men volunteered to fight and die for Canada in WW1. The play tells a part of this story through the eyes of a soldier from the Nuuchahnulth nation of Vancouver Island. From his childhood home to the battlefields of France, follow him as he endures the horrors of the Great War in a play that uses dance, myth and

mask to tell both a universal and a personal tale. For tickets and showtimes, check out the Arts Club website.

Advancing Women in STEAM

Mar. 8, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Anvil Centre, New Westminster
www.innovatenewwest.ca

International Women's Day is March 8 and the City of New Westminster will feature a keynote event at Anvil Centre celebrating women in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). This full day conversation will highlight ways to advance women in technical and scientific fields. The modern economy is increasingly being driven by innovation sectors like science, technology and engineering, and while their demographics are changing, women remain underrepresented in many of the key fields, which are the new engines for growth and innovation.

Cuba Vibra!

Mar. 8, 7:30 p.m.
Massey Theatre,
New Westminster
www.masseytheatre.com

On Mar. 8, Cuba will sing, dance and live at the Massey Theatre. Dance company Lizi Alfonso Dance Cuba's *Cuba Vibra!* highlights in an attractive, colourful and dynamic way, a tour of Cuba – its roots, its

dances and its music. Protagonists of the precise movement and the incalculable cadence: bulerías, seguidilla, chachachá, mambo, rumba, conga, bolero, feeling, all the rhythms that make the heart vibrate and fill the soul. For tickets and showtimes, please check out the Massey Theatre's website.

Dairakudakan: Pseudo human/Super human

Mar. 8–9, 8 p.m.
Vancouver Playhouse
www.vidf.ca

The Vancouver International Dance Festival (VIDF) will present the triumphant return of the highly provocative Japan-based butoh ensemble Dairakudakan, showcasing their latest theatrical extravaganza with the explosive Canadian premiere of *Pseudo human/Super human* on Mar. 8 and 9 at 8 p.m. at the Vancouver Playhouse. The beloved butoh troupe returns with a freshly exotic exposition on the fragility of the pursuit of happiness and prosperity through technology, choreographed by the company's award-winning director Akaji Maro. Check out the festival's website for more details.

Growing Room: A Feminist Literary Festival

Mar. 8–17
Various venues around Vancouver
www.festival.roommagazine.com

Growing Room: A Feminist Literary Festival is *Room Magazine's* annual literary festival, a celebration of diverse Canadian writers and artists, which takes place every March on the traditional, unceded and ancestral territory of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish peoples. The festival will feature over 100 authors in over 50 events, including workshops, manuscript consultations, panels, readings, an opening night dance party and a closing keynote by award-winning writer Canisia Lubrin. Check out the magazine's website for a complete list of events.

B.C. Tech Summit

Mar. 11–13
Vancouver Convention Centre
www.bctechsummit.ca

From AI and machine learning to virtual and augmented reality, technology is revolutionizing every part of our economy. Attend this year's BC Tech Summit to hear from business leaders who are successfully navigating the uncharted terrain of this new digital age and pushing the boundaries of innovation. How will we use emerging technologies – from AI to Robotics, Quantum to Clean-tech, Blockchain to AR/VR – to solve the biggest challenges facing B.C. and the world today? Check out the summit's website to register and to learn more.

Metamorphosis

Mar. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Surrey City Hall Centre Stage
www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/27590.aspx

This imaginative and poignant series of vignettes created and performed by Iceland's famed master puppeteer Bernd Ogrodnik is a poetic – and often hilarious – exploration of the nature of our existence. *Metamorphosis* brings a delightfully eclectic cast of characters to life, ranging from intricate, hand-carved marionettes and rod puppets to unusual characters created simply from silk scarves or Ogrodnik's own hands and feet. Mostly presented in mesmerizing silence, three stories are

set to an eclectic mix of musical accompaniment including Gabriel Faure's *In Paradise* and Louis Armstrong's *What a Wonderful World*, as well as instrumental melodies composed and performed live by Ogrodnik.

Gross Misconduct

Mar. 14–23
Gateway Theatre, Richmond
www.gatewaytheatre.com

Richmond's Gateway Theatre will present a riveting tale of revenge and redemption, *Gross Misconduct*, by Canadian writer and actress Meghan Gardiner, this March. Now in his early fifties, Deke has been in Millhaven Prison without a cellmate for the past twenty years. He is surprised and annoyed when Corey, a 20-something rich kid, joins him in his cell. As a complicated bond slowly forms between the two unlikely cellmates, tensions rise as they debate the nature of their crimes. The men must re-evaluate how they see each other after the true nature of their respective crimes is revealed. As Corey begs Deke for protection inside the prison, Deke is faced with a moral dilemma and is brought face-to-face with a decision he made 20 years ago. Visit Gateway Theatre's website for tickets and more information.

Celtic Fest at Surrey Museum

Mar. 16, 1–4 p.m.
Museum of Surrey
www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/28439.aspx

St. Patrick's Day is on Mar. 17 and there are many Saint Paddy's Day events going on throughout Metro Vancouver, some for the entire family. There will be a family-friendly event on Mar. 16 at the Museum of Surrey, where visitors will explore the rich Irish culture with Celtic-inspired games and take-home crafts such as Loch Ness monster puppets and salt dough shamrocks. Be entertained by Irish fiddlers and Scottish accordion music. Or even get your feet moving with Irish jigs courtesy of the Steele School of Irish Dance. Kids can get creative with Celtic crafts and try their Irish luck with a scavenger hunt in the galleries.



▲ Raes Calvert in REDPATCH.

► "English Language" from page 1
down over the next few centuries into the English language."

This trickling happened through the increasing connections between the Norman conquerors and the English conquered. Inter-marriage was common at this time, mainly because woman who inherited land due to their husbands and fathers being killed in the invasion were able to keep the land if married to a Norman. Additionally, Norman nobles often had English nurses for the children, meaning many second-generation Normans were bilingual.

Vocabulary

So which of our words are actually French? Among the 10,000 words which entered the English language, many of them were related to the areas in which Normans had the most control. Listed below are English words which are used today but are originally of French extraction

and bequeathed from the Normans after the 1066 invasion.

Crown and nobility: crown, castle, prince, duke, noble, sovereign.

Government: parliament, government, governor, city.

Courts and law: court, judge, justice, arrest, appeal, plaintiff, jury, prison.

War and combat: army, armour, battle, soldier, peace.

Fashion and high living: mansion, money, beauty, banquet, spice.

Interestingly, Old English words *cyning* (king), *cwene* (queen) and *cnicht* (knight) continued to be used. Many simple, low paid jobs such as "baker" and "shoemaker" retained their English names, but more skilled, well paid jobs adopted French names "mason," "tailor" and "merchant." Lots of animals kept their English names, "sheep," "cow," "ox," but then became French words when cooked, for instance "beef," (boeuf) "pork" (porc) and "venison" (venaison).

In some cases, French words completely replaced English ones; the English word "fire" was replaced by the French word "crime." Sometimes, both French and English words would be combined to create new words; the French "gentle" and English "man" created "gentleman." Many different English words which had a similar French meaning survived and are still in use now.

However, many new French synonyms accompanied these surviving words.

Motherhood (English) – *Maternity* (new French synonym)

Start (English) – *Commence* (new French synonym)

Fight (English) – *Battle* (new French synonym)

Work (English) – *Labour* (new French synonym).

Pronunciation and grammar

Not only were words affected by the Norman Conquest of

1066, particular pronunciations and spellings also changed. English spellings such as "cw" and "sc" changed to "qu" and "sh". Therefore, we now write "queen" and "ship" rather than "cwen" and "scip". Some French linguistic structures were also implemented into English grammar, such as, adjectives coming after nouns in certain expressions; for example, "attorney general" and "secretary general". Letters which were used in the Old English alphabet such as ð ("edh" or "eth"), and þ ("thorn"), did not exist in the Norman alphabet and slowly phased out, eventually becoming replaced with "th."

With regards to pronunciation, words which previously had a stress on the root of a word, often shifted towards the prefix (beginning) of the word. Vowels were also affected, with the long "a" vowel becoming more like an "o" sound after the conquest; "ham" be-

came "home" and "ban" became "bone" etc.

A modern view

Today, Dollinger recognises the Norman conquest as "the decisive event in the history of the English Language." The substantial amount of borrowed French words from this period leads Dollinger to view English as an "odd Germanic language." "The spelling is very strange, for example, 'night' used to be spelt and pronounced 'nit' in Old English. The 'gh' was added because of French influence and changes in lots of other spellings were accelerated by the language contact," he says.

The influence of the French language is clear. But English itself was never fully replaced. What survives today is a hot-potch of English and French together, both of those languages combining to produce something richer and more descriptive: the English language we know today. ☞