Many faces of the political landscape

by DANIELLE TAN

According to Elections Canada statistics, while visible minorities remain underrepresented among electoral candidates, minorities have expanded their presence among the ranks of candidates and MPs in recent elections.

In the 2011 federal election, 28 visible minority MPs were elected (6.8 per cent of all MPs). In contrast, Chinese Canadians hold 3.3 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons while the community comprises 1.6 per cent of Canada’s population. In addition, South Asian candidates held 3.2 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons with the community comprising 3.1 per cent of Canada’s population.

Members of the community hold 3.3 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons while the community comprises 3.1 per cent of Canada’s population. In contrast, Chinese Canadians hold only 1.6 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons but comprise 3.1 per cent of the general population.

The South Asian community in Canada, the electoral process is diverse in terms of votes. The community is divided based on origin and religion. Some South Asians vote for politicians of South Asian descent because they feel comfortable discussing issues such as immigration with a politician of the same background, but not all of them vote for South Asian politicians.


Mall notes that while in the past the South Asian community tended to favour particular parties at the federal and provincial levels, those leanings are no longer so clear-cut.

“It used to be that the Liberals were their federal party and the NDP their provincial party in BC. But over time, that has changed.”

Also in this issue

- Farsi calligraphy – an art form as an integrative tool
- Flamenco – anniversary celebrates every evolving dance

See "Many faces" page 8

See "Verbatim" page 5
Multifaceted Brazil, multicultural Vancouver
by SANDRA ZIMMERMANN

Ever since the second half of the 20th century, Brazilians have immigrated to Canada. According to the Consul General Ernesto Rubarth, the Brazilian community in Vancouver comprises primarily highly educated professionals and students who integrate into Canadian society while keeping their traditions alive.

"The number of Brazilian students who come to Vancouver to study has been increasing," explains Rubarth, who resumed work in Vancouver in September 2013, having previously worked in Geneva, Switzerland.

He says the education sector is very important for Brazilians in Canada, and has expanded with joint programs and research centres, such as "Science without Borders" (a joint scholarship program between Canada and Brazil). This program allows many Brazilian students to move to Canada's West Coast to study long-term at a university, they still have the opportunity to learn English in Vancouver. Rubarth explains that they either visit a local high school or, more commonly, take part in temporary language programs that typically last a few months.

Different programs for everyone
While younger students between the ages of 16 and 18 may not yet study at a university, they still have the opportunity to learn English in Vancouver. Rubarth explains that they either visit a local high school or, more commonly, take part in temporary language programs that typically last a few months.

One student from São Paulo met a career path

"These students are usually not from urban areas in Brazil. In Vancouver, they often live with a Canadian homestay family," says Rubarth.

In terms of the labour market, Rubarth says it is primarily highly educated professionals who work in a job relevant to the Canadian economy and who plan to settle down in their new country. In Alberta, for instance, many work in the oil and gas industry. Brazilians' immigration to Canada began in the 1990s and has developed steadily since then. According to Rubarth, Canada welcomed Brazilians because of their high level of education. These professionals often hold passports from both countries on this day for the Brazilian community. This year, the Brazilian community is invited to join them for the Open Consulate, where staff will explain how the consulate works.

"It's very democratic and we get closer to the people we work for," Rubarth continues.

While it is difficult to define a typical Brazilian due to the multifaceted influences that have shaped the country, Rubarth describes his fellow countrymen as enjoyable and hospitable.

"We are extroverted and like music, dance, sports and the outdoors," he continues.

Similar to Canada, Brazil boasts a multicultural community with African, European, Japanese and Arabic influences – a fact that Brazilians are very proud of. Brazil also has the largest Japanese community outside of Japan.

Promoting Brazilian and Latin American culture

To promote Latin American arts and culture, the Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre (VLACC) was established. This year, at the Brazil 2014 World Cup, Rubarth explained that several Latin American countries work together to bring this project to life.

"It's a serious initiative, which is planned carefully and consciously," he adds.

Brazil is also becoming increasingly popular in the academic sector: in a few weeks, a Brazilian scholar will begin his lectureship at the University of British Columbia. Additional language programs are offered, as well as courses on Brazilian culture, history and music. The lectureship seems very timely to Rubarth, who notices a growing interest in Brazilian affairs – especially among entrepreneurs in light of next year's Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

For more information on the Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre: www.vlacc.ca.

For more information on the Brazilian consulate: www.vancouver.itamaraty.gov.br/bc.

"We are extroverted and like music, dance, sports, and outdoors.

Ernesto Rubarth, Consul General of Brazil

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SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25TH
7PM
Grand Ballroom
The Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre presents the 2015 Gala "FUNDRAISING GALA 2015"

As a community-based charity, "Il Centro" depends on the support of the community to fulfill its mandate, "to promote Italian Culture, Language and Heritage and share these values with other communities." The funds raised during this gala will be used to enhance Il Centro’s cultural and language programs.

Doors open at 6:00pm, dinner program starts at 7:00pm. Tickets are $100.

Entertainment by the Cory Weeds Quartet.

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A pre-war Japanese Canadian community – touring Kitsilano’s past

by KATY THOMPSON

Remain ing faithful to tradi tional ways while maintaining a new lifestyle through forced assimilation in a new land is a common struggle for new immi grants. Recounting a long and complex past, the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre presents a walking tour of Kitsilano’s pre-war Japa nese Canadian community on Sept. 12.

“It’s a completely virtual tour,” says Linda Kawamoto Reid, retired nurse and volunteer research archivist for the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre. “The whole community was split up because of the internment and forced to either go back to Japan, or move east of the Rockies.”

Virtual tour into the past

From 1904-42, Kitsilano, or “Ki chi Ra-No,” contained the second largest Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver. At its peak of 432-42, the enclave was home to over 1,000 people, consisting of entrepreneurs and local in dustry workers. Reid explains Japanese Canadians lived in ten men near where they worked. Kitsilano’s lumber company and saw mill.

“As one community, they used to start thing needs – a bath house, barber, garage,” says Reid. “That’s how Kitsilano started building up.”

Children attended Henry Hudson Elementary, but many par ents also enrolled their children in Japanese Language School, which ran after school and on Saturdays. The community also built a Buddhist Church. How ever, the only building that remains of the pre-war Japanese Canadian community is the former Na tional Biscuit Factory. Japanese Canadians did not work there, but parents would send their children with 25 cents to buy broken biscuits.

A story of determination

Japanese immigration to Canada was high in the late thir ty, says Reid, because Japan had just switched over from the Shogun era to the Meiji era. This meant the end of the samurai’s feudal and agrarian way of life, replaced by a more constitutional govern ment with modern infra struc ture and an imperial army.

“Essentially it was a revolu tion and the reason it happened was because there was threat of other countries trying to take over Japan, so the Japanese had to modernize,” says Reid.

In order to transform the sys tem, the Japanese were taxed heavily. Consequently, many Japanese left the country for North America. The resulting influx of Japanese migrants into Canada fuelled an anti-Asian riot that took place in Vancouver in September 1907. Canada then limited immigration of Japanese males to 400 per year. There after, most immigrants were women, joining their husbands or betrothed to Japanese Cana dian men.

“In a lot of ways it was good be cause it brought women, fami lies, communities and children into Canada. It changed the landscape of what was there before, which was men, hard, may be drinking, maybe gambling, maybe up to no good,” says Reid.

Arranged marriages were common in Japan, but most Japa nese Canadian workers could not afford to return to Japan to meet their spouse, explains Reid. Instead, their families arranged a marriage by proxy. Men exchanged photos with their over seas prospective brides before sending them over in what was called the “picture bride sys tem.”

“One of the salient features of the Japanese community is that they organized themselves to be efficient and they worked to gether as a group,” says Reid. “Japanese Canadian workers excelled in their limited labour positions: farmers perfected the art of growing berries and fish ermen revolutionized the fish ing industry, and were excellent boat builders.

“Anything they did, they did to perfection,” says Reid.

Prevaling under pressure

However, their willingness to work for lower wages caused controversy and racism was rampant, explains Reid. Pre-war Japanese Canadians did not have the right to vote. In 1913, Japa nese Canadian veterans of WWII finally won the right to vote, but it would not be until 1949 that all Japanese persons could vote in a BC provincial election.

“Racism was here and it prevailed,” says Reid. “Japanese Canadians were accused of not assimilating, but they were kind of forced to assimilate because there was so much racism.”

The events put on by the Nikkei National Museum and Cul tural Centre provide a way to learn about the history and cul ture of Japanese Canadians.

“It’s also a really good oppor tunity to bring two groups together- the Japanese community whose families have been here forever and the new immi grants,” says Reid.

For more information, please visit: centre.nikkeiplace.org/ki-chi-ra-no
Time for Vancouver and B.C. to say 'refugees welcome here'

It's a global story with a very local dimension for those of us here in British Columbia. The photograph of a drowned three-year-old boy, Alan Kurdi, has now been seen around the world, a haunting image that has drawn the world's attention to an historic refugee crisis. Kurdi, his brother Ghalib and their mother Rehanna, died earlier this month while attempting to cross the waters from Turkey to Greece, the family, like countless others, victims of the devastation wrought by the war in Syria.

But the Kurdi family was also a victim of government policy in both Canada and Turkey. The boys' aunt, Tima, lives in Coquitlam, B.C. and has personally appealed to this country's immigration minister for help and advice in applying to bring members of her extended family here.

On Saturday, Sept. 5, I attended a public memorial for the Kurdi family, held at Vancouver's SFU Harbour Centre campus. The downtown facility didn’t have a room large enough to hold all those who came to pay their respects. The Kurdish community turned out in big numbers – I saw more than a few wearing shirts emblazoned with ‘Kurdistan’ – but there was also a diverse and strong turnout from the general public. The theatre was more than packed, with people standing and sitting in the aisles. A phalanx of media cameras squeezed into the back row. Speakers were set up in the main lobby and overflow seating improvised.

But this province has also seen waves of migration by people feeling war – proud moments when locals put out the welcome mat for those in distress. Many of the tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees who settled in Canada in the late 1970s came to Vancouver, as did Chilean refugees who escaped the Pinochet coup regime of the same era. More recently, many Kosovars fleeing the NATO-Serbia war in 1999, as well as Afghans and Iraqis, have settled here in Vancouver. The City of Vancouver, in particular, was once known as a haven for war resisters who came fleeing terror and war in Syria.

Following the lead of the “Sanctuary City” campaign, we need to ask our municipal governments to make a clear statement that refugees are welcome here. And then we need to back those words up with practical initiatives.

Alan Kurdi’s family hoped that one day he and his older brother would get to live near their aunt in Coquitlam, here in this province. They found the door closed, and were betrayed by various governments along the way. The least we can do is make sure doors are opened to others in a similar predicament.

B.C.’s history has been marred by shameful exclusions – such as the Komagata Maru ship that was turned back due to the official xenophobia of the day, and the Head Tax against Chinese migrants. But this province has also seen waves of migration by people feeling war – proud moments when locals put out the welcome mat for those in distress. Many of the tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees who settled in Canada in the late 1970s came to Vancouver, as did Chilean refugees who escaped the Pinochet coup regime of the same era. More recently, many Kosovars fleeing the NATO-Serbia war in 1999, as well as Afghans and Iraqis, have settled here in Vancouver. The City of Vancouver, in particular, was once known as a haven for war resisters who came fleeing terror and war in Syria.

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Sharon Chang says she embodies “mixedness.” Chang’s thoughtful examination about growing up multiracial at this year’s Hapapalooza festival: “Raising Mixed Kids: Family Workshop” will be at the Heartwood Community Café, Sept. 19 from 6–8 p.m. Hapapalooza festival celebrates mixed heritage and hybrid cultural identities.

“I bring my lived life to the table. I also now bring the experiences of my family (my husband and sons are also to the table),” says Chang, a mixed-race parent, expert and activist.

Children and race

Every single experience Chang has had with others is inevitably a multiracial exchange. Her father is from Taiwan and her mother is Caucasian American of Slovakian, German and French Canadian descent.

“Raising mixed children growing up across racial boundaries? How can we raise multiracial kids to feel good about themselves in a raced world?” asks Chang, who will be sharing some of her findings from her new book Raising Mixed Race, which will be released later this fall.

According to Chang, children have used racial reasoning to discriminate against their peers by the ages of four or five. Children see and hear everything, and racism is woven into the very fabric of society. Research also shows children as young as six months are able to categorize people by race.

“T'o my knowledge there isn't yet a comprehensive book on the North American continent that looks critically at the complex task of raising mixed children of Asian descent,” says Chang.

She says she and her family feel they don’t belong. They are asked unsolicited comments and are targets for discrimination.

Some of the questions she receives include: what kind of easier for multiracial folks? Isn’t loss/dilution of cultural heritage inevitable when mixed kids are born? What do you mean ‘mixed’? What’s the difference between race, culture, and ethnicity? Aren’t we all mixed?

“These experiences all together have shown me a shadow of a doubt that there is still so much we don’t acknowledge about mixed race peoples,” says Chang.

Chang also points out she and her family don’t feel represented in most areas, including the media, activism, politics, academia, and other areas.

Closer examination needed

While agreeing a conversation has begun, Chang says it is a young one. Lacking nuance and a critical lens, a real dialogue needs much more scholarship as well as thoughtful examination. This underdeveloped examination prompted her to specialize in the studies and research she does.

“When we look at patterns or themes, like what we see in these outmarriage statistics, then we have to ask ourselves larger questions that go beyond the individuals. What is the history of sociopolitical experience for Japanese and Latin American Canadians? (most likely to outmarry)” says Chang.

Go and try and find an employment office. Yes, for the little Belgian carries her bag and Schmidt, who doesn’t plan on stopping now.

By Florence Kwang

Sharon Chang, author of Raising Mixed Race, with her son.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2011, Japanese had 78.7 per cent mixed unions, while Latin Americans had 52.7 per cent mixed unions. African Americans or even less than 2 per cent mixed unions. On the other extreme, Chinese only had 19.4 per cent and South Asian only had 13 per cent mixed unions.

Similarities and how those experiences have encouraged or discouraged certain partnerships are also questions Chang is pondering.

“By contrast, what is the history of sociopolitical experience for Chinese and South Asian Canadians (least likely to outmarry) and how have those experiences encouraged or discouraged certain partnership patterns?” asks Chang.

Intimate partnerships, she says, while formed through affection, attraction and love, are also informed by the political contexts within which they exist.

Chang says they cannot escape this influence because everyone is impacted by their environments.

For more information about hapa-palooza festival, go to www.hapapalooza.com.
Science meets couture to foster laughter

by KATE MURRAY

A group of three graduate students from the SFU School of Interactive Arts and Technology have created a dress that investigates how interactive wearable technology can support social interaction through LED lights and the sound of laughter.

The design explores psychological mirroring, which is the interrelation of mental and physical phenomena when people exhibit emotions.

We brainstormed ways where we or computer interactions can make the city happier and spark connections between strangers.

Wynnie Chung, researcher

The dress uses the sound of laughter and LED lights to spark conversations.

“The dress plays synthetic laughter to attract attention from passersby, aiming to break social barriers and initiate opportunities for conversations. It also has LED lights that illuminate from the wearer’s movement to highlight the wearer’s presence,” says Lee.

By using sensors, the dress is able to respond to the environment around it. “The laughter and LED light patterns are triggered by two different sensors: an ultrasonic distance sensor and tri-axial accelerometer.”

The dress evokes smiles, laughter and a curiosity that brings people to communicate through a common interest in this traditional art form.

“When the design team first heard about the Happy City Machine challenge, they thought carefully about the most effective way to create happiness in the community.”

“We identified the issues of social isolation based on several literature researches during the first phase of the design. We then brainstormed ways where we or computer interactions can make the city happier and spark connections between strangers,” says Chung.

According to Chung, the dress was able to initiate opportunities for cooperative behaviour, mutual trust and social bonding.

“The design evoked smiles, laughter and a curiosity that brought people closer together.”

Overcoming isolation

Building connections with Farsi calligraphy

by AMY CHENG

This interconnectivity will also help to strengthen relationships and build a sense of unity amongst communities.

The charm of Farsi calligraphy

“Farsi calligraphy is often held in great esteem due to its close relations with religious texts, but by no means is it a calligraphy all religious in content,” explains Ng. Instead, calligraphy has become a highly celebrated art form, where simple scripts are used to creatively convey one’s emotions, depending on the strength or curvature of its strokes.

According to Ng, the lines go beyond the simple duty of transmitting texts, and allow for a personal artistic expression. She describes it as placing one’s soul at the tip of the pen for all to see. Not only does it facilitate inner awareness, but it also enables spectators to make sense of the artist’s expression and inner dialogues.

At the same time, practitioners will be equipped with a greater understanding of the Farsi language and culture, which strongly resonates with MOSAIC’s mandate to support and empower immigrant communities,” adds Ng.

“On top of that, we hope people will start trying new and innovative ways to target the bigger social issues and affect some of the more fundamental issues – big or small. And if we are able to learn a new skill or art form in the process, that’s even better.”

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Ng hopes the workshop encourages participants to be more culturally aware and sensitive within multicultural communities and promotes inclusion for people of all cultures and backgrounds. The message she would like to get across to people is that there are opportunities to learn something new at every age.

“This, in turn, can empower individuals to integrate further into society, knowing that others face similar challenges and that there is support out there,” says Ng.

To find out more visit laughingdress.wordpress.com

Reach the growing FILIPINO COMMUNITY in British Columbia!

For more information, please visit www.mosaicbc.com
Maiko Behr, a Japanese tea ceremony expert who teaches tea ceremony workshops to English speakers at the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre, has been holding tea ceremony workshops at the Nikkei Centre since the summer of 2013. This September, she will be giving her 14th workshop.

“I participated in the Tea Ceremony Club at the Nikkei Centre, which is held in Japanese, and I felt that it was important to offer the opportunity to learn about tea ceremonies to English speakers as well,” says Behr.

The workshops can accommodate individuals interested in taking one class.

“Participants can take the workshop at any time, so they can come back as many times as they want and learn something new each time,” says Behr. “Each session is a self-contained unit so it is not necessary to attend them in a particular sequence and participants can choose the topics that are most interesting to them personally.”

Nature’s place in the ceremony

Behr teaches a different workshop monthly to fit to the season. Each workshop surrounding the practice of Japanese tea ceremony differs from one another by focusing on different aspects of the cultural art and history.

“A keen awareness of the changing of the seasons and the passing of time is a fundamental attribute of Japanese traditional culture in general and it is critical to the appreciation of Japanese tea ceremony,” Behr explains.

“By focusing on different aspects of the changing of the seasons and the passing of time, participants can appreciate the uniqueness of the current moment.”

Diverse interests

The idea of taking a tea ceremony workshop is attractive to many different people for many different reasons.

“Some people are interested in wearing kimonos. Some people are interested in samurai history. Some people love Japanese culture in general and want to learn more about it,” says Behr.

The list of motivations to take a workshop like this goes on and on, but all reasons are related to the art of the tea ceremony.

“Even when people come from very different entry points, they often find that there is much more to the practice of tea than they realized and the more they learn about it the broader their interest becomes,” says Behr.

“Although I think that each person takes away something different from the workshops, one common response is that people are always amazed at how much more complex the art form is than they expected,” adds Behr.

“Discussing the art of the tea ceremony and the thematic content is always interesting, finds Behr, but what tends to be more significant is the tranquil experience of sitting in the tea room.”

“[It] has a contemplative effect that grounds us and focuses our senses on the present, creating a period of calm and mindful- ness of our surroundings that is a small but welcome escape from our otherwise hectic day-to-day lives,” says Behr.

Maiko Behr’s series of workshops begins with Otsukimi (Moon-Viewing Tea) on Sunday, Sept. 13.

Complicating the Fairy Tale: Play casts a spotlight on international adoption

by Simon Yee

Can an older orphan who has been institutionalized learn how to love and bond with an adoptive family? This is one of the questions explored in the upcoming play We're the Child by Lauren Kresowaty.

At the Vancouver Fringe Festival, playwright Kresowaty and director Aliya Griffin are putting on Olya the Child from Sept. 10 to 20 in the Emily Carr Parkade on Granville Island, in order to get their audiences talking about that very question, as well as the myriad social and emotional issues raised by international adoption.

“It’s something I’ve been interested in for a long time: the challenges of international adoption, stories of feral children and their potential inability to learn to connect with other humans,” says Griffin, the founding artistic director of The Troika Collective, the theatre group producing the play.

The search for happiness

Olya the Child chronicles the journey of character Olya Kadnikova, a ten-year-old orphan who is adopted from a Russian orphanage by Deborah Johnson, a Canadian housewife and hopeful parent. Both characters see this journey as an important milestone towards finding happiness.

“Deborah couldn’t have children of her own, so she thinks bringing a child into her failing marriage would make her happy, whereas Olya has been taught that finding a family and leaving the orphanage would be her happy ending,” says Kresowaty.

Kresowaty and Griffin wanted to make sure the many complicated nuances and challenges they discovered during the course of their research play a prominent part in their story. Such issues include culture shock, language barriers and an implicit presumption of cultural superiority on the part of the adoptive parent.

“What might the search for happiness look like when we know we’re dealing with a child who has not seen a lot of love in the traditional sense and not socialized in a family dynamic?” asks Kresowaty.

While the challenges of being adopted and learning to acculturate into a new family and culture are daunting, Kresowaty and Griffin also consider the reverse situation: not being adopted.

“Serving as a foil to Olya’s character and journey, a chorus of other Russian orphans whose back-stories are modelled on real-life cases are featured in the play. Among them is Anna, a 14-year-old who serves as a figurehead and caretaker of orphans who are not chosen. In the play, Anna represents the grim reality for many orphans in Russia.”

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“Many of those who age out of the orphanage system become prostitutes, street kids or are recruited into the army because they have nowhere else to go,” says Griffin.

“You have to go to another country,” adds Kresowaty.

Olya the Child is one of the more light-hearted plays they’ve produced so far. There is, after all, joy as well as uncertainty and fun as well as anxiety, in many life and social situations.

“It’s not totally bleak,” chuckles Griffin. “There is a whimsical style in the play. You may not have a happy ending, but not necessarily a terrible one either. "It’s about how people overcome amazing things and where there isn’t a conclusion and understanding, there is hope,” adds Kresowaty.

For more information on Olya the Child and the Vancouver Fringe Festival, visit www.vancouverfringe.com.

For information on The Troika Collective, visit www.thetroikacollective.com

Photo by KarshHoover (centre) team between two worlds: her fellow Russian orphans (left) or Deborah in Canada (right).

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.

Design a fantastic resume and cover letter, fine tune your interview techniques, learn the skills to succeed in the Canadian workplace, gain insight into the job market, access special services for skilled workers – 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. recipi- ents are always welcome. Knowledgeable case managers are available to guide you through the process of reaching your career goals.

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Please call 604-324-7733, go to www.pics.bc.ca, or visit us at 200-8161 Main St, Vancouver, to find out how we can best help you.
The Vancouver International Flamenco Festival is celebrating its 25th anniversary as one of the world’s most prominent annual flamenco festivals outside of Spain. Founded by Rosario Ancer and her husband Victor Kolstee, the festival has been providing Vancouverites with world-class performances by popular flamenco dancers and musicians from around the world, and instilling a strong flamenco presence in the city since its inception in 1991.

“When we moved to Vancouver [as a married couple after having lived in Spain with Vancouver native Kolstee for six years], there was very little understanding of what flamenco was,” says Ancer. The couple set out to start a school that offered progressive training for flamenco: Centro Flamenco. They wanted to offer a recreational program for people looking to have fun and learn about the art, as well as a professional program for people wanting to take flamenco more seriously.

“We already had a wealth of knowledge about flamenco from living in Spain, so then it just became about making it accessible to Vancouverites. From there, it was easy to make the art form popular,” says Ancer.

“Most people seem to think of flamenco as very traditional [in the sense that] it doesn’t change,” Ancer says. “Flamenco is changing all the time. It’s always evolving.”

A. Rosario Ancer with Victor Kolstee in Quadrilogue Affective.

The evolution of flamenco
According to Ancer, flamenco has originated in Andalusia, a southern province of Spain, but no one knows exactly when or how it came about. “It wasn’t until around the mid-1800s that Flamenco jumped onto the stage.”

Ancer feels that flamenco is constantly evolving, and says the performances seen today are different from those of the 1950s or even the early 2000s.

“We are extremely excited about this exhibit because it’s the first time that we’ve collaborated with a different art form to increase awareness about flamenco dancing,” Ancer says.

The festival also recently incorporated a program that caters to children, as Ancer explains: “I mean, kids love it! You just see the excitement in their eyes,” says Ancer. “The rhythm and movements of the dance, the ruffles of the skirts – they get mesmerized! And they especially love being invited up on stage.”

A. Flamenco dancer Veronica “Bonnie” Stewart.

By MARIAM BALDEN

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A delicate balance: listening to music of the East with Western ears

by NICOLE ALIVOIVODIC

Music producer Ian Widgery has come a long way from his hometown of St. Ives, a small arts community in Cornwall, England. Stops in London, Hong Kong and Vancouver have all shaped his music along the way.

Widgery will perform a semi-live version of his album Shanghai Lounge Divas in collaboration with visual artist Shayla Perreault on Sept. 12 at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden. “Creating this one thing has created waves in different directions,” Widgery says of the album. “It’s not even about me, it’s just about the album and the way it’s reached so many different places.”

Shanghai Lounge Divas, a mix of Eastern content and Western arrangement, is a five time platinum album and will be performed for the first time after a year of preparation.

A drive to create

Travelling across the country from St. Ives to attend Newcastle University, Widgery was the youngest person in his program, finishing his degree in Music Technology in three years at the young age of 20.

While the program was incredibly difficult to get into, at 17 years old Widgery applied anyway. Recognizing his talent, he was admitted to the program on his first try and found himself competing amongst classmates nearly twice his age.

“For me it represents the transition from day to night and all the subtle nuances.”

The success of the album is odd however, because it’s not in English. “You’d think it doesn’t stand a chance of being successful,” Widgery says of the album, which has sold remarkable well and been used as the soundtrack in several movies and TV commercials. “The most important thing about the CD is that people bought it then lent it to their friends who never returned it because they liked it so much!”

The process of creating the album, Widgery says, was about taking songs and writing songs around them, creating a western arrangement of Asian music. “That’s why you connect with your ears – you don’t even realize it’s not in English,” says Widgery.

Shanghai Lounge Divas live in the Garden

Setting this all in motion was Leticia Sanchez, chair of the Art Committee and fan of Widgery’s music. She played it for artist Shayla Perreault, which ended up inspiring some of Perreault’s paintings for the “Not the Dao” exhibit at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden.

Having reached out to Widgery, Perreault was happy to learn that he was right here in North Vancouver and interested in collaborating, as he was impressed by her paintings and curious to see how his work inspired hers.

Widgery will be performing a soundtrack from Shanghai Lounge Divas that he has put together specifically for this event. “It’s a careful balance of two different things,” says Widgery. “For me it represents the transition from day to night and all the subtle nuances.”

For more information and to RSVP visit vancouverchinesegarden.com.
**September 28–22, 2015**

### Cultural Calendar

by Jake McGrail

It’s September now, and just because summer is leaving doesn’t mean that there is any shortage of fun events to go to! From dance to film to theatre, September will be a blast with all of these events!

#### Time to Play

**Sept. 1-3**

The Cinematheque

1155 Howe St. Vancouver

[www.vancoufourl.org](http://www.vancoufourl.org)

The 19th century saw the rise of children in paintings, and in paintings of their daily activities, not just portraits. Works from the artists Gustave De Jonghe, Francis Coates Jones, Charles Bertrand D’Entraygues, Luplau Janssen and Sylvius Paolotti will be showcased alongside with other paintings and antiques from Europe and North America.

#### Film Festival

**Sept. 10–Oct. 10**

Exhibition: Catastrophe, Memory, Reconciliation

Sept. 10-Oct. 10

grant gallery

Vancouver-based artist Osvaldo Ramirez Castillo presents paintings that show various issues related to the violence against civilians during the 12 year Civil War in El Salvador. Collective memory, historical trauma and cultural identity are all touched on in this exhibition, represented by a series of mixed media drawings coupled with stop-motion animation and Super 8mm footage in grant gallery’s Media Lab. For more information please visit their website.

#### Vancouver Latin American Film Festival

**Sept. 3–13**

Various locations

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

Come down to Expo Boulevard to celebrate community and experience Crosstown Festival, a fun-filled day of activities with music, circus fun, magic and draws with the opportunity to win lots of prizes. Bring a chair or blanket and be ready to have a great time!

#### Crosstown Festival

**Sept. 13**

87th Expo Blvd, Vancouver

[www.falsescreekresidents.org](http://www.falsescreekresidents.org)

Crosstown Festival is sure to entertain everyone.

#### Wesbrook Village Festival

**Sept. 19**

3796 Wesbrook Mall, Vancouver

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

The fifth annual Wesbrook Village Festival is coming late this month and will be an afternoon of fun for all ages. With a barbecue, live music, a rock climbing wall and plenty of activities for kids, Wesbrook Village Festival is sure to entertain everyone.

#### Backstage at the Commodore

**Sept. 20**

Commodore Ballroom

868 Granville St. Vancouver

[www.forbiddenvancouver.ca](http://www.forbiddenvancouver.ca)

A night of hip-hop and bhangra, contrasting styles that both share deep connections to rhythm and music. For more information please visit their website.

#### Lunch Poems at SFU

**Sept. 13**

Simon Fraser University, Room 1400

[www.sfu.ca](http://www.sfu.ca)

The Revolving City Anthology and many others. You will be guided by musician and entertainment historian Aaron Chapman through the building and onto the stage. For more information please visit their website.

#### The Source

**Sept. 20**

Commodore Ballroom

868 Granville St. Vancouver

[www.forbiddenvancouver.ca](http://www.forbiddenvancouver.ca)

This month’s topic is The Revolving City – a collection of 13 poems selected from authors who have read at past Lunch Poems. For more information please visit their website.
As Above, So Below

Here we view the reconstruction of the Vancouver Art Gallery’s (VAG’s) membrane on Georgia St. It is part of the ongoing maintenance we have seen around other parts of the gallery, as well as repairs to the main stairs. A new plaza will be redeveloped with replacement trees, new landscaping and will continue to provide space as a gathering place for future events, including its prominent role as a central location for protests of all kinds.

How Do I Fit This Ghost in My Mouth? (May 30–September 7, 2015) was an exhibition at the gallery by internationally renowned Vancouver artist Geoffrey Farmer. His exhibition featured six major installations surveying his 15-year career. The installations employ archival images and objects sculpted in fantastic ways incorporating text, music and movement. They draw from personal historical and artistic information and the artist’s personal history. Farmer’s work illustrates the multiplicity and multi-faceted nature of art. Through his work, he explores the relevance of time and space and uses combinations of past and future elements in this exploration.

Farmer is fascinated by archives and appreciates their significance. He uses research. Part of his exhibition was a small room, which served as an archive storage. The VAG itself houses over 5,000 artist files, mostly paper-based. These include books, brochures, CD’s, newspaper and journal clippings, photos, press releases, resumés and much more. Some date back to the 1930’s. The VAG also houses a permanent collection of more than 30,000 artworks by local and international artists. Due to space restrictions, approximately only 3% of the collection is on view.

So where is all this collection of archival material and artworks? It’s below the membrane that’s being repaired to prevent any damage to these invaluable works. Staff refer to this area as ‘the catacombs’ and Farmer made it part of his exhibit. There were small tours that included some of his artwork and narratives of the building’s history. The site of the current VAG was formerly the Vancouver Law Courts which opened in 1911 and were still functioning in 1979. The old courthouse was renovated by Arthur Erickson and reopened as the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1983. Farmer’s father worked in the old courthouse which allowed Geoffrey Farmer to visit the area of the catacombs as a child. Although these catacombs don’t house the dead, they serve as records of past artists and in their manner bring the past to the present and await future possibilities. They are as substantive as the work displayed above in the main galleries.

Given the above space restrictions, the VAG, under director Kathleen Bartels has fought for over a decade for a new art gallery that would substantially increase its size.

In April 2013, Vancouver City Council voted unanimously to designate the new site to be located at West Georgia and Cambie Streets.

From the VAG website: “The new Vancouver Art Gallery will be a purpose-built art museum that creates and strengthens links between artists, contemporary and historical art, and diverse communities throughout the city and province and around the world. The Gallery will tie the past to the present, make visible Vancouver’s connections to other places in the world, and enhance Vancouver’s reputation as one of the most important international centres for contemporary art production.” And it will “drive to become one of the most environmentally sustainable art museums in Canada.”

On September 29, 2015, there will be a public unveiling of the concept design for the new VAG by the architectural firm Herzog & de Meuron at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

Don Richardson

Recipe by Selma van Halder

Almond orange bizcocho with honey lavender yoghurt

Spain is one of those countries I wish were closer to Canada, now that I’ve made the big move across the pond. For a young Dutch girl, travelling to the south of Spain is a complete culture shock only a three hour plane ride away. I visited Sevilla and it’s surrounding countryside with my parents when I was 11.

My memories are a blur of the countless arches of ancient mosques, Flamenco dresses and endless layers of coloured ruffles, impressive bull fighting rings, overwhelming mosaics, intense colours, and a LOT of terra cotta. Flavours were like the colours: warm and deep. Tomatoes, cumin, garlic, paprika, aperitivo.

Andalusian cuisine you’ll find with endless layers of coloured greens and grease the inside of your mouth. You’ll wish were closer to Canada, but if you can, enjoy it while it’s warm.

Serve with the honey, yoghurt, lavender mixture. You can make this mixture ahead of time: leave the lavender in overnight and strain out the next day to avoid biting down on the flowers. Or leave them in for extra effect!

Recipe by Selma van Halder

Ingredients

• 1 cup almond flour
• 1 cup all-purpose flour
• 2 tsp baking powder
• 3 eggs
• 1/4 cup yoghurt
• 2 tbs olive oil

For the yoghurt

• 1 cup yoghurt
• 1/3 cup organic honey
• fresh or dried lavender to taste

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and grease the inside of a small cake or loaf tin.
2. With a whisk or your kitchen mixer, cream the sugar together with the eggs and olive oil in a large bowl until it turns white and slightly frothy.
3. In a separate bowl, combine all the other dry ingredients: flours, baking powder, orange zest and spices, and mix together.
4. Combine the dry ingredients with the creamed egg and sugar, and add the orange juice and yoghurt. Mix until well combined. Pour into your baking tin and place in the middle of the preheated oven.
5. Bake for around 40 minutes or until golden brown and a cake tester inserted in the middle comes out clean. Leave to cook slightly on a wire rack, but if you can, enjoy it while it’s warm.

Serve with the honey, yoghurt, lavender mixture. You can make this mixture ahead of time: leave the lavender in overnight and strain out the next day to avoid biting down on the flowers. Or leave them in for extra effect!