



A dung beetle  
for model  
Page 3

# The Source

forum of diversity

Vol 21 No 22 | January 12–26, 2021

www.thelasource.com



## Verbatim

### An increasingly virtual world?

by LAURY-ANN MAHIEU

I think it's safe to say that most of us are ready to leave the year 2020 behind. It was the year that kept on giving. Month after month, there was always some type of new unpredictability. As a student, seeing the chaos that ensued due to the pandemic was, quite frankly, unnerving. One more year until we graduate high school and are released into the "real world." For many, having to quarantine and unable to see friends was unbearable. For me, it gave me some perspective on all the years I spent at school, and the exhaustion I felt from it.

I was now trapped between adolescence and adulthood. However, this purgatory was one I felt safe in. Stuck at home, seeing the world pass by through the screen, I could pretend I would forever stay inside. Pretend I would never need to graduate. I didn't have to break my thirteen-year routine of going to school. I could hopelessly teeter on the edge of a cliff for all of eternity.

Graduating would mean the end and the beginning. Though they now seem so trivial, the trips and the parties we were promised growing up, are now impossible. The sense of normalcy we once knew no longer exists. We will soon fall off that cliff and become the adults we so viciously criticized for seemingly leaving the world in shambles.

With the pandemic, time at first seemed to come to a halt. However, to me, time also seemed like such a scarce and limited resource. Coming from a teenager, someone who has yet to graduate high school and experience the world, this statement is laughable, is it not? Perhaps, but with everything moving

See "Verbatim" page 7

## An integrated view towards a green economy

by XI CHEN

It has been a few years since Canada signed the Paris Climate Agreement. Under the agreement, the country is supposed to reduce its emissions by 30 per cent by 2030 in comparison to 2005 levels. So far it is on track to miss the target. Last November, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau finally submit-

ted draft legislation for the country to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

"The Paris agreement, it requires a lot of work. The reason why we need a big international agreement to get things moving is that it is a hard problem. But there has been a lot of momentum in the last decade – electric vehicles, for example. Ten years ago, we

didn't see any and now we see them everywhere," says Taco Niet, an assistant professor at the School of Sustainable Engineering at SFU.

Niet has been working with the UN in the last few years to develop better energy system modelling.

### Energy system modelling

The environment we live in is a complex system with interlink-

ing and interdependent actors. Niet's research basically looks at big picture questions in energies at a country or regional level and investigates the tradeoffs and synergies between different actors and policies.

"I am using the UN CLEW (Climate, Land, Energy, Water) model. There are a lot of inter-actions between different pieces. For example, if we

See "Green Economy" page 4

### Also in this issue



Mexican photographers  
change the story's angle  
Page 4



Short films keep an eye  
on community and identity  
Page 5



## Visit The Source online

www.thelasource.com

Twitter/Facebook: thelasource

# Cultural Spotlight

## Of broken friendships and reunions

by AMÉLIE LEBRUN

Theatre and film often depict how losing or drifting apart from a loved one or can affect someone. The new play *Before They Cut Down Our Tree* by Jenna Masuhara tells the story of two former friends who grew up before the rise of social media. Meeting again in 2018, find themselves forced to deal with their past issues with each other when they are unexpectedly reunited after the death of a loved one.

Presenting the play in a pandemic presents some unique challenges but the Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre (VACT), in association with the Playwrights Theatre Centre has found a way to present it online. It has moved its annual new play development program, the MSG Lab, online to offer a safe theatrical experience while giving emerging playwrights the support and opportunity they need to share their perspective and creativity. It is available via Zoom on Jan. 17.

Even with the online format, the reading of the play helps us reflect on how time apart shapes relations, identity, what it means to lose a friend, but also how the confinement changed theatre and other live arts. "But I think there is something to be said about the loss of a friend and how that impacts you," shares Masuhara.

### Childhood memories

Friendship, like a tree, needs to be cared for, protected, and valued or it dries off. It also needs time. But in *Before They Cut Down Our Tree*, it is time that creates distance and the space needed by the two characters to evolve in a different direction, away from the childhood memories of two kids meeting under a tree. The story behind the play is partly autobiographical.

"[The] inspiration [came] from running into this person who I used to be friends with and hadn't seen in nearly a decade and noting how awkward and unfamiliar this person was to me now," explains Masuhara. "From there the idea for this story about broken friendships and confronting your past came about and it turned into this play."

### Bumping into a friend

The confinement had a noticeable impact on how people reach out to one another and how of-



Photo courtesy of VACT

▲ Jenna Masuhara will read her play *Before They Cut Down Our Tree* online.

ten. "Something that has become clear due to the pandemic [...] is the effort you have to put in to maintain friendships," points out Masuhara. "You can't just bump into a friend for coffee now, you need to set a time for video calls and sometimes suffer through laggy Wi-Fi... Sometimes it may seem like it's easier to not make that effort and justify not doing so, even if in the long run you suffer for it."

Masuhara also explores how these characters have changed in their time apart, leading to an uncanny reunion. "We all have changed during this pandemic and I think that is something that might be interesting for audience members to explore in relation to this play and

the pandemic," adds the playwright.

### Creative ways to adapt

The fact that the characters feel so relatable is also due to the MSG Lab program. Masuhara got tailored support from their dramaturge, Davey Calderon, but also from Sally Lee, a cultural consultant at VACT. "One of my characters is Korean Canadian and as I'm not of that background, talking to Sally Lee about growing up Korean Canadian helped flesh out aspects of my play and that character," Masuhara shares. VACT's dramaturge also helped the young playwright to adapt the reading to the online format.

"In our first workshop online [for example], we discovered that characters speaking at the same time doesn't work that well via Zoom, so I had to alter some of the dialogue to make it work for the medium," says Masuhara.

All of which goes to show how artists are continuing to find more creative ways to display and adapt their work. And while it may be challenging at times, this can often lead to eye-opening performances and very interesting art.

In addition to Masuhara's play, readers can catch free readings of the works of two other playwrights that are part of the program. Meghna Hadar's *Termite* is scheduled for Jan 15 and Grace Chin's *A Funny Thing Happened On My Way To Canada* will be presented on Jan. 16. ✉

Go to [www.vact.ca/save-the-date-for-our-msg-lab-readings-20-21](http://www.vact.ca/save-the-date-for-our-msg-lab-readings-20-21) to book a reservation for the reading. The admission is free.



JAN 31, FEB 2 + 4, 2021

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

ADOBE CONNECT

REGISTER NOW > [cyclingbc.net/coaching](http://cyclingbc.net/coaching)

**viasPORT**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## THE AIRBORNE TOXIC EVENT



COMMODORE BALLROOM  
FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022



NEW ALBUM  
**HOLLYWOOD PARK**  
OUT NOW

NEW BOOK  
**HOLLYWOOD PARK:**  
A MEMOIR - OUT NOW

[THEAIRBORNETOXICEVENT.COM](http://THEAIRBORNETOXICEVENT.COM)



**LifeSciences**  
British Columbia

**BioTalent**  
Canada  
Building skills for Canada's bio-economy  
Un monde de ressources pour la bioéconomie canadienne

## Career Connect Day

Presented by BioTalent Canada

- Job Fair
- Dynamic speakers
- Networking with industry professionals

January 22, 2021, 9AM – 4PM

Presented virtually – Student registration: Free

[bit.ly/ccd2021](http://bit.ly/ccd2021)

@lifesciences\_bc  
#LSBCtalent



### THE SOURCE NEWSPAPER

Mailing Address  
Denman Place PO Box 47020  
Vancouver, BC V6G 3E1

Office  
204-825 Granville St., Vancouver, BC

Telephone (604) 682-5545  
Email [info@thelastsource.com](mailto:info@thelastsource.com)

[www.thelastsource.com](http://www.thelastsource.com)

Founding Publisher and Editor-in-Chief  
Mamadou Gangué

Associate Publisher Monique Kroeger (Print)  
Art Director Laura R. Copes

Senior Editor (English and French Sections)  
Monique Kroeger

Copy Editors (English) Frank Abbott, Colleen Addison, Andrea Baedak, Deanna Choi, Andrea Keen, Annette Gingrich, Cheryl Olvera, Melodie Wendel-Cook, Lauren Wolf

Senior Copy Editor (French) Louise T. Dawson  
Page Editor (Francophonie)

Jean-Baptiste Lasaygues  
Executive Assistant Kevin Paré

Website Coordinator Pavle Culajevic  
Website Sepand Dyanatkar, Vitor Libardi,  
Silvia Pascale

Social Media Nathalie Astruc, Tina Qu  
Editorial Content Advisor Denis Bouvier  
Digital Media Advisor Saeed Dyanatkar  
Contributing Editor Simon Yee

Illustrator Joseph Laquerre  
Writers Nathalie Astruc, Xi Chen, Gratianna Daum, Anindita Gupta, Michael Huenefeld, Jean-Baptiste Lasaygues, Amélie Lebrun, Laury-Ann Mahieu, Emeline Riffenach, Andreina Romero, Curtis Seufert, Liam Sfaxi, Victor van der Merwe, Lin Weaver, Lauren Wolf, Simon Yee, Robert Zajtmann

Translation Barry Brisebois, Louise Dawson,  
Monique Kroeger  
Distribution Joseph Laquerre, Kevin Paré

Photo credits for front cover

Page 3 (top): Photo by Dan Mele, courtesy of Katie Marshall

Page 4 (bottom left): Juliana Alvarado, *Flaka*, from the series Name Them, 2017, Inkjet print  
Page 5 (bottom right): Photo courtesy of Vancouver Short Film Festival

### LEGALITIES

The Source shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Source's liability for other errors or omissions in connection to any published advertisement is strictly limited to the repeat of the advertisement in future publications or for the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement. We welcome appropriate, unsolicited editorial submissions if accompanied by the author's real name, address and telephone number. The author should retain the original as we cannot return submissions without prior agreement, nor does submission guarantee publication.

For advertising call: (604) 682-5545

# New Year's goal: changing our feelings about poop

by ANDREINA ROMERO

**Excrement. Feces. Poop. No matter humanity's level of technological advancement, dealing with fecal waste is a reality that we have never been able to escape; poop is just one of the byproducts of being alive.**

But as we face one of the greatest existential threats to our survival through climate change, could poop be part of the solution leading us to a more sustainable life on the planet? This is one of the questions three UBC's Green College scholars will invite the public to explore through the presentation *Waste Not: Rethinking Poop Through*

*Bugs, Books and Power*, taking place on Jan. 14, via Zoom.

### Learning from other species

Katie Marshall, PhD, is an assistant professor of comparative

physiology. "Dung beetles contribute somewhere on the order of multiple billions of dollars to the economy by helping reduce the risk of disease and by soil fertilization," adds Marshall.

relationship to waste even more practically.

"I think that dung beetles show us that even the things that we think of as waste are things that maybe we can use," Marshall af-

According to Mitchell, Indigenous communities have practiced a symbiotic relationship with nature for ages – one that the rest of us are starting to understand we need.

“If we think of excrement, our natural reaction is that it’s gross... But excrement has been such an important and vital material for societies for millennia...”

*Tamara Mitchell, assistant professor at the University of British Columbia*



Photo courtesy of Tamara Mitchell

▲ Tamara Mitchell, assistant professor in the Department of French, Hispanic, and Italian Studies at UBC.

physiology at the UBC Department of Zoology. Her research focuses on invertebrates, which has led her to study the dung beetle in collaboration with dung beetle world expert Kimberly Sheldon, PhD, of the University of Tennessee. As Marshall explains, the study of this unassuming insect can teach us a lot about our relationship with waste.

"Dung beetles roll balls of poop around and lay their eggs in poop, and then the larvae use it as an energy source," she says. The research has shown that "dung beetles help break down animal dung [and through this process] help reduce the risk of disease that can be passed on through feces." Burying their waste deep underground, the beetles also contribute to soil

Beyond their contribution to soil health, dung beetles can also help us reconsider our re-



Photo courtesy of UBC

▲ Katie Marshall, assistant professor of comparative physiology, UBC.

firms. "For instance, humans for a long time have used dung, especially from cattle or camels, for fuel or fertilizer. Now, with changing technology, we're finding that we can maybe use municipal waste, for instance, from treatment plants to produce biogas for energy."

### A literary perspective

While looking at other species can seem an obvious way to learn about feces, can literature also be useful in changing our relationship with poop? For Tamara Mitchell, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of French, Hispanic, and Italian Studies at UBC, the answer is yes. "In general, authors have this powerful ability to kind of re-focus our lens and help us to understand [a different perspective on a subject]," she explains. "If we think of excrement, our natural reaction is that it's gross. We don't want to touch it. We don't want to be near it. But excrement has been such an important and vital material for societies for millennia as a source for fire, or a key component of compost."

Drawing from her research about author Jose Maria Arguedas, whose work centers around the Indigenous peoples of Peru, Mitchell's talk will focus on "notions of epistemology" which she explains are "ways of believing" or "ways of thinking." By comparing a mainstream epistemology that "looks at poop as an abject or gross material" to a more Indigenous epistemology, she hopes we can better understand a way of thinking that allows us to see the value of these materials.

In addition to Marshall and Mitchell's presentations, the third talk, by Yankai Cao, PhD, assistant professor at UBC's Faculty of Applied Sciences, will explore the subject of fecal waste through a chemical and biological engineering lens.

While Marshall believes the topic is important for environmental reasons, she also hopes the event helps people to reflect on what we value, what we don't, and go on to ask themselves "What makes something waste?"

To register for this event, visit [www.greencollege.ubc.ca](http://www.greencollege.ubc.ca)

**Where do you find heritage?**

**HERITAGE WEEK 2021**  
February 15–21

Do you find it in the buildings that make your community unique or do you hear it in the special stories your family tells? Perhaps you experience it at cultural festivals and in the taste of many cuisines. Or maybe you find it on your favourite hikes and when you stop to admire scenes of rivers, fields and hills. Or you think of the generations of people who came before you or the newcomers to your community.

Look around you and you will find heritage everywhere.

**HERITAGE: IT'S YOURS TO DISCOVER.**

#BCHeritageWeek #MyBCis #MyCanadais

**HeritageBC**  
heritagebc.ca

**Multifaith Calendar 2021**  
Living Legacies

[www.multifaithaction.jimdo.com](http://www.multifaithaction.jimdo.com)

**RACISM AND HATE HURT US ALL**

CITY OF VANCOUVER

# An alternate look at violence against women

by VICTOR VAN DER MERWE

*Miradas Alternas*, an exhibition running at the Polygon gallery until Feb. 7, explores alternative approaches to the photographic representation of violence against women in contemporary Mexico. Curated by Andrea Sánchez Ibarrola, the exhibition showcases the work of five Mexican artists: Juliana Alvarado, Alejandra Aragón, Koral Carballo, Mariceu Erthal and Sonia Madrigal.

Ibarrola immigrated to Vancouver from Mexico in 2018 to attend UBC. The project was born as a cultural studies master's degree program assignment; in order to graduate, she had to develop both a research paper and an exhibition project. "I was interested in working with photography, because it is a medium I relate to personally," she says. "And I wanted to speak about where I was coming from."

## Rejecting violence

Ibarrola decided to gather the work of five female Mexican photographers with arts, journalism and documentary backgrounds. "I was interested in their work because they use different approaches to photography in order to tell stories about violence in a way that doesn't reinforce violence, and doesn't



▲ Sonia Madrigal, from the series *Death Rises in the East*, ongoing since 2014, inkjet printz.

retraumatize through imagery," she explains.

According to Ibarrola, there is an oversaturation of visual, textual, and verbal images around

violence in his native country that has only grown over the past twenty years. The goal of the exhibition is to give visitors an alternative way of looking at violence in Mexico.

"The entire project came from my concerned response to this kind of visibility and wanting an alternative," she says. "I used this project as an opportunity to think about the role of images in violence and in particular the war on drugs."

## A female perspective

Once the project was underway, Ibarrola decided to add a gender perspective to this dynamic of violence. She explains that femicide in Mexico has been growing to the point that almost 11 women are killed in the country every day.

"Because photography has traditionally been a male-dominant area, I thought it was also

important to make a statement by acknowledging the work that women photographers are doing, because I do think they are doubly exposed," she adds.

Ibarrola had a wealth of artists to choose from when she started doing research for this project. The five artists she finally decided on where those she felt most captured the concept she was hoping to exhibit.

"I was thinking about the representation of violence from the perspective of two dichotomies: presence and absence, and visibility and invisibility," she explains. "Some artists are addressing the evident and very visible problem of femicide, and then some address the very invisible aspect of violence."

## Finding commonalities

Ibarrola hopes that those who go to see the exhibition

walk away from it with a bit more awareness and empathy, and realize that femicide is not a unique problem to Mexico.

"I don't want this show to say, 'oh poor Mexican women,' that is not what I want," she claims. Instead, her aim is to raise empathy and awareness, and especially to think about violence where we are.

"After coming to Vancouver, I started to feel I was so safe and that there were no dangers here," remembers Ibarrola. "Then, I became aware of the situation in Canada about the missing and murdered indigenous women and how femicide is not only a problem in Mexico or in Latin America, but everywhere in the world." ✍

For more information, visit [www.thepolygon.ca](http://www.thepolygon.ca)



▲ Mericeu Erthal, from *Letters to Gemma* series, 2017–2020, inkjet printz.

## ► "Green Economy" from page 1

do all solar thermal energy, that will cause land use and other challenges. So, the CLEW model takes into account all those interactions and puts it together in a path for land, energy and water that is sustainable," Niet explains.

He says different countries face different resource constraints and the optimization model is not prescriptive but more comparative in offering insights on policy making. In general, according to Niet, most energy technologies for generating electricity require water. Food production requires water. Biomass requires both strong land and water use. Solar and wind systems both take up land space though wind energy less so. Hydropower is also where land and water interact a lot.

In the Canadian context, Niet made an example of studies done on using biomass to decarbonize to illustrate the complexity of the problem.

"Say we are trying to get rid of coal plants and convert the energy source to biomass, but biomass has to be grown somewhere, so there is a land-use implication to decarbonize the energy. There have been very few studies on these land-use implications. Does it mean taking over wheat fields, or does it mean deforestation? And if you take an acre of forest and take it down, that has emission implications too," he says.

He adds that it is great that many countries are making net-zero emission pledges but the challenges lie in that a lot of the carbon offsets in those pledges are not really well defined. He believes eventually we will have to get beyond net-zero and get to natural zero-emission.

## Canada's path

For Canada, Niet says, the country has a lot of hydro and some nuclear. Given solar and wind energy productions face

geographical constraints, he thinks nuclear energy probably has to be a part of the zero-emission system because it is one of the few technology systems that can keep running non-stop.

To reduce current emission levels, Niet believes the first step is getting rid of coal which should happen within the next few years. The next step is getting rid of other fossil fuels such as figuring out how to deal with heavy transportations as they still use diesel fuel, he is hopeful as he sees great new technologies coming out.

"In another ten years we probably won't see a non-electric car on the road. Non-electric delivery vehicles will be much rarer. Maybe in another 20 years we won't be burning fossil fuels. There is a lot of learning and engineering, but I think we can do it," he says.

Niet serves as one of the inaugural faculty members of SFU's newly launched School

of Sustainable Energy Engineering. The school just welcomed its first cohort last September and aims to help to prepare students to build a more sustainable future.



▲ Taco Niet, assistant professor at the School of Sustainable Engineering at SFU.

"The goal of the program is to build knowledge of those challenges of renewable energies, so when they graduate, they can bring these ideas and concepts to the industry and they can start addressing them," Niet adds.

Through his work with the UN, Niet says the bigger challenge is in the developing world and how to help them meet their requirements in a way that is sustainable.

"Many people in the developing world are still undernourished. Getting them to a place where they are healthy and can have a reasonable standard of living is going to use a lot of energy, land, food and water," he says. "There are big challenges. The technological solutions over the next 10 to 15 years will get a lot of those in place at least in the developed world. In other developing countries, where they are still building coal plants, we need to help them transition to a greener economy." ✍

## ENDING VIOLENCE

Association of BC

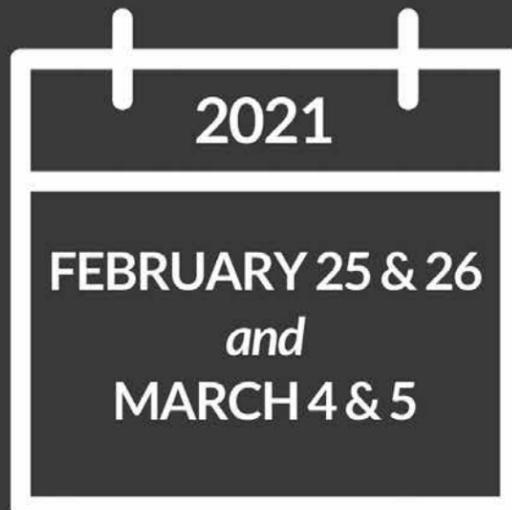
EVA BC ANNUAL TRAINING FORUM 2021



# Honouring Anti-Violence Workers

HOSTED  
ONLINE

PLEASE  
SAVE THE  
DATES!



Registration details to follow

Stay connected with us online:

[endingviolence.org/training/annual-training](https://endingviolence.org/training/annual-training)

## Vancouver Short Film Festival celebrates immigrants' stories

by GRATIANNE DAUM

The 11th annual Vancouver Short Film Festival, dubbed “watching together, staying apart” this year, opens Jan. 22. There are 61 features to discover from emerging and established Canadian West Coast movie and animation artists.

As is the Festival's practice, several titles celebrate Vancouver's diverse communities and the theme of identity. Frequently omitted in stories about Greater Vancouver's Asian immigrants are individuals who have arrived seeking a different life. Similarly, there are stories of how separate groups can be intertwined and thrive together. Two titles address this gap.

*A-Yi* tells the true story of an unlikely friendship, forged without a common language, between a group of East Van twenty-year-olds and an elderly Chinese woman. *Yarlung* is about identity and memory and how to bridge the gaps and collisions between different generations and worlds.

### Stressing the benefits of respectful curiosity

*A-Yi* is a Cantonese word for aunty and a more appropriate address to refer to the elderly. The mute relationship began when *A-Yi* was collecting cans in the back alley of the house where director Martyna Czaplak lived with her roommates. It moved on to *A-Yi* establishing her own “can depot” under their

translated sit-down conversation with her. Throughout the documentary, kindness and respect emanate from these East Van residents toward the subject. But it is most evident during the scene when they act and talk with a mix of shyness and obvious excitement to finally learn more about her. The tone of the conversation embodies the overall film: charming, poignant, and funny. At one point one of the characters describes *A-Yi* as an “uplifting” personality. This can be said about the entire story and how one might feel after seeing it.

### Identity through connecting with the land

*Yarlung's* hand-drawn charcoal-on-paper animation tells the story of three children in their Tibetan refugee village of Tezu who experience the death of a loved one and the mechanism they find to cope, namely by interacting with the Yarlung Tsangpo river. Tezu is where director Kunsang Kyirong's mother was born. In the film she wanted to capture the dynamics of having various generations grow up together in this village.

“The starting point of this film came from researching the Yarlung Tsangpo and the number of communities that depend on this enormous river and how damming plans would impact those communities. I cherish stories and wanted to find a way where I could explore the preciousness of the Yarlung, and the lives of those who depend on this river,” says Kyirong.



▲ Scene from *Yarlung*.

Photo courtesy of Vancouver Short Film Festival



vancouveropera  
**2020–2021**  
DIGITAL SEASON  
REIMAGINED FOR THE SCREEN

LA VOIX HUMAINE | AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS  
THE MUSIC SHOP | LA TRAGÉDIE DE CARMEN

LEARN MORE

## GLOBAL CHILD HEALTH: BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

GLOBAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2021

Accepting Poster Presentations

<https://bit.ly/3kEGdUW>

Deadline 18 Dec 2020

Speakers include

**Linda Nyondo Mipando**  
**Steven Hoffman**  
**Tanya Rogo**  
**Jeffrey Goldhagen**  
**David Goldfarb and more**

Save the date

**JANUARY 28, 2021**

presented by:



deck, and then to taking over their garden. In the process, *A-Yi* not only occupied spaces around the house but also filled their hearts.

“Anyone who has ever met *A-Yi* will attest to it when I say that *A-Yi* is an absolute ray of sunshine,” recalls Czaplak. “She is extremely hard working and resilient, positive and patient, always smiling and ready to share her knowledge of gardening through a variety of gestures.”

Even though all translation attempts via apps failed, Czaplak and her roommates “felt an instant affection for her and coexisted together without having to think about it at all - it was the purest form of friendship any of (them) had ever experienced.”

Czaplak used traditional Chinese shadow puppetry to recount “*A-Yi's* story of where she came from and how she got to Vancouver” not having “any other materials to show from her past.”

The climax comes when the remaining roommates have a

The flow of the charcoal technique can be viewed as a mirror of the river itself, thanks to the medium's subtle gradations. “A lot of what I enjoyed the most while using the process of charcoal and straight-ahead animation, is the spontaneity and drawings that come out unexpectedly,” she explains.

Kyirong also notes that the end result is quite different from the initial idea. The film is a blend of fiction and non-fiction. “Everything in the story had happened in real life; I think what I manipulated was the timing of it all,” she says.

This story feels very Canadian in the way that many immigrants only have memories or limited experience with their roots, as well as how Nature is fully part of life, and shapes everyone's identity. ✉

The festival runs from January 22–24. Film programs will also be available up to 7 days after their weekend premiere. [www.vdff.com](http://www.vdff.com)

**Reach the growing  
FILIPINO COMMUNITY  
in British Columbia!**

Advertise in *Dahong Pilipino*  
THE FILIPINO CANADIAN COMMUNITY DIRECTORY  
[www.dahongpilipino.ca](http://www.dahongpilipino.ca)

PRINT • MOBILE • ONLINE

# International Women's Day Celebration & Benefit 2021

All Proceeds Benefit North Shore Women's Centre

Take Out Meal Event:  
March 1st - 14th, 2021  
in partnership with  
Anatoli Souvlaki North Van

**\$75 TICKETS**  
\$45 TAX RECEIPT AVAILABLE

**Need the skills to find a job? We can help!**

Design a fantastic resume and cover letter, fine tune your interview techniques, learn valuable skills to succeed in the Canadian workplace, gain insight into the job market, access special services for skilled works – all at NO COST. The Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) Society, Vancouver Branch, has been helping immigrants and newcomers to Canada for over 14 years!

Our Group Job Search Workshops are a flexible, 5 module rotating program, running weekly, with 16 sessions each month. This includes basic computer orientation, with instruction on using Word and Excel, and accessing the Internet. Workshops are held within a culturally diverse environment, led by qualified facilitators.

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

PICS Vancouver also offers one-on-one employment assistance, paid on-the-job work experience through our Wage Subsidy program, and a one-stop Career Centre with a broad range of job hunting resources. Funding for all programs is provided by the Ministry of Social Development, Employment and Labour Market Services Division.

Please call 604-324-7733, go to [www.pics.bc.ca](http://www.pics.bc.ca), or visit us at 200-8161 Main St., Vancouver, to find out how we can best help you.

## S'ÉPANOUIR EN FRANÇAIS

**OFFREZ À VOTRE ENFANT UNE ÉDUCATION PUBLIQUE FRANCOPHONE**

**INSCRIPTIONS EN COURS**

- Enseignement de qualité de la maternelle à la 12<sup>e</sup> année
- Services à la petite enfance
- Service de transport scolaire
- Programme d'anglais de qualité
- Programme du Baccalauréat International
- Programmes de sport, musique, théâtre, art culinaire, leadership, etc.
- Programme d'éducation autochtone
- Programme d'apprentissage à distance **NOUVEAU**

POUR PLUS DE RENSEIGNEMENTS COMMUNIQUEZ AVEC L'ÉCOLE LA PLUS PROCHE DE CHEZ VOUS.

[csf.bc.ca](http://csf.bc.ca)



Photo courtesy of Ravi Jain

## Ravi Jain and *A Brimful of Asha*, a real conversation between a mother and son

by ANINDITA GUPTA

**WhyNot Theatre continues making life better through art by premiering *A Brimful of Asha* online Jan. 15–31. Keeping this experience COVID-friendly, the show is a recording of a 2014 performance; and further making this a more interactive streamed session, the Surrey Arts Center has organized a chat after the Jan. 15 show with Ravi Jain.**

Toronto-based actor and director Jain, who has been acting for 15 years, is a multi-award winning writer, actor and founder of the WhyNot Theatre company. After graduating high school, travelling the world and working abroad, Jain went on to graduate from France's prestigious L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq, a Paris school of physical theatre.

### *A Brimful of Asha*

The show's title is borrowed from the title of a song written by British alternative rock band, with the same name, Cornershop.

Asha, the Hindi word for hope, is also Jain's mother and co-actor's name. Fittingly, at the core of it, this play is about the challenges that arise out of the hope for happiness a parent wants for their child, or a child has for their parents.

"We tell the true story of how my parents tried to arrange my marriage in 2007," summarizes Jain.

*A Brimful of Asha* has now been performed for over nine years and has trotted the globe. Ravi and Asha Jain, who is not an actor by profession, have performed this play in countries like Australia, England, Germany, the United States and Canada.

Of note, there have also been performances of this show without the Jains and with

other actors instead – such as, in the recent past, the shows which premiered in Edmonton and Nova Scotia.

### WhyNot Theatre

After setting up a name for himself in the theatres of New York and London and upon his return to Canada in 2007, he started his own theatre company in hopes of finding a stage for his work and voice to reach the world.

"[The theatre company was started] as a way of making work, and sharing the work I make with the rest of the world," says Jain.

One of their production's works coming to the audience in 2022 is an adaptation of the Mahabharata – the great Sanskrit mythological story, an epic battle between families – as a Sanskrit opera.

Last December, Jain and Miriam Fernandes, who is co-artistic director of WhyNot Theatre, had a live Zoom chat with Devdutt Pattanaik, who is a mythologist, speaker and author of several books exploring various characters of the Mahabharata and the epic itself.

This adaptation is written by Jain and Fernandes, and it uses poetry by Carole Satyamurti. WhyNot's attempt is to reinvent this production.

"A contemporary adaptation of the story and tell it for today," says Jain.

WhyNot Theatre has had over 55 shows, for which they have earned 44 nominations and awards. They have also toured over 80 tour stops in 40 cities over the globe. ✉

More information about the show can be found on the WhyNot Theatre website, [www.whynot.theatre](http://www.whynot.theatre). Register for the performance on January 15 via the City of Surrey's website, [www.surrey.ca/news-events/events/brimful-of-asha](http://www.surrey.ca/news-events/events/brimful-of-asha).

## VICO

# Sounds of two homes

by CURTIS SEUFERT

**The Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra (VICO) has released their debut full-length album, *In the Key of the World*. The album, which consists of a multicultural and broadly-influenced array of chamber, folk and orchestral music, features the works of four Canadian or Canada-based composers, including UBC's own Dorothy Chang. Chang's suite, *Lost & Found*, takes the listener through an abstracted cross-cultural experience, often drawing on her own upbringing and heritage between China and the U.S.**

"I grew up with an uneasy balance between my traditional Chinese upbringing at home and the culture of White middle-class Midwestern suburbia in the Chicago area... So, cultural identity has thus always been a conundrum and has been a theme that I often reflect upon in my music," says Chang.

### Engaging honestly with culture

One of the most pertinent and recurring themes throughout Chang's life has been the transcending of categories both on a personal and musical level. Whether it's negotiating a diversely informed personal and

cultural identity or having pursued musical studies abroad in China to reconcile what she calls an increasingly unsettling disconnect between her own musical voice and the music in her curriculum in the U.S., making sense of her personal and musical identity has been a challenging yet engaging journey.

the two traditions. In *Lost & Found* I tried to fully embrace all my influences as they relate to my personal experience," says Chang.

Chang gives the example of the first movement of the suite, *Folk Song*. With this piece, rather than trying to limit the musical impulses of her upbringing in

“In most of the earlier works, it felt like I was simply borrowing elements in a way that wasn't entirely genuine or suppressing certain musical influences...

*Dorothy Chang, composer*

And after many attempts at a musical synthesis of Western and Chinese traditions, Chang says that *Lost & Found* finally marks a substantial creative moment for forging an uncompromising manifestation of her plurally-informed identity.

"In most of the earlier works, it felt like I was simply borrowing elements in a way that wasn't entirely genuine or suppressing certain musical influences in an attempt to reconcile the differences between

Western music, Chang brings an unabashed blend of Western influences into the fold of Chinese folk song.

"For example, the appeal of a driving 4/4 meter stemming from many years of playing in marching bands. *Folk Song* is a folk song that reflects on my hybrid culture, and it layers elements of Chinese music, contemporary art music, 80's pop tunes, jazz as well that strongly-pulsing 4/4 meter," says Chang.

### Emotion and expression

In taking such an introspective and honest approach to music, Chang's work is often inspired by themes of memory and emotion. Indeed, combining this tendency with her more sincere and honest embrace of both her Chinese and Western musical sensibilities makes for some very touching and frank reflections on both memory and culture.

"My mother once tried to teach me a Chinese folk song she had sung as a child. However, it had been so long since she had sung or heard the song herself, she couldn't remember it beyond the first line or two, says Chang.

Chang says this fading connection became her inspiration for the middle movement of her flute concerto.

"The melody is completely fragmented and distorted and revealed to the audience only in the final few notes of the movement," says Chang.

All in all, despite much of her music being influenced by individual circumstances, Chang says that it is her aim to create music that can be understood and be reflected upon by all.

"I find the best part about exploring these themes through music is that the art form is abstract, allowing for multiple interpretations," says Chang. ✉



Photo by Brian Hawke

▲ Dorothy Chang says that her cultural identity has always been a conundrum, and a theme she often reflects upon in her music.

For more information, please visit [www.vi-co.org](http://www.vi-co.org)

### ► "Verbatim" from page 1

so fast and with our very earth deteriorating, I can't help but constantly feel like time is running out.

Indeed, the pandemic and the year 2020 has put forth the class and race inequities that run deep in our society. Many could say that I, along with many other teenagers, have a pessimistic

view of our world. I just think it's our reality and the sooner we face it, the sooner we might be able to meaningfully change our futures for the better.

The pandemic emphasized our dependence and need for technology. Teenagers' use of technology is something we often get criticized for. However, during quarantine, everyone

was forced to use technology if they wanted to keep some semblance of a connection to the rest of the world.

The negative effects our phones and computers have on us can be worrying, but I know that for many, technology is a source of comfort. Living through our screens was our form of escapism during

quarantine. Technology will continue to play a big part in our lives; therefore, it is important to understand it so we can make sure it positively impacts our futures.

The pandemic has enabled us all to reevaluate our standing in the world. For teenagers, we got to learn how to quickly adapt to an ever-changing situ-

ation and learn how to work differently. This global event has also propelled us all faster and deeper into a technology-driven world. Our generation of teenagers is distinguished by our technological upbringing. I certainly wonder what our next steps will be in what seems like an increasingly virtual world. ✉

January 12–26, 2021

## Cultural Calendar

by SIMON YEE  
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Goodbye 2020, hello 2021! Even though many of 2020's problems continue this year, here's hoping a new year brings with it a new perspective and better changes over the next 12 months! Below are just a few of the many online events, exhibits and activities available for you to view and check out from the comfort of your home this month.

\* \* \*

**Reframed**  
*Streams Jan. 7*  
[www.electriccompanytheatre.com](http://www.electriccompanytheatre.com)

Gathering dozens of performers in a natural environment, moving together in choreographed formations, *Reframed*, by the Electric Company Theatre, gives poetic voice to online shorthand and emojis. In contrast to the isolation of reacting to information on a screen, the project aims to physically transform an escalating online discourse into a voiced expression of multiple perspectives. As an examination of outrage and divisiveness, propelled and exacerbated by virtual algorithms, *Reframed* poses the question: "How do we engage?" Check out the ECT website for the online video and more information.

\* \* \*

**2021 Italian Film Festival**  
*Jan. 8–21*  
[www.viff.org](http://www.viff.org)

The Vancouver Italian Film Festival migrates online for the 2021 year and is available on the Vancouver International Film Festival's website, VIFF Connect, between January 8 and 21. The festival features a new, acclaimed, live action version of Pinocchio, which was described by critics as "a landmark adaptation," was a big hit in Italy last Christmas. The opening film at the Venice Film Festival last year, *The Ties* wrests meaningful new perspectives on age-old relationship conflicts and is a piercing study of adultery and betrayal. For more information on these and other films playing at the festival, please check out the VIFF's website.

\* \* \*

**Vivaldi & Bach: The Trio Sonata in the 18th Century**  
*Jan. 13, 7:30 p.m.*  
[www.earlymusic.bc.ca](http://www.earlymusic.bc.ca)

Enjoy two of Canada's most revered and influential violinists specializing in historically informed performance practice, Jeanne Lamon, Tafelmusik Music Director Emerita, and Marc Destrube, longtime concert master of the Orchestra of the 18th century as they sample the splendours of Baroque chamber music as realized by the great J.S. Bach, Antonio Vivaldi, and French composers Jean-Marie Leclair and Marin Marais. Please visit the Early Music Vancouver's website for program information and artist biographies.

\* \* \*

**Inside the Mind of a Crow**  
*Jan. 14, 5–6:15 p.m.*  
[www.stanleyparkecology.ca](http://www.stanleyparkecology.ca)

If you live in Vancouver, it's safe to assume you are well acquainted with crows. But did you know that crows can remember your



▲ The Electric Company Theatre poses the question: "How do you engage".

face for years, solve puzzles too hard for human toddlers, and know to only use crosswalks when the light is red? As a post-doctoral researcher at UBC, Ben Freeman has studied how crows interact with their raven relatives. Find out how crows live alongside people as Ben tours you through crows' lives in Vancouver and explains why they have evolved so many fascinating behaviours. Check out the Stanley Park Ecology's website to register for this interesting Zoom webinar.



▲ Crows are smarter than you think.

\* \* \*

**Clementine Literature: A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Christian**  
*Jan 15, 2:30–4:30 p.m.*  
[www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html#!view/event/event\\_id/16562](http://www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html#!view/event/event_id/16562)

Simon Fraser University's Centre for Hellenic Studies will be hosting a virtual seminar on Jan. 15 entitled *Clementine Literature: A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Christian*, presented by their postdoctoral fellow Sergio Basso. Under the name of Clementine literature, we can read today a 4th-century romance, the adventurous journey that the young, boisterous Roman Clement makes to Palestine in search of spiritual enlightenment. When it comes to the Clementine Romance, Basso recommends picking up the book and immersing yourself in its mind-blowing odyssey. After introducing the book's main events, he will present the influence of the ancient, rhetoric-centered school programs on the structure of the novel; the Syriac contribution to the imagery of the author; and some underrated comical aspects of the story. It will be an intrepid journey into the writer's cabinet and his audience, in the Greek-speaking Near East of the 4th century.

\* \* \*

**Sea Signals: Communications at Sea**  
*Launches Jan. 18*  
[www.vanmaritime.com](http://www.vanmaritime.com)

Sea Signals, a joint exhibit by the Vancouver Maritime Museum and Langara College, explores the history of communications at sea over the past century with a focus on how developments in marine communications impacted British Columbia and the Arctic. The exhibition includes exhibits on Morse code, radio communications, flags, shipwrecks and aids to communication. To build the exhibition, five design teams each worked on a subtopic, creating a multimedia experience with a unique look for each aspect of maritime communications. The virtual exhibit also features a 3D fly-through animation of the plans for the physical exhibition.

\* \* \*

**Shakespeare's London: 1564–1616**  
*Jan. 24, 8–9:30 a.m.*  
[www.eventbrite.ca/e/shakespeares-london-1564-1616-a-livestream-history-tour-tickets-134540344793](http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/shakespeares-london-1564-1616-a-livestream-history-tour-tickets-134540344793)

London-based tour guide Edward Calcutt will be hosting a fascinating online Zoom tour exploring the world and era of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) in London. It was an intriguing time both in the wider picture of Medieval England, but also in the personal and professional life of Shakespeare. Using high-quality images and engaging storytelling, Calcutt will be guiding you through how these different ele-

ments wove together, both zooming back and recreating medieval London, and also looking at and exploring the various surviving buildings and places from Shakespeare's time where he used to live, the churches he worshipped in, where he put on his plays and much more. Check out the Eventbrite page to register and for more information.

\* \* \*

**The Plague's the Thing: Theatre Before, During and After the Pandemic**  
*Jan. 26, 5–6:30 p.m.*  
[www.greencollege.ubc.ca](http://www.greencollege.ubc.ca)

Long before the pandemic struck, theatres were being pressured into becoming 'safe spaces' to gather, but the virus turned them into unsafe, possibly even fatal, gathering spaces. What place does live theatre have when the life and death stakes of a pandemic are raging around the world and up-to-the-minute news becomes more urgent than any theatre drama on zoom? Zoom keeps people safe in every way but when the danger recedes and live theatre returns, what might those 'safe/unsafe spaces' look like? What kind of safety will artists and audiences demand when they gather together again? What kind of ordeals and afflictions will they hunger for? Please check out the Green College for more information on this webinar.

\* \* \*

**PuSh Rally**  
*Jan. 26–Feb. 7*  
[www.pushfestival.ca](http://www.pushfestival.ca)

The PuSh Festival returns to Vancouver as the PuSh Rally to showcase innovative and transformative art. This year's format, because of the pandemic, will be a free online series. The PuSh Rally, curated by two of Vancouver's most celebrated theatre artists, Theatre Replacement's Maiko Yamamoto and Newworld Theatre's Marcus Youssef, will provide a global platform for meaningful discourse and idea exchange about the challenges and possibilities inherent in conflict, and the future of live performance. The Rally will include a variety of artist encounters and conversations, international artist presentations and surprise performances from some of the world's finest artists, thought leaders and change makers. For a list of shows and event details, please visit their website.

\* \* \*

**B.C. Black History Awareness Society**  
*Ongoing*  
[www.bcblackhistory.ca](http://www.bcblackhistory.ca)

The British Columbia Black History Awareness Society celebrates the achievements of Black people in British Columbia by creating an awareness of the history of Blacks in B.C., stimulating interest in the contributions of persons of African ancestry to B.C. and Canada today, and celebrating historical and current achievements in the arts, education, government, sports and science. Check out their expanded online exhibits, learning centre and feature stories to learn more about this vibrant community.

## VIRTUAL CAREER AND EDUCATION EVENT

EASILY ACCESSED FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME!

February 1st, 2021 - February 5th, 2021

LocalWork

@BLACKPRESSCAREERFAIR

Register for webinars at

[events.blackpress.ca](http://events.blackpress.ca)

Actively Hiring! Visit BC Corrections website