



Hagoromo features
Yamai Tsunao
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Photo courtesy of the Armenian Cultural Association

Verbatim

Let's Celebrate!

by SOPHIE LEE

Last week I celebrated my birthday with my family. The highlight of my day? An absolutely delicious gelato cake!

But that's not the main point of my little anecdote, though the cake really was marvelous. Rather, I want to reflect on the broader link between celebrations and culture.

There are probably millions of different ways to celebrate a birthday. But as far as I know, there is usually great similarity in celebrations between cultures. Several key ingredients are necessary: celebrating with family and friends, enjoying good food and having a good time. Everything else can differ according to personal preferences.

Granted, that recipe could be used for other celebrations as well. When we consider cultural and religious holidays, however, the differences are more apparent — Christmas and Hanukkah are certainly different. New Year's Eve and Chinese New Year are also celebrated differently, despite their strikingly obvious similarities and the fact that they essentially celebrate the same thing. According to my parents, for Chinese New Year there is, traditionally, a whole series of practices indicating which day to visit your parents and which day to visit your parents-in-law, for example.

Vancouver is a multicultural city; we're lucky to have the chance to become acquainted with various cultures and their holidays. But in my experience, this advantage is also a source of confusion.

Born in Taiwan, I moved to Vancouver at the age of four. Most of the time I'm happy about this dual nationality, as it's an important part of my identity and certainly makes life more interesting. Yet occasionally, it's a cause for worry — what to celebrate?

See "Verbatim" page 9 >

B.C. Armenian community marks 45th anniversary

by PEGGY LAM

In the summer of 1968, 20 people from the Armenian community gathered together to attend a young woman's wedding. After forming a choir group at the event, they decided to create a committee with seven members to meet the cultural needs of the small Armenian community in Vancouver. Originally called the Armenian Christian Cultural Association of British Columbia, they eventually dropped the "Christian" to become the Armenian Cultural

Association of British Columbia (ACA).

The non-profit organization is dedicated to preserving and

Throughout its 45 years, ACA has organized many events like lectures, concerts and banquets, as well as running a weekly Arme-

growth of the Armenian community is assisted by local businesses and individuals.

One example is the estab-

“It's important for many Armenians to ensure our kids speak the language, understand where we came from, and know our long history.

Ani Geragosian, Treasurer of Armenian Cultural Association

promoting the heritage and culture of Armenian people. Since its establishment, the association has grown and expanded on a large scale due to the work of its members and volunteers.

nian school and radio program on Vancouver's Co-op Radio.

Building community through business

Along with the association, the

lishment of La Majoun Bakery, specializing in lamajoun bread. What started out as a small commercial kitchen in Surrey now delivers wholesale prod-

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Power of the spoken word
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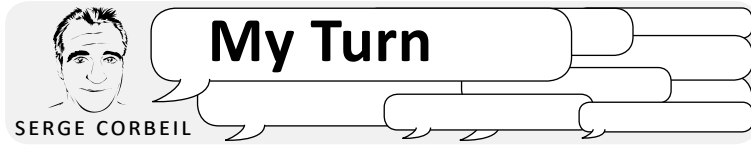
Urban planning leaves out community spirit
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My Turn

SERGE CORBEIL

A snatched victory

Quebec's latest electoral campaign has confirmed what recent elections in many provinces, including British Columbia, have recently suggested: campaigns are more crucial than ever.

Recall that Liberal Christy Clark's victory last year was a product of her campaign. This time around it was the Quebec electorate's turn to have front seats for an electoral match rife with unexpected turns. So much so that what was supposed to be a smart electoral calculation on the part of Parti Québécois leader Pauline Marois, head of a minority government and with the lead in polls, has ended up causing her several costly setbacks.

Since I wrote this column when the Quebec electorate was but a few days away from making its final decision, I took the liberty of projecting myself into the future and predicting that on Monday April 7, Quebecers will have chosen Philippe Couillard's Liberal Party.

The stars seemed to be favouring Marois' government as the campaign buses first took to the roads. But a checkered campaign for both Marois and Couillard, gave our Quebecers the opportunity to choose perhaps the best of the worst.

In the end it seems to me that two main issues determined the

outcome of this election: the Values Charter and a referendum on potential Quebec sovereignty. What transpired from this campaign is that Quebecers' apprehension about a referendum held by a PQ government has weighed more heavily in the balance than their support for a Values Charter.

For Pauline Marois, the Liberal success in convincing many Quebecers that the Pequistes would conduct a referendum became a ball and chain she just could not get rid of. As for Philippe Couillard himself, he had his own ball and chain to drag along: his ties to Jean Charest's government, the one defeated by Pauline Ma-

Spencie's View



rois and the PQ in the last election. The PQ's heavy hitters didn't miss a chance to call him on that one during the electoral campaign.

But notwithstanding the final result, I found something very unusual during this past electoral campaign: the almost total indifference shown by media and people alike in British Columbia. There was a time not long ago when a Quebec election drew a lot of attention even on this side of the Rockies. That is no longer the case, save for a few political aficionados.

It may be in part explained by a generalized desensitization to all things political. But the main

reason is quite simple: people here couldn't care less about the eternal return of the referendum's ghost every time the people of Quebec are called to the ballot box. It's too bad, as it does nothing to foster a very necessary national dialogue, even though our province is now increasingly turning its economic hopes towards Asia.

Meanwhile, despite the indifference shown towards the election, the Liberals' checkered victory – at least the victory I predict ahead of decision day – will trigger in many British Columbians a sigh of relief. ✂

Translation Monique Kroeger



▲ Philippe Couillard (left), leader of the Quebec Liberals, and Pauline Marois, leader of the Parti Québécois (right).

Photos courtesy of Justin Trudeau (left) et the Parti Québécois (right)

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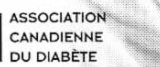
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Bernie, First Nations counsellor

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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
www.thelastsource.com

Founding Publisher Mamadou Gangué
Associate Publishers Saeed Dyanatkar (Digital),
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New UBC program takes a closer look at migration and the development of Asian communities

by FLORENCE HWANG

University of British Columbia (UBC) students can explore topics like their family roots through a new minor program that focuses on Asian migration to Canada. In February 2014, the UBC Senate approved a new multi-disciplinary minor program, Asian Canadian and Asian Migration Studies, in the Faculty of Arts. According to UBC, the minor delves into the history, culture and contemporary development of Asian communities in Canada as well as Asian migrations outside of Asia.

Joanna Yang is one of the students in a course called Asian Canadian Film Production, taught by filmmakers Alejandro Yoshizawa and Mina Shum. In the course, students learn the technical aspects of video production and how to research and write for their films. Some of the works will be chosen for a discussion forum this month. Yang wanted to learn more about Asian migration to the Americas (specifically, Vancouver and Canada) because of its relevance to her family's history.



▲ Joanna Yang, UBC student.

"Like other historical narratives, such as those pertaining to Indigenous peoples in Canada, Asian migration is framed as less significant than the dominant story

“Making a film was much more powerful than writing a paper.”

Alejandro Yoshizawa, co-instructor, Asian Canadian Film Production program at UBC

of Canada's construction," says Yang, who majors in human geography. She thinks that seeing this knowledge gap made her want to pursue more courses at UBC, such as a film production course with an Asian studies theme.

"As a geographer, I study how patterns of migration affect the urban morphology of places, communities and cities and indeed, Asian migration has and continues to shape our communities today. I love bringing creativity, film production and elements of my degree together in AI's [Alejandro Yoshizawa] class," says the 23-year-old student.

Yang's project, with her partner Stephanie Fun, investigates five queer Asian-Canadian youths' coming out stories and learn about how they find their identity. Yang feels that the effort she has invested in this film will be putting her undergraduate degree to good use.

"The power of film lies in its ability to educate and enlighten the average person in an engaging aesthetic. Disseminating knowledge cannot be limited to the world of books and journal articles," says Yang.

Introduction to film through academics

Yoshizawa, one of the co-instructors of the film course, studied

physics at UBC and obtained a master's degree in history at Concordia. He didn't start filmmaking until he took Professor Henry Yu's history course at UBC. The final

project was to produce a film instead of a term paper. Yoshizawa interviewed his family about his grandfather as the subject of his film, and his family loved it.

"I learned a lot from my first film. I wanted to do more. Making a film was much more powerful than writing a paper. I saw how the film affected people," says Yoshizawa.

Germ of an idea

The Asian Migration Minor stud-

ies' seeds were planted about 10 years ago by Prof. Henry Yu when he returned to UBC from UCLA.

"If you want to create new knowledge, if you want to popu-

larize it, then it needs to be put on TV or video," says Yu.

He acknowledges that Canadian-born Asians are likely not aware of their family history. "If you grew up here, and parents grew up elsewhere, you know very little of your own history," he says.

Yu thinks it's very important that students research their own history and community. Immediately, they have something to give back to the community.

"That's why we have film and media for preserving history. You see, and hear, get the personality, not just the words. You preserve the person's life story.

You hear their emotions in the stories," says Yu.

Future focus of film

Ying Wang is one of the founders of Cinevolution Media Arts Society and the Your Kontinent: Richmond Int'l Film and Media Arts Festival. She feels there are a lot of interesting stories about Asian-Canadian history that have yet to be told.

"However, I believe to tell the history is not the ending, but should only be a starting point."



▲ Alejandro Yoshizawa, a filmmaker and instructor at UBC.

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May 1-30
A View Within a View: Garden expressions, exchanges & explorations (UBC Library's Spring & Summer Learning Centre, 3381 S. Mall, Vancouver)

May 2-4
The Life of Reclam, Persia's Great Hero, from the Shahnameh (Book of Kings) (West Vancouver Community Centre, 2522 Marine Dr, West Vancouver)

May 2-7 pm
NEED: The Life and Works of Roy Kiyooka (Saskia Sami, 131-42 W 85th Ave, Vancouver)

May 3-2 pm
explorASIAN 2014 Festival Official Opening (International Arts Gallery, International Village Mall, 88 W Wender St, Vancouver)

May 3-31
Generation One Exhibition (International Arts Gallery, International Village Mall, 88 W Wender St, Vancouver)

May 5, 9
BEYOND THE WALLS: VICO concerts Sound of Dragon Music Festival (Southwest Centre for the Arts & The Southwest Community Arts & Recreation Centre - Vancouver)

May 7, 10, 14
First Families, First Stories: Research workshop (Vancouver Learning Centre, 3381 S. Mall, Vancouver)

May 10-24
BLOOM 2014 - Doreana Project (Mikael National Museum & Cultural Centre, 6038 Southtown Circle, Burnaby)

May 10 - 3pm
"Truth the Field" film screening, Life and Times of a Chinese Canadian Woman (100 Learning Exchange, 113 Main St, Vancouver)

May 10 - 7:30pm
BC Chinese Orchestra LIVE! Night Concert (Gateway Theatre, 5580 Gilford Rd, Richmond)

May 10 - 2pm
Illustrated Cultural Narratives & Graphic Novel by Hsueh Wei (Vancouver Art Gallery, 7700 Miasson Suite, Richmond)

May 10 - 2-3pm
Illustrated Talk: Vancouver's Ethnic Chinatown by Rayne Wei (Vancouver Art Gallery, 7700 Miasson Suite, Richmond)

May 14 & 10:30-11:30am
Art & Tea Talk (Richmond Art Gallery, 7700 Miasson Suite, Richmond)

May 14 - 5-6pm
Living (and Dying) for Canada's Ideals (Chinese Canadian History Museum, 5010, 555 Columbia St, Vancouver)

May 14 - 7-9pm
2014 Milton S. Wong Lecture: The Global Ecovillage: Diversity, Resilience and Adaptability by Dr. David Suzuki (The Chan Centre for Professional Arts, 6309 Crescent Rd, Vancouver)

May 17 - 1-4pm
Asian Heritage Day (Sunny Mountain, 17710 80A Ave, Surrey)

May 17 - 2:30 & 4:30
Buktitik-An Afternoon of Bengali Poetry (Buktitik Cultural Centre, 7700 Miasson Suite, Richmond)

May 21-22
100th Anniversary of the Kamagata Maru Episode (Museum of Vancouver, 3100 Chestnut St, Vancouver)

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Photo courtesy of Alejandro Yoshizawa



Left Bank



DERRICK O'KEEFE



Photo by Dennis Sylvester Hurd

Harper's unfair Elections Act must be stopped

Stephen Harper is trying to rewrite the rules around elections in Canada, and we can't afford to let him get away with it.

The prime minister won a majority government in 2011 with 39 per cent of votes, which were cast by a mere 61 per cent of eligible voters. He doesn't need either of those numbers to go up to hold on to power in the next election, expected in 2015. In fact, he'd likely fare better if voter turnout goes down. So if you're not an identified Conservative Party supporter, or someone Harper's party thinks can be swayed with the micro-targeted direct appeals they've perfected, they couldn't care less.

The Conservatives make no secret of their vast and state of the art database that keeps track of voter contact and preference information, allowing them to pinpoint potential supporters and craft their messages accordingly. What the party doesn't advertise is the flip side to this electoral coin: direct or indirect attempts to reduce voter turnout amongst those likely to vote for their opposition.

In the United States, these practices have come to be understood as voter suppression, and the Conservatives' ideological brothers in the Republican Party have infamously mastered these techniques.

The 2011 federal election offered alarming evidence that these toxic, anti-democratic strategies have come north. The so-called "robocalls" scandal involves reports of scores of identified non-Conservative voters receiving calls directing them to the wrong voting location. These fraudulent calls were ordered up by one "Pierre Poutine."

An Elections Canada investigation is currently underway into robocalls and electoral fraud in the riding of Guelph, Ontario. One Conservative campaign worker, Michael Sona, has been charged, while his former colleague Andrew Prescott has turned state's witness in exchange for immunity. The Guelph Conservative campaign manager, Ken Morgan, has refused to speak to investigators and is currently out of the country, reportedly teaching in Kuwait City.

This sordid episode provides vital context for understanding the current debate over Harper's efforts to overhaul Canada's elections laws through the Orwellian-named 'Fair Elections Act.' This is raising alarm across the political spectrum, amongst Elections Canada officials themselves, and from senior public servants who rarely weigh in on specific legislation.

Last week, for example, former auditor general Sheila Fraser blasted the Conservatives' Bill C-23 as "an attack on democracy." If it goes through without major

amendments, Fraser worries "it's going to be very difficult to have a fair, a truly fair, election."

There are a couple of key reasons why C-23 would be better called the unfair Elections Act. First of all, this bill would weaken Elections Canada. Almost unbelievably, it would prevent the independent body from engaging in campaigns to encourage voting. Worse yet, the Commissioner of Elections will have less authority to investigate electoral infractions.

So basically, the party that has done everything it can, at the local and national level, to avoid getting to the bottom of the robocalls electoral fraud scandal in 2011 is now rewriting the rules under which the 2015 election will be held. Harper has chutzpah, you have to give him that.

Furthermore, Bill C-23 proposes scrapping voter identification cards and eliminating the practice of having someone vouch for a voter's identity. The Conservatives say these measures will reduce voter fraud. But they've been making the case for the changes with made up or misrepresented evidence. During debate in Parliament, Conservative MP Brad Butt twice recounted how he had personally seen people retrieving discard voter cards from the garbage so that they could reuse them fraudulently. It turns out Butt just made that story up, and he was forced to retract it.

The changes the Conservatives are proposing, based on fictitious evidence like Butt's, could have very real consequences. No less than Harry Neufeld, the author of the report that the Conservatives are using to justify Bill C-23, has warned that hundreds of thousands of people could have a harder time voting if the bill goes through unamended. Neufeld has accused Pierre Poilievre, Harper's Minister of State for Democratic Reform, of "selectively reading and quoting from [his] report."

Now, there's no such thing as a truly fair election in an unequal, capitalist society, where corporations and the super-rich have so many tools to distort and undermine democracy. But the current moves by the Harper government are brazenly anti-democratic, an attempt by a bully to rewrite the rules in order to improve his chances of staying in power.

As I've written about at length, the alternatives to Harper currently on offer are woefully insufficient. However, it's still essential that we oust him from office. And it's imperative that we defend our democratic rights.

Harper's unfair Elections Act must be stopped. ✉

For more information on campaigns against Bill C-23, check out LeadNow.ca and Canadians.org



Vancouver Chapter

PRESENTS

AN EVENING WITH MELLISSA FUNG

Journalist, former CBC reporter, and Author of
"UNDER AN AFGHAN SKY"



TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2014
7:00 PM

HR MacMillan Space Centre
1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC

Award-winning journalist Mellissa Fung will discuss her experience as a reporter covering the Canadian military mission in Afghanistan, and her recent return to the country for the first time since her abduction there in 2009. The evening will include a screening of Mellissa's documentary for CBC's *The National* about her recent return to Afghanistan.

- ❖ "Under an Afghan Sky" book sales and signing opportunity
- ❖ Afghan jewellery and handmade products available for sale
- ❖ Tickets: \$10 for students (ID must be presented upon entry); \$15 Early Bird before April 18 or \$20 after April 18 and at the door

Book online: www.eventbrite.ca/e/an-evening-with-mellissa-fung-tickets-3501833077
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Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru April 12 to June 15 | Opening Reception: April 12, 7:30-9:30pm Exhibition Launch with Artist's Talk and Opening Reception

Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru launches on April 12 with an artist's talk at 6:30pm, followed by an opening reception from 7:30pm to 9:30pm (formal remarks at 7:45pm). Toronto-based artist Ali Kazimi will give an illustrated talk about his art practice, major works, and the context for his work on display in the exhibition. There is another event taking place on this evening, so visitors are encouraged to arrive early in order to find parking. Admission to the opening reception and artist's talk is free (donations are gratefully received).

EVENTS

Exhibition Tours

Thursday, April 24, 7–8:30pm
Thursday, May 29, 7–8:30pm
Location: Surrey Art Gallery

Be part of an informal tour of the exhibition led by Jordan Strom, curator, Surrey Art Gallery, and hear interesting stories about the artworks and artists. After the tour, stay for refreshments and conversation.

By donation; Surrey Art Gallery Association members free

An evening with Ali Kazimi and the film *Continuous Journey*

The Harjit Kaur Sidhu Memorial Program 2014
Thursday, May 1, 7–9:30pm
Location: Centre Stage at Surrey City Centre (City Hall) 13450-104 Avenue

This event includes a screening of *Continuous Journey* – Ali Kazimi's 2004 documentary that explores the history of the Komagata Maru 'incident' – and a conversation with the filmmaker. Presented by UBC Asian Studies, in partnership with the Komagata Maru Heritage Foundation, Surrey Art Gallery, and Surrey Civic Theatres.

Free with the support of the Sidhu family

Seating is limited

Disfiguring Identity: Art, Migration and Exile

Saturday, May 10, 7:30–9:30pm
A series of short film and video screenings to 8:45pm, followed by Q&A with artists to 9:30pm.
Location: Centre Stage at Surrey City Centre (City Hall) 13450 104 Avenue

Sunday, May 11, 12-5:45pm
Presentations, panels, and performances featuring a keynote talk on recent histories of art and activism related to racism.
Location: Surrey Art Gallery

This two-day symposium will examine contemporary artistic responses to histories of racism and xenophobia triggered by immigration from Asia to Canada over the past century. Among those featured will be artists who have made work directly related to the history of the Komagata Maru and those who have addressed parallel and more recent incidents of arrival. Others will consider the impact of media representations, personal experiences, and art histories that engage with narratives of identity. Co-presented with Kwantlen Polytechnic University Fine Arts Department and On Main Gallery.

Free – donations gratefully received

Family Day

Sunday, June 8, 12-4pm
Location: Surrey Art Gallery

Drop in to explore, enjoy, and create art together! Family-friendly activities are inspired by the exhibition, plus a special performance at 2pm. Children must be with an adult.

Suggested donation: \$4 per child

Surrey Art Gallery acknowledges the support of the Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru project by the Department of Canadian Heritage through a grant for Building Communities through Arts and Heritage in partnership with the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society in Metro Vancouver. Surrey Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of City of Surrey, BC Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, and Vancouver Foundation. Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru is presented in partnership with Komagata Maru 1914 – 2014, a collaboration between eight organizations across Metro Vancouver that are presenting events and exhibitions related to the living legacies of the Komagata Maru episode. www.komagatamaru100.com Surrey Art Gallery recognizes and is thankful for the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts, which last year invested \$157 million to bring the arts to Canadians throughout the country. Nous remercions le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien. L'an dernier, le Conseil a investi 157 millions de dollars pour mettre de l'art dans la vie des Canadiennes et des Canadiens de tout le pays. Surrey Art Gallery and the Surrey Art Gallery Association gratefully acknowledge the ongoing financial assistance of the BC Arts Council, an agency of the Province of BC. Surrey Art Gallery Association acknowledges the support of Vancouver Foundation for the Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru project. With almost 1,500 funds and assets totaling \$814 million, Vancouver Foundation is Canada's largest community foundation. In 2012, Vancouver Foundation and its donors made more than 4,000 grants, totaling approximately \$46 million to registered charities across Canada. Since it was founded in 1943, Vancouver Foundation, in partnership with its donors, has distributed more than \$917 million to thousands of community projects and programs. Grant recipients range from social services to medical research groups, to organizations devoted to arts and culture, the environment, education, children and families, disability supports for employment, youth issues and animal welfare. To find out more visit: vancouverfoundation.ca or follow us on social media: Facebook.com/vancouverfdn or @VancouverFdn.

**Surrey Art Gallery is located at 13750 - 88 Avenue, Surrey, BC, Canada.
604-501-5566 | www.surrey.ca/artgallery**

**HOURS (until early July): Tues-Thur 9am-9pm | Fri 9am-5pm | Sat 10am-5pm | Sun 12-5pm |
Closed Mondays and holidays. Note: Surrey Art Gallery will be closed April 18 through 21.**

Being street smart about Canadian culture

by SIMON YEE

What is the proper etiquette when one is invited to go to a party in Canada? What kinds of parties are held? How early to the party should one arrive? How late is acceptable? And how do people from other cultures host parties?

These are some of the questions that can be asked and discussed at Culture Smart, a weekly workshop set in a friendly atmosphere that provides a forum for newcomers to learn about different facets about Canadian culture, as well as share their stories about how their own cultures approach similar situations.

A place to learn

Culture Smart discusses different cultures in Vancouver. It

"I didn't know a Nanaimo bar was a sweet! I only knew it was a street!" exclaims Girly, 38, from the Philippines.

Adris, 28, who arrived from Afghanistan three months ago, celebrated his birthday on March 31. He brought a cheesecake to the meeting to share and enjoy with the group. Birthday celebrations and parties in general provided the main theme for that day's group discussion.

Girly explains that in the Philippines, certain milestone birthdays, such as ages 1, 7, 12, 18 and 21, are grandly celebrated. In addition, symbolic foods must be prepared on those birthdays.

"Rice noodles or spaghetti should be served. It's a symbol which indicates long life," says Girly. But the noodles or spaghetti cannot be cut short or else it ruins the symbolism.



▲ Karen George addresses the group.

helps new immigrants to improve their English writing and listening skills, and also gives them a sense of Canadian humour.

"When new immigrants come to Canada, they may have a lot of questions and not know who to ask. So we set up this program to help answer them and help them learn more about the cultural context, and how it is to live in Canada," says Karen George, program facilitator with MOSAIC, the non-profit organization that hosts Culture Smart.

Sue, a volunteer facilitator who has previously worked on other MOSAIC cultural programs, leads this year's Culture Smart. Sue determines the topics for discussions, but she also asks the participants what they are interested in and what questions they have about living and getting around in Canada.

"We've talked about the Canadian handshake, what do you talk about with strangers, what are safe and appropriate topics, how to get in and out of a conversation, personal space and Canadian food," Sue says.

But it's not just Canada the participants learn about. Sue also connects what she talks about with the various cultural backgrounds represented at the workshop and tries to find cultural similarities and note differences as well.

"Learning is not a one way street. I like to try to make links with their cultures as best we can," explains Sue.

A place to converse

All of the Culture Smart participants agree with the sentiment the program is a valuable forum to learn more about Canadian culture. It also provides an opportunity to make new friends, who are also new to the country as well as share their own life experiences and humorous cultural misunderstandings.

"For the first birthday, it's a big party," adds Yinga, 50, who arrived in Canada from Taiwan five months ago with her husband and son. "We go to a restaurant and usually the guests will give money in a red envelope or they will give presents like a golden necklace or ring for the baby."

Yinga further remarks that when the children are older, it is the children who treat their elderly parents to the restaurant.

A place to feel welcome

Culture Smart is more than just a workshop to swap stories, learn about cultures and improve one's English skills. It also fosters a sense of place and belonging, which is very important for newcomers who sometimes find themselves lost or disoriented in a new country.

"I enjoy the topics that we talked about, like how everyone has different hobbies. Having conversations, to talk with others and make friends. It makes me feel very relaxed and happy," says Wenjie, 45, from China.

Although some participants found out about the program through advertisements at a public library or community centre, others heard it through a glowing recommendation from a work colleague who previously attended the program.

Adris thinks programs like Culture Smart should be better advertised at Canadian immigration offices for newcomers to learn about it quickly and register if they wish.

"When you come to a new country like Canada, very multicultural, you need some place to go because you can't keep asking everyone every day, 'How do you greet here?', 'How do you talk there?'. So you want a platform where you go to share these questions. It's best for newcomers to learn these things as early as you can. I'm so happy now to have a place where I can go to get an answer for sure," says Adris. ☺

Workshop shares Coast Salish song and drumming

by ANASTASIA SCHERDERS

For the past year and a half, SFU Woodward's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts has been the site of Coast Salish singing and drumming workshops. The workshops, which are free and open to the public, invite participants to experience and share First Nations music in an accessible community space.

Originally held at SFU's Burnaby campus, SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement and Office of Aboriginal Peoples collaborated to present the workshops downtown, starting Sept. 2012.

"The Office of Aboriginal Peoples wanted to bring this event to the Downtown campus in order to connect with the Downtown Eastside and First Nations peoples in the downtown area," says Am Johal, director of community engagement at SFU Woodward's Cultural Unit.

Songs for the community

Russell Wallace, a composer, producer and traditional Lil'wat singer, instructs each workshop and introduces the participants to an array of physical and vocal activities including breathing and rhythm exercises, call-and-response songs and playful dances like the crow dance where participants are invited to imitate the movements of a curious, intelligent crow.

Wallace hopes that in sharing these songs, participants will gain an appreciation for the diversity of Aboriginal music.

"A lot of people have no idea about Aboriginal culture and think that all the music is the same, but there are many Aboriginal nations," says Wallace. The songs of one community may vary greatly from another and he illustrates this diversity by teaching songs from several First Nations communities.

The history of a song

With each song that he teaches, Wallace provides significant historical context as to how these songs circulate and the role they play in Aboriginal communities in the past and the present.

"He is so knowledgeable about the language and history of First Nations culture, singing and dancing, and the songs that are shared within families," says Johal.

For Wallace, it is important to achieve a balance between sharing First Nations music and communicating the history and philosophies behind it. He points out that one can sing a song without knowing where it comes from.

"For some, [the workshop] is a bit of an introduction to Aboriginal language and history. I want to provide as much information as possible so people understand why we sing," says Wallace. "If



Photo courtesy of SFU Woodward's

▲ Russell Wallace and company sing and play hand drums.



Photo courtesy of Russell Wallace

▲ Russell Wallace performing at the Dragon Boat Festival in Vancouver.

"People find different things that they enjoy in the workshop," says Wallace.

The songs that Wallace teaches are referred to as social songs, which are meant to be shared and can be sung by the community, unlike private or ceremonial songs. He includes children songs, working songs, and narrative songs, some of which are accompanied with the rhythm of stomping and clapping, others with a hand drum and rattles.

there is a question, I try to answer it."

According to Johal, Wallace's instruction allows participants to gain a deeper understanding of the richness of the cultures that existed before colonization.

While the event facilitates greater awareness and knowledge of First Nations history and culture, Johal also believes it is an opportunity for attendees to learn from one another and engage with their community.

He points out that there are many attendees from the Downtown Eastside, and because it is drop-in, each session is unique with persons from varying cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

"We need ways for different groups of people to come together and share an experience. This allows for a collective exploration of memory and history," says Johal. ✎

This season's final Coast Salish singing and drumming workshop will be held on April 28, 7–9 p.m. at Djavad Mowafaghian World Art Centre, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts. The workshops will resume September 2014.

CELEBRATE SPRING

Japanese Canadian Festival to Celebrate Spring

Saturday, April 12, 2014

11:00am-4:00pm

Nikkei Centre

6688 Southoaks Crescent, Burnaby (Kingsway & Sperling)

604.777.7000 | www.nikkeiplace.org

The Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre has just the festival to fix your grey sky blues.

On Saturday, April 12 from 11am to 4pm Nikkei Centre will be hosting the annual Celebrate Spring: *Festival of Colour*, a family friendly event that celebrates all that Spring has to offer, with Japanese Canadian flair. Festivities include performances, Japanese kimono dressings, tea ceremonies, and a craft section for kids. New for this year, the festival is partnering with Filipino organizations to celebrate diversity in the community. Performances will showcase traditional Japanese and Filipino artists including Satsuki-kai (Classical Japanese dance), Ryukyu Dance & Taiko (Okinawan dance and music), and Filipino folk dance and drum. There will also be the opportunity to do some shopping for your own kimono, handmade Japanese fashion accessories, jewelry, miniature bonsai, and much more. For a taste of Japanese food, there will be special Sakura Bento lunches available and tea and sweets served at the event. Bentos sell out quickly, so to pre-order your Bento lunch please call ahead to 604.777.7000 or email to info@nikkeiplace.org. Sakura Bento lunches are \$13+tax (general), \$12 (NNMCC members) for pre-orders, and \$15 on the day of the festival.

We are currently still looking for craft vendors to have booths at Celebrate Spring. Please find the application form and submission directions at <http://centre.nikkeiplace.org/celebrate-spring-2014/>.

For more information on the festival or other programs and events held at Nikkei Centre, please visit www.nikkeiplace.org or call the centre at 604.777.7000.

The Filipino community introduces Celebrate Spring in a video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jY3mT1IG09U>

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre endeavors to promote a better understanding and appreciation by all Canadians of Japanese Canadian culture and heritage; and awareness by all Canadians of the contribution of Japanese Canadians to Canadian society, through public programs, exhibits, services, publications, public use of the facilities and special events. Our mission is to preserve and promote Japanese Canadian history, arts and culture through vibrant programs and exhibits that connect generations and inspire diverse audiences.

 Nikkei
national museum
& cultural centre



HORN OF AFRICA EMERGENCY

 DEVELOPMENT
AND PEACE

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Japanese consulate celebrates 125 years with theatre for the ages

by JAKE MCGRAIL

Japanese people and culture have been a part of Vancouver for a long time. A man named Manzo Nagano arrived in New Westminster in 1877, becoming the first official Japanese immigrant to Canada. Twelve years later, the first Japanese Consulate-General in the country was founded in Vancouver.

In 2014, the consulate will celebrate its 125th anniversary with a series of events promot-



▲ Colleen Lanki, artistic director of Tomoe Arts.

ing Japanese culture, highlighted by *Hagoromo*, a play in the ancient Japanese tradition of Noh theatre. The performance will take place at the Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre on April 12.

Representing Japan

The Japanese Consulate in Vancouver covers B.C. and Yukon, and is responsible for representing Japan in these areas. It is offers services to Japanese businesspeople, farmers, and others conducting business in B.C., while also fostering greater awareness of Japanese culture and history in Canada.

"The reason we opened our office is because there were Japanese people here. We are revisiting their history. One of our jobs is to promote Japanese culture to Canadians here. We have to do that as best as we can," says consul-general Seiji Okada.

One of the events that will celebrate Japanese culture and the consulate's 125th anniversary is the Noh play *Hagoromo*, presented by the Consulate-

General and Tomoe Arts, a dance theatre company.

The artistic director of Tomoe Arts, Colleen Lanki, has ties to Noh theatre and Japan.

The masks are very important as well, as they are one of the key visuals that define the characters. They are made out of the Japanese cedar, hinoki,

different characters. A warrior can turn into an old man or a seemingly harmless woman can reveal that she is really a demon.

“One of our jobs is to promote Japanese culture to Canadians here.

Seiji Okada, Japanese Consul General

She lived in Japan for many years and studied Noh and other types of theatre.

"I'm honoured to present this. [The performing troupe] are master artists. My whole company is honoured," says Lanki.

An ancient but vital art form

Noh theatre has been around for hundreds of years. It originated in the 14th century, and was popularized and formalized by a man named Zeami. Four main troupes, or schools of Noh were established. Noh was elevated when an early shogun officially made Noh an official ceremonial art and introduced regulations for it. Noh became focused on tradition, not innovation. A fifth school was added and the same five schools perform today.

Hagoromo comes from the Komparu school of Noh. It is about an angel that descends to earth and has her feathered robe stolen and with it, her ability to fly. The angel has two distinct appearances during the play. One is with her patterned and colorful robe, and one with a simple white outfit.

The costumes are mostly silk and have many layers to create a "bulky" effect. This means they are very warm and not pleasant to wear.

"They are very heavy and uncomfortable," says Lanki. "[Noh actors] have to wear pads underneath the costumes to absorb the large amount of sweat they produce."

and are flat.

"You have to wear pads on your cheeks because they are flat," says Lanki. "If you don't lift them they will break your nose. If you have a smaller nose then you're better off!"

A character can change masks and costumes multiple times throughout the play to become

According to Lanki, Noh performances in Vancouver attract a mix of different people and cultures.

"My experience is about half and half. Japanese want to see and support their culture. The other half is curious people, people wanting to learn about Japanese culture," says Lanki. ✎



▲ Yamai Tsunao in Hagoromo.



▲ Consul General Seiji Okada.

“Armenian” from page 1

ucts to clients as far as Calgary, Ontario and Northern B.C.

While La Majoun Bakery facilitates Armenian traditions by allowing people to enjoy freshly baked cultural foods and breads they love and miss, it also fosters relationships within the community.

"When delivering products to our customers we often make new friends – the acquaintances of Armenians – who for some reason do not participate in community events. I am glad that I personally introduced many "hidden" Armenians to our community, and they eventually made friends with other members. Thus our community becomes greater," explains Serge Maranjyan, president of the bakery.

Passing on the torch

Alongside fostering a wider appreciation of Armenian history, traditions and values, the Armenian Cultural Association of B.C. also aims to provide a means for the younger generation to know their heritage and culture.

"Our culture means our heri-

tage, our values. It's what we need to pass on to our children – in order for our language not to get lost. It's important for many Armenians to ensure our kids speak the language, understand where we came from, and know our long history," says treasurer Ani Geragosian.

Because of this traditional belief, the association recently put on a youth talent project featuring young Armenian artists,



▲ The Armenian alphabet on display.

singers, and actors to showcase them to the community. Participants of this initiative host a talent show and also assist with ACA's radio show.

"This gives them confidence, self-esteem, recognition within the community and also growth in their ventures," Geragosian says.

Astighik Harapetian, president of the Armenian Student Association of UBC, believes preserving one's culture and heritage is crucial to shaping the community for young people to thrive.

"I can say from being a diasporan Armenian, no matter where you are, no matter what language or languages you speak, what you eat, or what you wear, your upbringing ensures you will never lose your sense of being Armenian," says Harapetian.

He grew up in a very large Armenian American community in Los Angeles.

"A lot of who I am is thanks to that community," says Harapetian.

Reflecting on History

From 1895 to 1922, the Otto-

man Empire – in what is now present-day Turkey – had forced the deportation of many Armenians to "relocation centers" in the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia. On April 23 and 24, 1915, Armenian political, religious, educational and intellectual leaders in Istanbul were arrested, deported to the interior and put to death.

The Armenian genocide and systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing, carried out by the Turkish government during the time of World War I, has left many adverse impacts on the Armenian community today.

"We all know that history plays a big role in the lives of all people. Crimes against humanity, such as the Armenian genocide, have impacted our people in many ways," explains Greg Yaghdjian, executive director and chairman of ACA's Trustee Board. "Our culture cannot help but be affected by an event of this magnitude. Our literature, music, arts etc. have all been affected by the genocide."

For Yaghdjian, the acknowledgement and condemnation

of committed genocides is crucial for their prevention in the future. Non-acknowledgement or willful ignorance of genocide, he believes, pave the way for the repetition of new crimes against humanity.

In 2004, Canada passed a resolution in the House of Commons denouncing the Turks for the atrocities committed in 1915. After decades of avoiding the sensitive issue, the Canadian government officially recognized the event as "genocide" instead of calling it a "tragedy."

The motion states, "This House acknowledges the Armenian genocide of 1915 and condemns this act as a crime against humanity."

According to Harapetian, representing history accurately is paramount to moving forward.

"The Armenian genocide is undoubtedly and unfortunately a large part of the Armenian identity – it means we [need to] know first-hand the importance of truth, and the importance of supporting one another," he says. ✎



Photo by Mat McCarthy, courtesy of Verses Festival of Words

▲ Janice Lee aims to give her audiences positive vibes while feeding their critical skills.

Spoken magic: festival celebrates poetry as performance

by SONJA GRGAR

Vancouver's Verses Festival of Words, which runs from April 5 to 12, allows poetry to jump off the page and come alive as both a theatrical performance and an interactive, transformative experience for the audience. In addition to events and workshops, the festival features The Canadian Individual Poetry Slam Championship, where poets are judged by randomly selected members of the audience, with the winner poised to represent English Canada in the World Cup of Poetry Slam in Paris.

Harnessing the rhythm

Though Verses welcomes all manner of poetry, the focus of the festival is a genre called spoken word.

"Spoken word draws on the oral traditions of poetry. It includes storytelling, stand-up comedy and lyric poetry," says Chris Gilpin, the festival's managing director.

Spoken word poetry is not simply read: it is performed. d'bi. young anitafrika is an interna-

tionally renowned African-Jamaican-Canadian poet, dramatist and educator, who will, among other engagements, hold a Spoken Word Masterclass on April 8.

ours the rhythm in the language, in movement, in the ecosystem," she says.

Kevan "Scruffmouth the Scribe" Cameron, a dub poet and Grand Champion of the 2008 Vancouver Poetry Slam who will perform at the Pan American Slam on April 9, explains that the oral nature of spoken word motivates the poet to consider the reception of their work in a different manner.

"The oral element of dub poetry forces you to consider your audience as listeners first," he says.

Storytelling, an archetypal backbone of all cultures, is also a central ingredient of the form.

"I find that spoken word returns to the roots of poetry and storytelling, in that it is a communal experience. It exists in the air between people," says Janice Lee, an Ontario-based spoken word poet, singer-songwriter and community organizer, who will be featured in Shake Yo' Fist and Talk the Talk: Race events on April 10.

Personifying the political

Lee loves spoken word because she believes that it removes bar-

tainment aspects of poetry, he believes its most vital role is to promote social change.

"I have always believed that the value and purpose of poetry is to radically alter people's consciousness. When people speak their truth, it has an amazing amount of transformative power," says Akpata.

For Cameron, a first generation Canadian-Jamaican of African descent, the social values stemming from his cultural background inform his poetic sensibilities.

"Many of the values, morals and life lessons of African-Caribbean culture come from stories, songs, proverbs and poems. I hope that my work not only disseminates this knowledge, but is used to govern right action and intent," he says.

Heart over mind

For d'bi.young, art-making is a socio-political, yet also a deeply personal process. Her work is steeped in the magic and spirituality of her Jamaican heritage as it is unmistakably feminist and critical.

d'bi.young explains that to her the spirit and politics are deeply inter-connected, and that all social change inevitably starts with a spiritual and emotional transformation.

"When you listen to a storyteller, your heart is moved, [and] then you can get the energy to move your mind," she says.

The idea that being expressly political does not necessarily involve the intellect alone is something that Lee can relate to.

"I want to be gentle with the community and share lots of love. I also want to call audiences to be critical...Poets have power, and they ought to be checked by audiences," says Lee.

The connection between the personal and the political is only one of the many topics Verses is interested in exploring.

"We need to redefine the idea of a writer in the 21st century. Maybe we should be realizing that being a writer is not entirely book-centric, and look at singer/songwriters as poets, and stand-up comedians as writers," says Gilpin. ✍

For more information on the 2014 Verses Festival of Words, visit www.versesfestival.ca, and follow them on twitter @vanpoetryhouse, #VS14



Photo by courtesy of Verses Festival of Words

▲ d'bi.young anitafrika, a renowned dub poet, dramatist and educator, seeks to inspire social change and personal growth through her work.

riars between performers and audiences, and allows the words that course through a poet's body to convey unfiltered truths, often erasing the line between the personal and the political.

John Akpata is a spoken word poet, art educator and radio broadcaster from Ottawa, who will appear in the Pan American Slam on April 9. Though he values educational and enter-

tainment aspects of poetry, he believes its most vital role is to promote social change.

tainment aspects of poetry, he believes its most vital role is to promote social change.

THE CULTCH



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Written and Directed by Yael Farber

Produced by Baxter Theatre at the University of Capetown and the South African State Theatre in association with National Arts Festival, Grahamstown

March 25–April 19, 2014

March 25–29, April 1–5, April 8–12, April 15–19 at 8 pm
March 30, April 6, 13, 19 at 2 pm

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1895 Venables Street, Vancouver, BC

Tickets start at \$31!

Single tickets on sale now through The Cultch's Box Office: 604-251-1363 or tickets.thecultch.com.

ADDED VALUE: Enjoy a lively post-show Q&A session with the artists: Mar 26, Apr 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16

Internationally acclaimed director Yael Farber sets her explosive new adaptation of Strindberg's classic *Miss Julie* in the remote, bleak beauty of South Africa. In the sweltering heat of a Cape Karoo kitchen, a deadly battle unfolds over power, sexuality, memory, mothers, and land. This newly menacing, passionate, and relevant allegory for a post-apartheid state in transition was named one of 2012's Top 5 productions by *The Guardian*, UK and the Top 10 of 2012 by *The New York Times*.

An outstanding South African cast includes Fleur Du Cap award-winner Bongile Mantsai as John, South African television veteran Thokozile Ntshinga playing Christine, and Hilda Cronje as Julie. They are joined by on-stage musician and singer Thandiwe Nofirst Lungisa from the Ngoko Cultural Group, creating an evocative soundtrack of Xhosa music performed with traditional regional instruments, overlaid by a sinister soundscape created by Daniel and Matthew Pencer.

Following its Canadian premiere at The Cultch, the production will have runs at Place Des Arts in Montreal (April 21 to May 3) and the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto (May 5 to 10).

Issues & Ideas

The housing market's war on culture and community

by ALEXANDER AGNELLO

World's best city to live in", and "World's most reputable city" were the accolades thrown around by just about anyone who learned about my imminent departure to Vancouver. To my mind, the city has an immediate appeal and aura that these various reports and surveys seem to have tapped into: it's pleasant, safe and in a rather impressive location. The sobering truth is that Vancouver now wears neither of those two crowns, and it may very well have something to do with the fact that Vancouver has the second most expensive real estate market in the world relative to average annual earnings.

First Impressions

Something I began noticing after it was brought to my attention on a causal evening stroll downtown is the substantial number of condominiums in this city that appear vacant. UBC adjunct urban planning professor Andrew Yan suggests that nearly a quarter of condos in Coal Harbour are either empty or occupied by non-residents, according to data from the 2011 census. The sight of the condos in this area in particular can provide an ominous and alien-



▲ New residential buildings in Downtown Vancouver – but what type of community are they creating?

ating experience to those walking the southeast end of the Stanley Park seawall. The walkways that

contour the modern-looking development projects are mainly occupied by fitness-obsessed joggers and photo-taking tourists. It is the ideal place to take in the elements

from a safe distance, but certainly not the right place if your aim is to get a feel of the Vancouver vibe. This sort of development project ultimately brings to mind a question regarding the general outlook for Vancouver: what sort of a community are we aiming to foster in these high-rise neighborhoods that are swiftly emerging?

The investment that neighborhoods like Coal Harbour, Yaletown and Gastown are seeing, whether it be foreign or domestic, seems to have created a class of residents who are not part of the active population of Vancouver. I admit that the latter two neighborhoods, much like the areas near Denman and Davie, do boast a large number of well-frequented shops and restaurants, which account for a substantial portion of the city's cultural output. But on the other hand, the many shops and restaurants in Coal Harbour give a false impression of the level of activity in this neighborhood. Aside from the fact that most coffee shops and restaurants in this area are of the chain brand variety, they tend to close not long after the regular daytime work hours are over, and are no busier on weekends than they are on weekdays.

The Road Ahead

The highly anticipated TED conference took place last

month only a stone's throw away from Coal Harbour, and the response seemed rather underwhelming. Not even the 747-foot sky sculpture that soared over the event space (half the span of the Brooklyn Bridge), could entice residents to congregate around Canada Place. To my mind, the take-home message is that city planners should carefully reflect on recent and future changes made to Vancouver's skyline.

Simon Fraser University's Vancouver campus is sometimes regarded as the intellectual hub of the downtown core. Yet the university has also been at the forefront of the gentrification process of the historical East Side, a continuing process that threatens the livelihood of several iconic establishments on Hastings that define the city's raw-and-real entertainment culture. It would come with great remorse to see the Hasting area be irreparably altered by the sort of housing developments found in Coal Harbour: a neighborhood created *ex nihilo*, with a transient community that can't seem to make a meaningful mark on the cultural fabric of this city. ✍

REEL CAUSES
Make change through the power of film

Tuesday April 15th, 2014
Doors open 6:30 PM
Event starts 7:00 PM

SFU Goldcorp Centre for the Arts
Djavad Mowafaghian Cinema
149 West Hastings Street, Vancouver

"A searing look at the role of American evangelical missionaries in the persecution of gay Africans" - The New York Times

Event Info & Details:
www.reelcauses.org

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Ashton

► "Verbatim" from page 1

When people ask me if I celebrate Christmas, I always think: "Good question. I don't know, exactly." Ditto for Easter, Chinese New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival and numerous other holidays.

Aloud, I often answer: "Kind of, I think."

I know that isn't the clearest of responses, decidedly, but I have to admit that I don't quite understand what constitutes 'celebrating a holiday.' I sometimes decorate a Christmas tree - it's fun! -

shockingly simple conclusion: there is no single way to celebrate a holiday. So if our Christmas dinner sometimes includes Chinese food, well, so much the better.

Maybe, finally, it isn't important to distinguish between different ways of celebrating. There will always be differences between cultures, but isn't that rather a good thing? Of greater importance is the consideration that there aren't, and shouldn't be, any limits. So if I wanted to I could celebrate Holi, even if I'm not



▲ Various cultures may celebrate differently but some elements are universal.

but I don't usually exchange presents with my family. And when I consider several Christmas parties I've been to, I realize they weren't much different from other holiday parties, except perhaps for the presence of candy canes, gold ribbon and snowflakes everywhere.

Considering my annual, even monthly, holiday-induced confusion, it's hardly surprising that I finally arrived at this

Hindu. I should add, according to an Indian friend, Holi is great fun.

Living in a multicultural city provides a perfect opportunity to develop open-mindedness. Even if we don't entirely understand the origins or particular significance of a holiday, as long as we remain respectful towards the values and beliefs of others, it should be possible to celebrate anything and everything! ✍

International Children's Festival

Free Event




Turkish Canadian Society

Saturday
April 26, 2014
10:00am - 3:00pm.

CBC Studio
700 Hamilton St.
Vancouver
(Next to Main Library)

- **ANADOLU YOUTH DANCERS**
(Turkish Folklore Group) from Seattle
- **DANCE GROUPS**
from different cultures
- **"STONE SOUP"**
A play performed by TCS Children Theater Club
- **CHILDREN TALENT SHOW**
by Safak Karaca
- **CHILDREN ACTIVITIES**
Games and Surprises
- **TURKISH FOOD**
by Lara Cuisine





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Total prize value: \$4,470. Some date restrictions apply. Draw will take place at La Piazza Dario Ristorante, Vancouver BC on May 28, 2014, 9pm. Tickets may be sold and purchased only in BC. Prize must be accepted as awarded, no substitutions will be made.

Vancouver Chamber Choir 1254 W. 7th Avenue, Vancouver BC V6H 1B6
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Cultural Calendar

April 8–29, 2014

by JESSICA LI

It can be hard returning to work after spring break, but these events will have you feeling excited in no time. Learn some new Bollywood dance moves, or discover new music at one of the many new concerts coming to Vancouver. For an unforgettable experience that will never be replicated, immerse yourself in *Sakura Illumination*, a sensory projection artwork that captures the fleeting beauty of cherry blossoms blooming.

Document: A Year in Review
 April 9–25,
 Roundhouse Community Centre
 181 Roundhouse Mews, Vancouver
www.roundhouse.ca

Document: A Year in Review is the first annual exhibit of the Roundhouse Documentation Team, a dedicated group of volunteer photographers. This show features their photos of everything from Diwali to swing dancing to zombies – a quirky, yet fascinating, mash-up of various aspects of Vancouver’s rich culture.

Public Art
 April 9
 Vancouver Public Library,
 Central Branch
 350 W. Georgia St., Vancouver
www.carfacbc.org/news

In which way does public art contribute to our social well-being and economy? How are artworks chosen, and what is the process behind the management and



▲ *Il Divo* gives a heartfelt rendition of classic Broadway songs on April 10 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.



▲ The Soweto Gospel Choir performs April 13 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

production of public art commissions? Come hear speakers, who range from experienced artists to curators and city planners, present their perspectives on public art, share their successful projects, and speak to their concerns and hopes for the art form.

Il Divo: A Musical Affair
 April 10
 Queen Elizabeth Theatre
 630 Hamilton St., Vancouver
www.ildivo.com

Il Divo is the world’s first and most successful classical crossover group whose repertoire includes famous Broadway songs such as, “Some Enchanted Evening” (South Pacific), “Bring Him Home” (Les Miserables) and “Tonight” (West Side Story). Their show, “A Musical Affair,” showcases their signature emotional and heartfelt take on these classics.

Sakura Illumination
 April 11
 Vancouver (location will be posted on website on Monday, April 7)
www.vcbf.ca

Visual artist Stuart Ward uses LED and patterned video lights to illuminate a canopy of cherry blossoms with his sensory projection artwork. Through his use of light and shadow, this

one-night-only experience reflects the tempo of the blossoms blooming and creates an intangible memory of a time and place never to be duplicated.

Blossom Bollywood!
 April 12
 Vancouver Art Gallery Plaza
 750 Hornby St., Vancouver
www.vcbf.ca

As part of the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival this year, SHIAMAK Bollywood dancers are hosting an outdoor dance party. No dance experience is required – just come, learn new moves and dance along!



▲ SHIAMAK dancers groove to Bollywood music at the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival.

African Grace
 April 13
 Queen Elizabeth Theatre
 630 Hamilton St., Vancouver
 604-569-1144
www.sowetogospelchoir.com

The uplifting and multiple Grammy-winning Soweto Gospel Choir returns to Vancouver with their new show “African Grace,” which is a tribute concert to Nelson Mandela that celebrates the 20th anniversary of the end of apartheid in South Africa. Through their vibrant rhythm movement and amazing vocal harmonies, Soweto Gospel Choir’s perfor-

mances have become a worldwide phenomenon.

Hot Copy
 April 14
 Carousel Theatre Studio
 1411 Cartwright St., Vancouver
www.vancouverfringe.com

If you’re an independent artist trying to get more media coverage, come participate in this publicity workshop hosted by Deb Pickman, who is the communications & marketing specialist for Theatre at UBC. Learn the basics of a press release, when to contact media outlets, what the key elements are to choosing promotional images for posters and flyers, and social media tips. “Hot Copy” is free for 2014 Vancouver Fringe Festival artists and \$10 for other artists.

Eternal Light: Mozart and Lauridsen
 April 18
 The Orpheum Theatre
 884 Granville St., Vancouver
 604-738-6822
www.vancouverchamberchoir.com

Bask in the light of beautiful choral music in the Vancouver Chamber Choir’s traditional Good Friday concert at the Orpheum. Experience for yourself Mozart’s venerable “Requiem” – one of the most sublime musical masterpieces of all time – and delve into the golden sonorities and subtle shadows of Morten Lauridsen’s beautiful “Lux Aeterna.”

Silk, Bamboo and Maple
 April 27
 Norman Rothstein Theatre
 950 W 41st Ave., Vancouver
www.bccma.net

In celebration of the CD release of “Bamboo Shoots in Spring,” the BC Chinese Music Association presents a concert “Silk, Bamboo and Maple.” This unique event, which will be performed by the BC Chinese Music Ensemble, is musically inspired by the historical Silk and Bamboo style from the Jiangzu region in China and its contemporary journey to Vancouver. Performers include Gui Lian Liu, who is considered one of the top *pipa* virtuosos in the world, and *suona* musician Zhong Xi Wu.

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The White Sentinel



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It's a rare occurrence to view Mount Baker's splendor apparent in the background of this picture. Located east of Bellingham, Washington, in Whatcom County, this massive peak can be viewed from the Vancouver, Victoria and Seattle areas. Its First Nations names have variations sounding like "Kulshan." Many First Nations people believe "Kulshan" means a kind of puncture wound, probably a crater caused by an ancient eruption. However, some translations have been interpreted as "white mountain" or "white sentinel." With some of the heaviest snowfall in the world,

Mount Baker certainly makes a powerfully beautiful white sentinel overlooking our city.

This picture was taken looking east from the Granville Bridge. It highlights the ever-increasing densification of the city. In the right foreground is Best Buy, located in a series of new buildings which have developed up to Broadway and Cambie. In the mid to left foreground we can see new developments along south False Creek, which has seen a lot of recent growth east, including the Olympic Village. In the mid-right of the picture, we see three peaked houses representing

what much of the old Mt. Pleasant area used to look like.

There are also redeveloped buildings like the Romanesque Revival church at 10th Ave. and Quebec St., whose white spire we see mid-left in the picture. Built in 1909, it functioned as a church until 1989. After a brief stint as a performing arts theatre, it was converted to a residential complex by 1994. Behind and a bit left of the church are all the new tower developments around Main and Broadway. The density is relieved by the swath of trees from Central Park, Burnaby, in the back right, seemingly just below Mt. Baker.

There is a lot of controversy surrounding development with some people feeling the only way to go is up and others feeling there can be redevelopment, such as that described with the white-spired church. Many people feel housing in the city has become unaffordable.

The tall tower center and furthest back, which appears to compete in height with Mt Baker, is the latest construction in the area of Metrotown, Burnaby, the largest shopping mall in the province. Sears Canada is proposing another seven towers of office and residential space on the site.

Perhaps soon we won't be able to see Mt. Baker at all except for a little peek here and there through what the city of Vancouver is fond of calling "view corridors." However, the "White Sentinel" will be watching whether we see it or not. The last time its voice was heard was in an eruption in the late 1800s. And it began smoking heavily in the mid-seventies. Let's hope it doesn't feel the need to express its opinion on all this development!

DON RICHARDSON

Recipe by Chef Ben Kiely

Armenian Easter bread recipe

Choereg is a traditional, slightly sweet bread, especially made for Easter time.

It is delicious for breakfast with a nice cup of coffee, similar to a French brioche bread. *Choereg* can be made individually or as a large braided loaf of bread.

One of the ingredients is a spice called *Malheb*, which is used in cooking throughout the Middle East, Turkey and, of course, Armenia. It is dried cherry stone that is ground into a powder and used mainly in breads and sweet baked items. *Malheb* can be found at most Middle Eastern food stores.

Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 cups unsalted butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup lukewarm water
- 2 tsp white sugar (for yeast)
- 2 (0.25 ounce) envelopes active dry yeast
- 5 free range eggs
- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1-1/2 tbsp ground mahleb
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds

Method

1. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the milk and butter. Heat until the butter is melted, but do not let it boil. Stir in one cup of sugar until dissolved, then set aside to cool to lukewarm.
2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, dissolve two teaspoons of sugar in warm water. Sprinkle the yeast over the surface and let stand until frothy, about 10 minutes.
3. Crack the eggs into a large bowl, and stir a little to break up the yolks. Slowly pour in the heated milk mixture while whisking constantly, so as to temper the eggs and not cook them. Add the yeast mixture, and stir just until blended.
4. In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, *mahleb* and salt. Make a well in the centre, and pour in the wet mixture. Stir until it forms a sticky dough. Pour onto a floured surface and knead in additional flour as needed to make a more substantial dough. Knead for about 10 minutes. Place in an oiled bowl, and set in a warm place



▲ Baking Choereg.

to rise for about two hours, or until doubled in size.

5. When the dough has doubled, punch down, and let rise until doubled. It will only take about half as long this time.
6. Separate the dough into five even portions (if making buns take 2 oz portions and roll them into bun shapes), then separate each of those into thirds. Roll each of those into ropes about 12 inches long. Braid sets of three ropes together, pinching the ends to seal, and tucking them under for a better presentation.

Place the loaves onto baking sheets lined with parchment paper. Loaves should be spaced four inches apart. Set in a warm place to rise until your finger leaves an impression behind when you poke the loaf gently.

7. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Brush the loaves with the beaten egg and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
8. Bake for 25 minutes in the preheated oven, or until nicely golden brown all over.



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