

In Uganda for
a good cause
Page 4



The Source

forum of diversity

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Photo courtesy of canada.ca

Verbatim

Two hemispheres of COVID-19: Vietnam and Canada

by VINH NGUYEN

We are living in an unprecedented time when global public health is at risk. The COVID-19 pandemic has made its way around the globe and impacted nearly all aspects of our lives. I've witnessed how my friends and family's lives have been affected by the pandemic in so many ways.

Since the outbreak can spread fast and show symptoms very late, it is difficult to know who has been afflicted with the disease. Vietnam, where I am from, took the proactive stance and ordered a quarantine, stopping most person-to-person contact. The order enforced social distancing and the use of medical face masks. Thanks to early action and being proactive in protecting the public's health, Vietnam (population 95 million) has only 325 cases, with 267 recovered cases.

My family in Vietnam has been adhering to social distancing orders, which resulted in some interesting lifestyle changes. My sister has been learning online since February when COVID-19 peaked. Her learning journey has not changed drastically, but she misses her classmates and social events at school.

Everyone is presumed to have purchased medical masks and hand sanitizer. However, having enough supplies for a dense population in Hanoi isn't always feasible. There is news as well as personal accounts that not everyone can get their hands on supplies when they need them since they sell out very quickly. On top of that, some medical supplier stores started charging more than the market price for masks and hand sanitizer, which is incredibly unethical and exploitative. In times of health crisis and financial hardships, the thing

See "Verbatim" page 3 >

A short history of Canada's birthday celebrations

by DAN WALTON

"On Canada Day we're going to have to be physically distanced this year," says Matthew Hayday, history professor at the University of Guelph. But considering the vastness of Canada even before the current COVID pandemic, "in a way we're always experiencing a level of physical distancing from most other Canadians," he adds.

the gathering at Parliament Hill," Hayday says.

Still felt British at first

Although Canada Day plans must be compromised this

And while Canada Day is taken seriously nowadays, it took a long time for Canadians to develop an appetite to celebrate their national pride. Confederation in 1867 made Canada into an autonomous part of

July 1 was not even called Canada Day until 1982 – before that it was called Dominion Day.

By the 50-year anniversary in 1917 the federal government finally planned national celebra-

“ They tried to create the sense that what was happening in Guelph and Vancouver had something in common.

Matthew Hayday, professor of History at the University of Guelph

"[But] frankly, Canada Day involves going outside and being with other people, whether it's a barbecue at someone's house or

year because of COVID, it will not be the first time the national celebrations have faced obstacles.

the British Empire but, as Hayday points out, "Canadians thought of themselves as being British then and for decades thereafter."

tions – which had to be postponed because the nation was at war.

See "Canada Day" page 8 >

Also in this issue



Documentary looks at the personal lives of supermarket workers in Brazil
Page 6

Nigerian-born singer shares music and soul
Page 9



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Cultural Spotlight



Photo courtesy of Nikkei Centre

The fateful meeting of star-crossed lovers

by TINA QU

The Tanabata + Flea Market event at the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre celebrates the popular Japanese star festival, Tanabata. The celebration will be held on Sat., July 4, from 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

“Tanabata is the tale of two star-crossed lovers, Orihime, the star Vega, and Hikoboshi, the star Altair,” says Yukiko Nishikawa, special event coordinator at the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre.

Orihime was a seamstress who wove beautiful clothes by

began to neglect their work,” says Nishikawa. “Their carelessness resulted in both Orihime and Hikoboshi being separated by the Heavenly King who only allowed them to meet once a year over the Milky Way, on the seventh day of the seventh month, also known as Tanabata.”

But on the first day they were to be reunited, Orihime and Hikoboshi found the river to be too difficult to cross. A flock of magpies came and made a bridge for them, but it is said that if it rains on Tanabata, the magpies will not come, and the two lovers must wait another year to meet.

Traditionally, the strips of paper are pinned or hung on bamboo decorations, which is thought to have become a part of the celebrations for the bamboo’s propensity to grow straight and tall, with upward stretching branches bearing wishes to heaven on the wind. “In Japan, Tanabata is celebrated in various ways from region to region; however, you will almost certainly find the colourfully decorative displays of bamboo with paper streamers,” says Nishikawa. “There are also decorations, food vendors, parades, and yukata-clad festival-goers, and it is a full-filled event for people of all ages.”

“We wanted to bring this Tanabata tradition and spirit to Canada and introduce it to the different communities here,” explains Nishikawa. “It is about celebrating a reunion, sharing love, and simply having fun. We very much want to see people’s smiles during this difficult time while they enjoy this cultural event.”

“At the centre, we are going to set up a booth where anyone can stop by to write a wish on a colourful piece of paper called Tanzaku.

“The wishes will be shared with the beautiful Tanabata constellations,” says Nishikawa.

Outside of the garden, there will also be a flea market to add extra vibrancy to the event.

“People can join as a vendor and browse and see what’s on offer as the Nikkei flea market has something for everyone. Items include Japanese kitchen goods and kimonos. It will be a wonderful summer weekend to enjoy,” she adds.

For more information, please visit www.centre.nikkeiplace.org/events/tanabata-flea-market-2020



Photo courtesy of Nikkei Centre

▲ Tanabata is one of Japan’s five traditional seasonal festivals.

the heavenly river, represented by the Milky Way, and Hikoboshi was a cow herder who lived on the other side.

“The two stars fell in love with one another - so much that they

“This is why we always hope for clear skies on Tanabata,” says Nishikawa.

A chance to spread joy

Tanabata is a tradition that blends Chinese legends that were imported to Japan and original Japanese myths. It originated from the Chinese Qixi Festival and was first observed in Japan by the ancient imperial court. Today, Tanabata is one of Japan’s five traditional seasonal festivals.

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16

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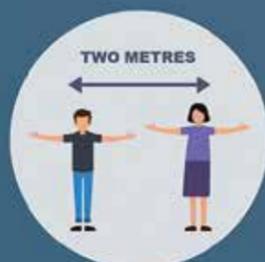
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For general information from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), call 1-888-COVID-19, text 604-630-0300 or visit www.bccdc.ca

BACI strives to sustain beacons of inclusion beyond the pandemic

by DANIELA COHEN

Created in 1956, the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI) offers a range of community services to support the inclusion and belonging of people with disabilities.

Co-executive director Richard Faucher, a long-time advocate for human rights and social justice, has been with the non-profit for 30 years. “People with disabilities are still perceived as a vulnerable population that needs a lot,” he says. “So how do we help elevate people in our community so that they’re fully included? Not just like they’re in the community – we want them to be part of the community.”

Creating a society that includes all people

BACI is guided by a theory of change with three crucial, interconnected components: service delivery, advocacy and commu-

nity development. For people with complex needs, not having a support person to facilitate communication with hospital staff or help with personal care can result in serious consequences. BACI’s advocacy efforts, in partnership with families and people with disabilities, led to the development of a policy in Victoria to ensure people with disabilities can have essential visitors.

Also, physical distancing is not possible for many people with disabilities who require on-site assistance. “It’s the same with wearing a mask,” Faucher adds. “For example, for some folks with autism, it’s not something comfortable. And now if you can’t go to get your hair cut because you can’t wear a mask – it just compounds all the time.”

Despite the challenges, Faucher appreciates the collaboration demonstrated among community partners and funders, and hopes this will continue.



▲ Safety and inclusion on equal footing at BACI.

nity development. Services include programming for infants, all the way to seniors. All initiatives are designed to reflect the reality of the Canadian population, where 10 to 15 per cent of people live with, or experience, a disability.

One service BACI offers is “life sharing”: creating homes where people live together. “People love the idea of sharing their lives with someone, and it allows people to live in the community together. It’s quite magical to see how these networks can begin to grow together and then relationships are formed,” Faucher shares.

BACI consistently leverages its resources to be “a conduit of inclusion,” Faucher explains. This could involve creating a community garden in one of its homes, setting up electric vehicle stations in a building the organization owns to spark further conversation with users about the association, or encouraging people who rent space from BACI to include people with disabilities in their activities.

Addressing COVID-19 challenges

One of the biggest challenges during COVID-19 is ensuring that isolation, already a challenge for people with disabilities, is not compounded. Consequently, in partnership with posAbilities, Kinsight and InWithForward, BACI created www.comakedo.ca, an online platform where people can engage in activities and experiences together.

Another significant impact of COVID-19 is restrictions on hos-

pital visitors. For people with complex needs, not having a support person to facilitate communication with hospital staff or help with personal care can result in serious consequences. BACI’s advocacy efforts, in partnership with families and people with disabilities, led to the development of a policy in Victoria to ensure people with disabilities can have essential visitors.

Committed to learning during the pandemic, BACI has been collecting community stories to inform future organizational decisions. For instance, the revelation that many community members don’t have credit cards, resulting in significant challenges with purchasing goods in a time where cash is sometimes not accepted, has prompted reflection on how to address this. Faucher notes that BACI’s strategies need to change to remain relevant as community needs shift, and emphasizes the necessity of ensuring “the beacon of inclusion in the community that surfaced during the pandemic” is not lost.

Future directions

The pandemic necessitated reverting to a focus on health and safety; however, BACI aims to return to a model that helps people to thrive. This includes investment in social research and development to create new solutions to address stigma and social connections, and facilitate people becoming more self-determined.

“If we continue to perpetuate people with disabilities as in need of help, they’ll never have the opportunity to become equal citizens,” Faucher stresses. “What we need is relationships and connections. So, if you’re the average citizen and you want to make a difference, when you meet someone with a disability, don’t walk away, just invite the person to walk with you.”

For more information, visit <https://gobaci.com>

Women of Vancouver

Nicole Guzzo and her initiative across the globe

by ANINDITA GUPTA

“When you educate a woman, you educate a whole generation of people,” is the message that motivated Nicole Guzzo as she volunteered and created an NGO across the globe. A fashion designer from Vancouver, Guzzo began Prakasa Co. (pronounced prakasha), a non-registered charitable organization in 2017, that plays different roles in the three different countries it is established in today: India, Uganda and Nepal.

Guzzo currently lives in Rishikesh, India. When living in Vancouver, Guzzo worked and volunteered with various organizations. It was after conducting a sewing workshop for Atira Women’s Resource Society that she realized she wanted to continue helping empower women.

“All of my experience working there inspired me to continue working with women in the creative field,” says Guzzo.

As a result of her volunteering, Prakasa Co. began in Vancouver as a place for people who wanted to volunteer but did not know how. After establishing Prakasa Co. with a small community of people in Vancouver, Nicole traveled to India and later Uganda to teach sewing at a school for women. She assisted them with making Western designs for the women to possibly create businesses of their own. Her experi-

Guzzo was taken aback by how hardworking and passionate these women were, and decided to increase Prakasa Co.’s limits.

The Ugandan branch of Prakasa employs 16 women who stitch and sell scrunchies. They have sold more than 3000 scrunchies all over the world. The Nepalese branch, on the other hand, employs four women who have stitched and sold over 100 kimonos.

All the money made selling the scrunchies goes back entirely to these women. By purchasing a single hair scrunchie, worth CA\$ 8, customers can help feed a woman in Uganda for 30 days.

“The women of Entebbe, Uganda are incredibly resilient as they battle through AIDS/HIV, poverty and raising their children as single mothers. Our mission is to build these women to become self-sufficient without the need of an abusive husband, prostitution, or living with their kids on the streets,” explains Prakasa Co.’s website.

While the women work independently on the products – from selecting material, stitching the products, packaging and shipping them – Guzzo’s job in the organization was to create the brand and spread awareness of it over social media and in person. She began launching Prakasa Co.’s products in yoga studios and salons in Vancouver.

The first success occurred when the biggest local cheerlead-



▲ Nicole Guzzo helps women in Uganda to become self-sufficient.



▲ 200 scrunchies and more to come.

ences inspired her to find a way to create the organization it is today.

Prakasa Co. – how it works

During one of her travels, Guzzo came across a community center in Entebbe, Uganda looking for a sewing teacher.

“I knew I had to grab this opportunity to grow my reach and help the women reach their best potential, to be able to sell what they sewed,” exclaims Guzzo.

After working with the women in Entebbe for only two months,

ing team ordered 200 matching hair scrunchies, and the word spread! One of the main reasons Guzzo works with women is to help them battle gender inequalities, wage gaps and lack of jobs for women in Uganda and in Nepal.

“Women are the backbone of societies but they are always only perceived as caregivers; by supporting women to thrive in vocational training, it empowers them to have lives, careers and creative focuses that are just about them,” explains Guzzo.

The women working with Prakasa Co. help pull their families out of poverty and educate their children.

COVID has affected the women and the NGO itself, but thanks to people’s donations, the COVID fund that was set up for the women in Uganda has raised \$5000 in a week. The money goes to the 70 family members of the 16 women they employ. Any extra funds are set aside for the education of the women’s children. ✍

To help the women and/or to know more about Prakasa Co., please visit: www.prakasaco.com.

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CITY OF VANCOUVER

New e-journal reimagines the post-COVID-19 future

by XI CHEN

Interdisciplinary e-journal *Ideas and Futures* launched in May 2020 with the aim of provoking serious reflection on an uncertain post-COVID world.

Founding editors Sadia Abbas and Raza Ahmad Rumi explain that the journal, which evolved out of a COVID-19 working group of scholars, activists, policy analysts, and artists, will serve as a platform for international contributors in a wide range of genres including art, essays, commentaries, and scholarly reflections.

Abbas, an affiliate scholar with SFU and an associate pro-

fessor of postcolonial studies at Rutgers University, is also an established author. Her latest book, *The Empty Room*, has been shortlisted for the DSC prize for South Asian Literature. “We want more serious thinking and scholarly engagement with the society that is going through turbulence and transformation now,” she says. “In newspapers, there is an urgency to do things very quickly, but a lot of issues that affected us and are still affecting us are interceptions of long-standing social issues.”

A platform for different expressions

Co-founding editor Rumi, a veteran journalist and policy analyst who also serves as the

director of the Park Center for Independent Media at Ithaca College, explains that the new journal will provide room for a wide range of genres and artistic

document her own complicated relationships and feelings about her family, as well as her birth country, its government, and society.

which have led to these situations.”

Rumi believes that some movements, such as removing historical statues, will go a long

“The (COVID-19) crisis presented an opportunity to reimagine our future, not just for one country or society but for the whole world.

Raza Ahmad Rumi, founding editor of *Ideas and Futures*

expressions very few journals cover, in addition to a diversity of international voices.

“The (COVID-19) crisis presented an opportunity to reimagine our future, not just for one country or society but for the whole world,” he says. “There are movements such as the mobilization for social justice and fixing the long-standing structure of systematic racism; what we can do in this complex moment is to curate some of the voices, arguments, and expressions.”

Insights born from crisis

The idea of the journal came about when COVID-19 suddenly hit, stranding Abbas during a visit in Pakistan. She penned the journal’s first essay, *Immigrant Reflections on Flying Home to New York from Karachi*, to

The journal elicited a positive response from thinkers, artists, and scholars who are used to straddling continents and cultures but are now facing an increasingly uncertain future. “The crisis has revealed just how quickly things could change what we take for granted in daily life. What is inconceivable is how quickly things can all come to a halt, and what sounds like a futuristic scenario, such as climate change, is certainly conceivable to impact our lives immediately,” comments Abbas.

While he remains optimistic, Rumi sees that immense challenges were laid bare by the COVID crisis. “There are centuries of structural inequality globally and intra-country, it is a long struggle ahead. What COVID has done is to allow us to think of a world without those structures

way in reshaping our memory and will play an important role in redefining cultures and countries. “The existing liberal orders that have been dominating the world cannot be sustained. Whether a new order will come to reconfigure it or a movement to alter it remains to be seen, but now there is an opportunity.”

Abbas agrees that it is also important to take the current momentum to keep working for a better future. “There are some of us who are very committed to this moment, people who are responding to poverty, racism, and profound injustices, but we have short memories. How do you not let people forget?” she asks. “If we don’t give in, then it is going to happen.”

For more information, please visit: www.ideasandfutures.com.



▲ Raza Ahmad Rumi.



▲ Sadia Abbas.

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Dragon Hoops: A graphic novel about life, family and high school

by KYLIE LUNG

In need of comic relief? Just in time for the summer, Gene Luen Yang has recently released his first non-fiction graphic novel, *Dragon Hoops*. This past March, Yang, whose workshop at the Vancouver Public Library (VPL) was cancelled due to the pandemic, had a virtual book launch where he discussed *Dragon Hoops* and answered questions from fans. Interested readers can still access his interview on Yang’s Facebook page.

Yang was born in the San Francisco Bay Area to parents from Hong Kong and Taiwan. From an early age, he had a knack for

drawing and storytelling. Collecting comic books soon became one of his favorite hobbies as well as making comics with friends from school.

“When I was in third grade, we had to do these biography reports on famous people,” says Yan. “I did mine on Walt Disney. After that, I became obsessed with him. I desperately wanted to become a Disney animator. I remember going to our local library and checking out as many



▲ Gene Luen Yang.

books about Walt Disney as I could find. I remember spending hours trying to mimic that classic Disney style.”

Not just a hobby

Yang kept making comic books all through his youth, but it wasn’t until after university that he was

able to get national recognition. In 1996, he began self-publishing his comic books. Only one year later, he received the Xeric Grant for his comic *Gordon Yamamoto and the King of the Geeks*. The Xeric Grant is a prestigious self-publishing grant given to comic book writers. Over the years, Yang has become more and more prolific and in 2006 received the National Book Award for his book *American Born Chinese*. This was the first graphic novel to be nominated for this award as well as the first comic book to win the American Library Association’s Printz Award.

Writing comics is more than just a job for Yang but a deeply ingrained part of his identity. As well as writing full time, Yang also teaches MFA writing courses in hopes to inspire future generations of authors and animators.

“I love the combination of words and pictures,” says Yang. “But to tell you the truth, my love of comic books is pre-logical. I began to love comics before I thought about why I love comics. When I’m reading a well-crafted comic, I feel like I’m getting a glimpse into somebody’s soul. I guess that’s true for pretty much every artistic medium out there, but for me, it’s especially true of comics.”

A multi-faceted author

Yang’s first non-fiction book is inspired by his foray into the world

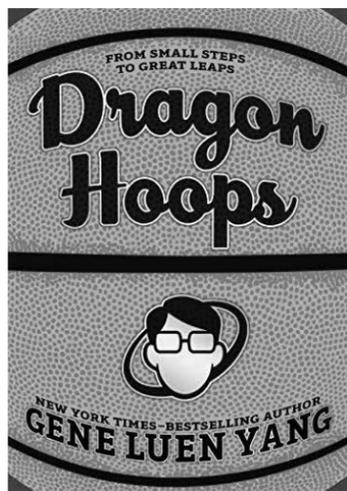
of high school basketball. This book came together after he followed a high school basketball team out of Oakland, California.

“The book is about a team of coaches and players chasing after the California State Championship,” says Yang. “It’s also about how I became a basketball fan. When I began that book, I knew nothing about basketball. After seeing the courage of those coaches and players over the course of the season, I became a fan not only of them but also of the sport.”

Along with *Dragon Hoops*, readers can also check out *Superman Smashes the Klan*. This comic book from 2019 is an adaptation of a 1946 Superman radio show where Superman defends a Chinese American family against white supremacists. These novels differ vastly, but Yang hopes both of his works can provide some reprieve from the uncertain world around us.

“I hope the readers of *Dragon Hoops* and *Superman Smashes the Klan* also feel better after finishing them,” says Yang. “Following that team of coaches and kids for a season filled my heart. So did learning about Superman’s place in American pop culture history. I hope I can get that across to my readers.”

To learn more about Yang and his works, please visit www.geneyang.com.



▲ Dream Hoops by Gene Luen Yang.

Supermarket clerks and the human imagination

by FELIPE CÂMARA

In our lives, we do some activities so automatically that we do not realize how art, or even existential questions might be present in them. Grocery shopping is one example. As customers, we tend to do it quickly, and not think about the relationships between the supermarket workers, and the richness of the universe.

That was not the case with Brazilian documentary filmmaker Tali Yankelevich. One day, she was staring at the store shelf, deciding what she would have for dinner, when she heard two young employees talking about their first loves. She had an insight, which she describes as a “cinematographic moment.” “The supermarket was almost empty, and they were having a deep and beautiful conversation in that lengthy hall, while performing repetitive tasks, filling the shelf with inanimate products, and then, suddenly, they came up with this discussion about their first loves,” she said. This idea resulted in the documentary *My Darling Supermarket*, her first feature film.

Contradiction between mechanical tasks and deep thoughts

When Yankelevich previously produced a short film called *The Perfect Fit*, shot in a pointe shoe



▲ Danilo, in *My Darling Supermarket*.

factory, she noticed how rich, deep and questioning the discussions were between the employees. So, she decided to make a documentary about the imaginations of people whose work includes repetitive tasks. She focused on what these workers think, and how their imaginations work as they perform mechanical tasks. The contrast between their physical work and their unlimited imaginations is what motivated Yankelevich.

As she attests, “The proposition is to talk about human imagination within a supermarket. I enjoyed putting myself in this contradictory challenge.”

The documentary features the supermarket’s clerks, and shows their daily routines, but the most important content focuses on their views about life, spirituality and the universe. The dialogue is all based on the clerks’ ideas. “It was made with previous research and talks

with the employees, but there was no script written; the characters shown are 100 percent real,” says Yankelevich. Security guards, bakers, butchers and cashiers share their feelings, thoughts and beliefs with the audience on many aspects of life. As a result of this dialogue, she believes there is a humanization of the workers, as they express themselves in the documentary.

Every scene takes place within the grocery store, to emphasize the focus on what the characters do, and think, while performing their jobs. Though the shots were filmed during business hours, Yankelevich says it did not impact the store’s activities. She said, “Clients were so focused on their shopping lists, and on the products, that they didn’t even realize there was a film crew there.”

Documentaries and supermarkets during the pandemic

Released in November 2019, *My Darling Supermarket* was shown at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) and at Doc Fortnight 2020, at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, receiving positive responses from

the audiences. It was also to be shown at the Guadalajara International Film Festival (FICG), which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the moment, the film is only available via online documentary festivals, such as the DOXA Documentary Film Festival, until June 26. As Yankelevich says, film producers and consumers need to adapt to the new situation imposed by COVID-19. “We lose the experience of watching movies in a theatre, but on the other hand, festivals such as DOXA, can reach a larger audience when it is available online.”

Even with the cancelled screenings, the new reality of the pandemic connects to the theme of the documentary. The pandemic has given society a different perspective on grocery store clerks. As Yankelevich says, “Clerks are facing changes not only in the way they work, but in the way they are seen, as well. Supermarket workers, who once passed unnoticed by many people, are now being valued and praised due to their continued work during this time.”

DOXA Documentary Film Festival
watch.eventive.org/doxa2020



▲ Rodrigo Kelly and a co-worker share a laugh among baked goods.

► “Verbatim” from page 1

that people need most is sympathy and support, not exploitation and manipulation. It is the peer support and cooperation that unites us as a modern society. Hardship brings nothing but destabilization and segregation for our society.

Fortunately, Vietnam’s government started an investigation into the matter. Fast forward to May, 2020, and supplies have been replenished and most people can purchase medical masks to prepare for their trips into the outside world.

Meanwhile, my life in Canada, away from the other half of the world, has been stable with a touch of fear of racism. Canada started to quarantine a bit later than Vietnam, around late March. But it is a good measure, nonetheless. The strangest predicament I’ve seen so far is seeing toilet paper sold out. The panic buying during the

pandemic onset came in a strong wave that cleaned out almost all toilet paper and cleaning supply stocks. The news reported that some people were amassing supplies to sell at inflated prices. Plus, harassment of people wearing masks (mostly people of Asian descent) became a problem. It’s incredibly strange why one would be harassed for taking measures to protect themselves. We should emphasize the benefits of wearing a mask here in Canada; this is something that is already prevalent in Vietnam.

The racist tide against the Asian community has been pushed higher than ever. I am anxious when reading news about increasing hate crimes against anyone. The virus doesn’t discriminate against races, which the outbreak in Italy has already proven. Any place with frequent travellers or high population density can be a hotspot for infection.

Furthermore, the illogical accusation of Asians being responsible for the COVID-19 outbreak is incredibly harmful to our society. It generalizes all Asian descendants, who bear complex heritage backgrounds. Many First Nations and Asian-Canadians were harassed and assaulted just because of their heritage, even though they have no ties to any infection hotspots. We have seen how racism can hurt our society and it certainly doesn’t advance the unification of all Canadians. It must be stopped and called out when witnessed.

Another hurdle during the pandemic is the loss of jobs and our economy. New graduates and current job seekers are struggling to find a job with income to support themselves in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. As a university graduate myself, I sense the panic to find a job that pays a living wage ap-

proaching. Opportunities still exist, but the competition has been pushed to extremes. One job I applied to gathered over one thousand applicants, and the position was only for one person. In times of turbulence, flexibility is needed to make ends meet. I suggest everyone look at essential services such as retail, healthcare, etc. and offer a helping hand if and when needed.

I am thankful that the situation is now deescalated thanks to everyone’s cooperation with social distancing measures. The government of British Columbia kick-started the second phase of reopening the economy in late May. Many businesses are open for service, provided that important social distancing rules are in place. Everything will not be restored to the pre-COVID-19 time, but I am glad that we are on the road to recovery. ✍

Francophonie in B.C.

Following a Supreme Court of Canada judgement rendered on June 12 2020, the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF) and the Fédération des parents francophones de la Colombie-Britannique (FPFCB) achieved a historic victory for minority language rights in Canada about education in the French language. The Source Newspaper will be covering the repercussions of the judicial decision in its Back to School edition, in early September. This victory is a defining moment that will surely shape the future of education in the French language in British Columbia and across Canada.

To be continued...

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

This program is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

© June 2020



Photo courtesy of EyeSteelFilm

How acupuncture reached the Black community

by JAKE MCGRAIL

The DOXA Documentary Film Festival offers over 40 films you can view from the comfort of your living room until June 26. One of them is *Dope is Death*, a story decades old yet strikingly prescient, directed by Montreal-based filmmaker Mia Donovan.

The film examines racial politics and activism in 1970s New York City through the lens of acupuncture and reveals the strong sense of community the practice held.

A winding road

The seed for this documentary was planted a decade ago, when Donovan was introduced to Montreal acupuncturist Mario Wexu. Wexu had an unlikely connection to New York activism: he had taught acupuncture to several members of the Black Panthers and Young Lords, including the very active Mutulu Shakur, back in the 1970s. Donovan was immediately interested by what she heard.

"I didn't really know anything about this," says Donovan, "I didn't even know who the Young Lords were. I had never heard about acupuncture, or its connection to the Black Panthers...it was all very new to me."

Dope is Death examines why and how acupuncture was put in place in the community-run Lincoln Detox, a clinic run out of Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx. Lincoln Detox focused on drug rehabilitation, specifically for heroin, which was ravaging the area's Black community. Rather than using other drugs like methadone to curtail heroin use, the clinic's goal was to use more holistic, non-chemical methods, like acupuncture.

"I was attracted to this story in the beginning because I have a stepbrother who has addiction issues," says Donovan. "He has been in and out of rehab centers since he was 11, and so I've always been interested in drug treatments and how they work."

It was difficult for Donovan to learn about Lincoln Detox initially because there was little information on it online. So the development of the film was a slow journey which included correspondence and multiple visits with Shakur, who had been in prison since the late 80s. Rather than a more broad overview, Donovan focused her research on the specific area around the clinic to build a detailed profile of that neighborhood.

"I always try to document first-person perspectives," she says. "When I meet someone, they tell me about a certain perspective of the history, and they lead me to another person, and so on. I try to really build up

the atmosphere, the ideological landscape that the story was built upon."

The struggle continues

A lot of the film is made up of archival footage, but there are many moments that resonate with the current Black Lives Matter movement sweeping across North America. That is not something Donovan set out to do, but when she spoke with those involved with the Lincoln Detox, she realized that their struggles against racism and authorities like the police were the same as the struggles that exist today.

"The history has always been there," she says. "When I started doing the documentary and interviewing people, I think I had some naivety, asking how things had changed for the people involved. They told me for the most part, these issues have not improved."

While that was a truly sobering realization, Donovan has taken heart in seeing the positive impact acupuncture has made in New York, continuing the legacy of those who fought for an individual-first, more compassionate way of treatment. Filming at a small drop-in clinic in present-day Harlem, Donovan was impressed by the effect the practice had.



▲ Mia Donovan, filmmaker.

"When I first started visiting the acupuncture clinic I was skeptical of it, but I would watch people come in super restless, and within a few minutes of receiving acupuncture they were so relaxed in almost a full transformation. It was beautiful seeing the community healing each other in this safe space...it brings people together, it relieves anxiety, there is something really great about it."

To watch the film, go to www.doxafestival.ca. There will also be a four-part podcast series to accompany the film released at the end of the month, also entitled *Dope is Death*.

Photo courtesy of EyeSteelFilm

C-19 MONEY NAVIGATOR

By Family Services of Greater Vancouver

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FAMILY SERVICES of Greater Vancouver

► “Canada Day” from page 1

“It was unthinkable to most English-speaking Canadians that you would not go to war with Britain as you were part of their broader empire,” explains Hayday.

A decade later, in 1927, Canada’s Diamond Jubilee was the occasion when the first major celebrations occurred. But that celebration in 1927 would be it for another three decades.

It would not be until the 1950s “when the role for the federal government really gets going, when they really start trying to foster a national identity,” adds Hayday.

Since then the government’s goal has been to create a sense of closeness between communities that span more than 5,000 kilometres from St. John’s, Newfoundland to Victoria, B.C. Over the past century, the government also harnessed the latest technologies – taking advantage of the CBC’s radio network, and later television, to reach nearly every Canadian between the Atlantic and Pacific.

Between 1958 and 1968, particularly for the Centennial in 1967, Canada Day celebrations were held on Parliament Hill. They typically included “a flag ceremony in the afternoon on the lawns of Parliament Hill and a sunset ceremony in the evenings, followed by a concert of military music and fireworks,” according to Library and Archives Canada spokesperson Amélie Desmarais.

Month-long celebrations would take place during the years from 1968 to 1979 (except in 1976 because of budget cuts). “The month was kicked off with a large multicultural celebration presented on Parliament Hill and broadcast on television across the country,” says Desmarais.

Celebrations began shifting away from large national broadcasts in the 1980s and began focusing more on local celebrations, as the federal government began allocating more money for community events.

“They tried to create the sense that what was happening in Guelph and Vancouver had

was largely ignored for most Canada Day celebrations, it has gradually become a larger part of the discussion over the past 50 years. By the sesquicentennial anniversary in 2017, First Nations communities were much more heavily involved in the event, but not always as happy participants. Many Indigenous Canadians participated that year to protest the government’s history of colonialism and ongoing mistreatment of First Nations.

Canada Day 2020

Even though physical gatherings have had to be cancelled due to COVID, there will be many innovative ways for Canadians to make the most of



▲ This year, the Canada Day celebrations will be on-line rather than on the lawn.

this year’s circumstances. Online concerts will be streaming through Canadian Heritage’s Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter pages, as well as on CBC and Radio-Canada. The show will include musicians Paul Brandt (headlining an hour-long mid-day show), and a collaborative evening show including headliners Alanis Morissette, Avril Lavigne, Sarah McLachlan, Loud and The Sheepdogs.

Closer to home, the city of Surrey will host a virtual Canada Day celebration. ✉

For more information, please visit: www.canada.ca/fr/patrimoine-canadien/campagnes/fete-canada.html
www.surrey.ca/canadaday

Photo courtesy of canada.ca



something in common,” says Hayday. “There would be common elements; for example, no matter where you were in the country you would sing *O Canada* at noon.”

Canada Day begins to involve social justice

Cultural issues would begin coming to the forefront in the 1960s. A separatist movement was gaining steam in Quebec. After the 1976 election of the Parti Québécois under the charismatic René Lévesque, “It started a huge discussion – ‘will Canada survive the separatist scare?’” Hayday says. “So, the federal government was ready to use every tool in the tool kit that they could to do something big (for francophones) on Canada Day.”

Also, during the 1960s, new Canadians and visible minorities were being recognized as a bigger part of the national identity.

Although Indigenous culture



July 16 – 26 2020

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Surrey Virtual Canada Day

Sade Awele brings her soulful sound

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Sade Awele, Nigerian-born Vancouver-based singer-songwriter, shares her blend of neo-soul, afro-soul, alternative and contemporary R&B, all while drawing on her personal and cultural experiences and heritage.

“My dad is from the Yoruba culture, and [with] Yorubas they always say that music is in our

“I kind of moved on from the last band into a solo project in 2017, and then started this journey of my solo project,” says Awele. “In all the other cities, it’s always been working with other bands, but then here it’s me independently pushing this thing in Vancouver.”

Awele says her sound depends on the song itself, though generally favouring a direction of afro-soul, R&B or pop, coloured with influences of jazz and gos-

the runs and the cadences and words? So, it’s kind of built from there,” says Awele.

The role of an artist

With the coronavirus postponing most large public gatherings, the City of Surrey’s free Virtual Canada Day online concert presents itself as both a challenge and a boon for Awele. While she is no longer set to perform at most of the summer festival slots for which she had

“This performance was about showing who I am. That I’m a musician who loves to perform, who wants to bring a smile to people’s faces – especially people of colour – during this time.

Sade Awele, singer-songwriter

blood. So, I found that as I write songs, there are certain cadences to the sounds I would put in because I just love it, because it’s from the Yoruba culture. And then I combine that with my love for hip hop, my love for R&B, my love for pop music,” she says.

Awele will be performing for the Surrey Virtual Canada Day celebrations on July 1, 2020.

Finding her sound

Awele comes from a very musically engaged culture and family. Growing up in Nigeria, she recalls her choir member parents playing jazz and gospel records and singing and praying together as a family every morning. Since moving to Canada, she has sung and collaborated with bands throughout the country, but it was her eventual settling into Vancouver that would coincide with settling into her own sound.

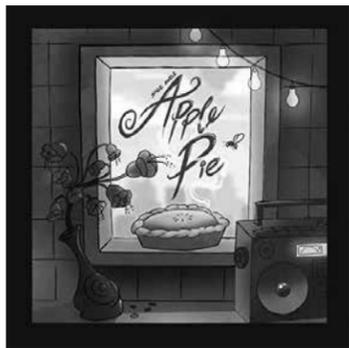
pel. The one constant that is central to her music, however, is her voice, which she uses both as means of personal storytelling, as well as its own featured instrument.

“The process is definitely feeling what I can hear in the sound. And then from there I’m like, how do I make this sound amazing? How do I bring out the very best feature with all the harmonies I can think of, and all

been scheduled, the July 1 concert presents itself as an opportunity to share her music, and hopefully bring people a moment of joy.

And while the performance itself was pre-recorded, Awele feels that music’s positive effect is doubly valuable given the renewed permeation of anger and political tension in the wake of George Floyd’s killing by police in the United States.

“This performance was about showing who I am. That I’m a musician who loves to perform, who wants to bring a smile to people’s faces – especially people of colour – during this time. And I feel like there is a space for that, because there’s just so few of us who are performing. So, it’s an opportunity for other Black people hopefully to see that there’s space for us, that there’s room for us in these places even though it can be challenging,” says Awele.



▲ The album *Apple Pie*.



▲ Sade Awele.

Photo by Carol Gomara

The question of Awele’s role as an artist has been renewed for her amidst all this. She feels it is important that her music is truly personal, if not explicitly political. These elements manifest in sentimental songs about love like *Apple Pie*, or in celebrating her heritage and her physical features, such as her ‘kinky curls’ that others have either idolized or derided, on *Nigerian Born*. Either way, it’s all about speaking truthfully and fully to her personal experience as a Black woman and singer-songwriter in Canada.

“I don’t feel a pressure to be political. I feel a pressure to be an advocate for the things that I believe in and the things that I stand for. And it’s not a negative pressure. It’s more of the things that I want to put in my music based on what I believe is beautiful,” says Awele. “And I definitely believe that Black women and men deserve a spot in the limelight.”

For more information, please visit www.surrey.ca/canadaday/sade-awele

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Cultural Calendar

June 23–July 7, 2020

by SIMON YEE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

The summer is here! Like summers past, the days are longer, warmer and sunnier, but unlike past summers, we still have the spectre of the global pandemic hanging over us. While social distancing has relaxed in British Columbia, large gatherings, events and festivals will still be mostly online. So, go out and enjoy the sun, but on days when you want to just stay in, why not check out some of the online events below?

God in Reverse: When Wisdom Defies Capture

June 3–Sept. 9
www.richmondartgallery.org/godinreverse

Richmond Art Gallery is presenting the filmic contributions of invited artists in an online platform for public viewing. The gallery invites the public to take advantage of this opportunity and access these works of fifteen contemporary artists from around the world, most of which are available online for the first time. These works will appear for a limited time on their web platform GODINREVERSE.COM.

e-Volver Festival

June 18–27
www.upintheairtheatre.com

Up in the Air Theatre brings audiences the e-Volver Festival, featuring live streamed virtual performances for emerging and early mid-career artists. Created in response to the isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, this festival presents a series of nine performances by local and national solo performers and interdisciplinary companies. The series will expressly reflect on the time we are living in now. Exploring technology and non-traditional platforms for performing arts, the new creations can be viewed online with Discord, Zoom, YouTube live, Vimeo and Instagram Live, as well as streamed person to person intimate performances. For a complete list of shows and performances, please check out the Up In the Air Theatre website.

Frida Kahlo Online

June 25, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/frida-kahlo-online-self-portraits-and-symbolism-tickets-104634247852

The Mexican artist Frida Kahlo is celebrated around the world for her emblematic work of Mexi-



Photo courtesy of dumb instrument Dance

▲ *dumb instrument Dance* is one of the groups that will be performing at this year's *Dancing on the Edge*.

can national and indigenous traditions. The London Drawing Group will be hosting a session online exploring one of Kahlo's favourite mediums: the self-portrait. No other artist has taken such advantage of the medium of self-expression offered by the self-portrait; her paintings ooze personal suffering, triumph, love and tragedy through a simplicity and frankness often interwoven by complex symbolism. This class will provide a brief overview of her incredible life, the techniques and styles she pioneered, followed by a series of specially designed exercises that will help attendees explore Kahlo's personal way of working, help learn to express oneself through painting and create a great self portrait!

Royal Astronomical Society Bicentenary

June 26, 10–11 a.m.
www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ras-bicentenary-free-public-lecture-michelle-collins-at-6pm-tickets-109319046210

The Royal Astronomical Society in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland celebrates its 200th anniversary this year. To help celebrate the occasion, they will be putting online their public lecture from astronomer Michelle Collins who will be discussing galactic archaeology. How did our Galaxy form? Is there only one way to form a spiral galaxy like ours, or can they form in different ways? And what role does the mysterious dark matter play in galaxy formation? By treating each star as a fossil

of galactic evolution, scientists can piece together a roadmap for how the beautiful spiral galaxies of the Universe are produced.

Documenting an Ever Changing Chinatown with Jonathan Desmond

June 26, 2–3 p.m.
www.vancouverchinesegarden.com

Currently a member of the Wongs' Benevolent Association, photographer Jonathan Desmond has been documenting Vancouver's Chinatown through photography since 2013. This intersects, methodologically, with his professional work in documentary wedding and lifestyle photography. Desmond strives to create photographs that allow stories to unfold on their own. He will be presenting his work and discussing his experiences online courtesy of the Dr. Sun-Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden on June 26.

Forbidden Vancouver Walking Tours

Reopens July 1
www.forbiddenvancouver.ca

Forbidden Vancouver Walking Tours reopen on July 1. Peek beneath Vancouver's sparkling surface to uncover a hidden history of dark crime, outrageous intrigue and filthy scandal. Roam the city with expert guides in these one-of-a-kind walking tours, and hear the scintillating stories of Vancouver's secret past.

Dancing on the Edge

July 2–11
www.dancingontheedge.org

The 32nd Annual Dancing on the Edge Festival moves forward in a different form – virtually! For the 2020 festival, they will be presenting specially curated digital

programming with live-streamed performances, premieres of dance films, dance discussions, four outdoor live performances in the Firehall's Courtyard (for very limited audiences with safety precautions in place) and one dynamic theatre performance at the Firehall Arts Centre Theatre. *Dancing on the Edge* has run uninterrupted for 31 years and they did not want to stop that momentum so they are hoping everyone will enjoy this (hopefully) one time only re-imagined version of the festival.

The Louvre (Online)

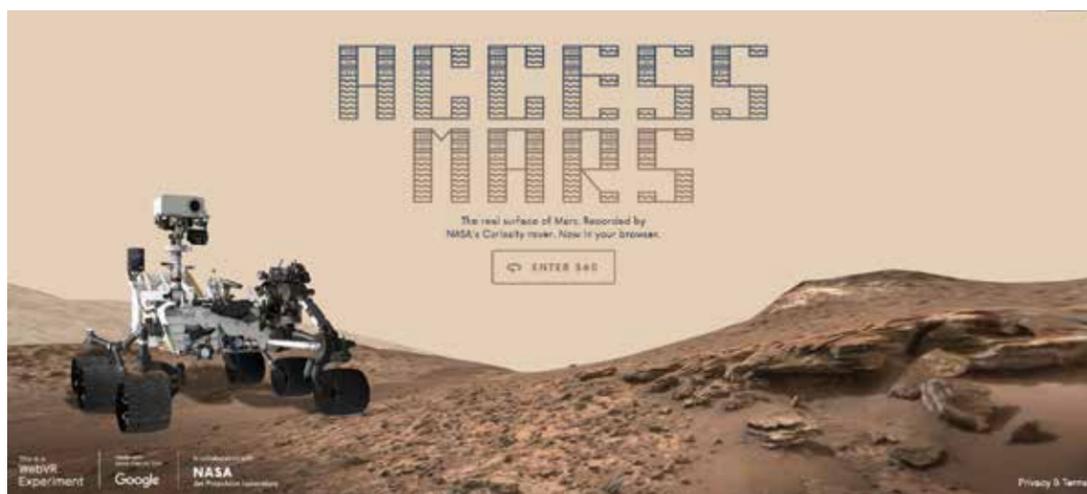
www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne

The Louvre will be re-opening to visitors on July 6. But for those of us who cannot make it to the French Republic this summer, we'll always have Paris (online). Visit the museum's exhibition rooms and galleries, contemplate the façades of the Louvre in their virtual tours and enjoy the view. Check out their Founding Myths exhibit, Egyptian antiquities, Renaissance paintings and political art and more!

Access Mars

accessmars.withgoogle.com

Are you just so sick of Earth right now? Why not check out Mars for a little bit, thanks to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and Google. Access Mars lets you explore a 3D replica of the Martian surface using data and photography taken from the NASA Curiosity Rover. Imagery from the Curiosity Rover provided the terrain, allowing users to wander the actual dunes and valleys explored by the spacecraft. More than anything, Access Mars offers a visceral impression of what it would be like to walk alongside Curiosity, wandering through the lonely, red desert.



▲ Visit Mars virtually.

BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and LEDCOR Group present the Virtual Trivia Summer Series



June 26

TRIVIA NIGHT, EH?

July 24

TRIVIA MUSIC FEST

Aug 14

TRAVEL TIME TRIVIA