

Tibetan
community –
close-knit,
non-judgmental
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The Source

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Embracing Canadian culture though community connections

Photo by Susan Hancock

by SUSAN HANCOCK

Our lifestyle gives us a sense of belonging; it gives us our identity which is vital for our well-being and happiness. When newcomers arrive in Canada, they have to rebuild their friendships and connections to help them feel welcome.

Queenie Choo is the chief executive officer at S.U.C.C.E.S.S., a multi-service agency assisting immigrants and Canadians. She can relate to the challenges of other immigrants who are going through the settlement process.

“Newcomers need to find the courage to contribute to society, says Choo. “It’s important for them to venture from what feels comfortable in their immediate surroundings so they can learn about our Canadian culture.”

Choo is referring to newcomers who have difficulties integrating into Canadian culture. She explains that immigrants tend to settle in neighbourhoods that have a similar culture to their homeland. In the short term it’s comforting to be with people with similar backgrounds, languages and customs: in the longterm it’s limiting. Choo suggests that

newcomers need to embrace what it means to be Canadian to achieve their full potential.

When Choo arrived in Canada many years ago she had a choice. She could remain sheltered in a familiar Japanese culture, or she could branch out to learn what it means to be a Canadian.

“I wanted to talk about my culture to Canadians,” says Choo. “I wanted people to understand where I was coming from. I also wanted them to know that I was willing to learn about Canadian culture and customs.”

Immigrants have to rebuild their friendships and community

connections when they move to a new country. They have to rely on other people’s kindness to discover a pathway to assimilate into a new culture.

Adjusting to Canadian society

Tanvir Hossain, 30, emigrated to Vancouver two months ago from Bangladesh, India. He was tired of the corruption in Bangladesh and was looking for a place to call home.

“I needed a change, says Hossain. “I wanted to live in a safer place with less corruption.”

Prior to leaving Bangladesh, Hossain connected with Multi-
See “Integration” page 11 >

Verbatim

Rooted in Vancouver

by AUGUST BRAMHOFF

When I’m out and about in Vancouver, be it at a party, shopping or sheltering rainy hours away at a coffee shop, people often ask me, “Where are you from?” Perhaps it’s based on statistics; so many people pass the Rocky Mountains and call this city home, but the questioners come across as genuinely perplexed. One guesser of nationalities insists, “Your giant curly hair – you must be Irish, right?” Another player suggests, “You’re so artsy – have you spent any time in Montreal?” and “Don’t you have a sister in Newfoundland – you look exactly like a close friend of mine.” If I had not lived my whole life in Greater Vancouver, it would seem as though I’m a composite of the greater part of the Northern Hemisphere. In a way, everyone stands correct. I would not be the person I am if I had not grown up in Vancouver. Allow me to explain.

My mom’s side of the family came from across Europe. The first to British Columbia were the Welsh members: tempted to break free from Britain’s classism, they settled in the 1800s just outside Prince George, breeding apples in an orchard that still stands by a creek. The Italians came next: Great Uncle Primo and Great Grandad were miners who drilled holes in the side of mountains for the newly-formed Canadian Pacific Railway. Great Grandad met Great Grandma in a town so remote it has its own postal code today. Petite, quiet and all the way from Poland, Great Grandma couldn’t speak a word of English or Italian. While Great Grandad and Great Grandma were getting to know each other, the Irish side of my roots were sailing

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WelcomeBC

Community Profile

February marks Tibetan New Year with goal of positive thinking

by BRENN A TEMPLE

Vancouver's Tibetans will celebrate Losar, their culture's New Year, Feb. 8. This year, the Kagyu Kunkhyab Chuling Centre will celebrate Losar with a series of different traditions, including meditation sessions and special Protector Mahakala ceremonies to ring in the Tibetan New Year.

Lobsang Tenzin calls himself a dharma believer and teacher who's immersed in Vancouver's Tibetan culture. He says Losar is all about recognizing the opportunity to accept adversity and think positively.

"Losar is about cleansing yourself and dropping all your prejudices you have against other people. That's a big one, you forgive everybody. It's about forgiving all the people who have wronged you and spoke badly about you, or whatever it is," says Tenzin.

Tibetan culture budding in Vancouver community

Losar is a celebration that's traveled from China's cultural landscape all the way to Canada.

According to Tenzin, Tibetan

certain understanding of karma and interdependence," says Tenzin. "The only enduring happiness is to truly know the joy of making others happy. We're never happier than when we're selflessly useful."

Tenzin describes the Tibetan

not necessarily vegetarian. You eat what's served," says Tenzin. "You don't turn your nose up when someone has gone to the trouble of making a feast for you. You are polite and there are no absolutes, except in your own intention because that's

“The only enduring happiness is to truly know the joy of making others happy.”

Lobsang Tenzin, Dharma believer and teacher

belief as a positive philosophy that discourages judgment: a factor that makes the culture within Vancouver close-knit.

"Buddha dharma is a growing philosophy; and not a religion based on faith, but based on logic. You're allowed to debate, and you're not allowed to swallow anything because you have to challenge it and defend," says Tenzin.

He explains Vancouver's Tibetan culture as multifaceted and encourages locals to maintain an open state of mind.

"We need to remember integration and the physical

the only thing you have one hundred per cent control over."

Canada's Tibetan history

The population of Tibetans within Canada is difficult to find. According to the Canada Tibet Committee, Canada has been home to the philosophy of Tibet for years.



▲ Lobsang Tenzin finds peace in Tibetan culture.

According to the website, 1971 is the first time Tibetan refugees arrived in Canada. At the time, the settlement of these refugees called for Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia to accept an equal number of refugees.

Once an entity for only Tibetans, many Canadians have taken on the culture as their own.

"A lot of their culture doesn't get translated because of language," says Tenzin. "Everyone will eventually practice the Buddha Dharma found in the Tibetan culture by nature, because it's the evolution of thought."

Everyone is welcome to attend Losar (Feb. 6–8). Each day begins with a meditation session at 7:30 a.m. and a short Green Tara Sadhana practice at 8 a.m. The first Mahakala Puja starts at 9:30 a.m. and Tsok starts at 6 p.m.

For more information, visit www.kkc-kdol.org



▲ Locals celebrating Tibet Fest 2013 in Vancouver.

culture has a strong influence in Vancouver, although many people aren't aware. The philosophies of Buddhism are encompassed by much of today's Tibetan culture, regardless of the location.

"Everyone in Vancouver has a

interests of people here: two concepts Westerners don't always get right away," says Tenzin. "Tibetans are often quiet because in Tibet there's a high altitude and you can't talk as much."

Losar dishes: expansive as Tibetan culture

According to Tenzin, Losar dishes are expansive due to the culture's accepting attitude and include both vegetables and meat.

"You often see momos, which are little dumplings. They're



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Join us Monday, February 8 for BC Family Day – a provincial statutory holiday celebrating the importance of families and family life. Enjoy a variety of FREE all-ages public swims, activities and events happening all across the City!



2016 Chinese New Year Gala Celebration

On February 6, enjoy live entertainment and a 'lucky' banquet dinner, while you ring in the Chinese New Year at the Bell Performing Arts Centre. Bring your friends and family and join your community in taking part in this lively cultural celebration – one of the world's oldest and most joyful traditions.

Business of Culture Gala

On Friday, February 19, supported by Jamail Arts and Nanak Foods, VIBC and the Board of Trade present a dynamic night of art, music, dance, food, and great conversation focused on the positive impacts of the arts on business, which in turn benefit our youth, as well as tourism, economics, and quality of life. View details for more information.



I Am Woman! Hear Me 'Laff'!

Tickets on Sale Now

Join famed female comedians for an incredible evening of hoopla. This 'herlanious' gathering of stand-up comics will raise the bar for all comedians, proving women 'got it' when it comes to big laughs. Bring the girlfriends, bring the men, and get a shot of comedy that will have everyone howling with laughter as they revel in all that makes women extraordinary.

February Edition: inFlux Open Studio

Voice looping, knitting and filmmaking are just some of the activities that will transform the Surrey Art Gallery into a large open studio for this edition of inFlux. On Friday, February 5 from 8pm to 11pm, join local makers, artists and musicians for an evening packed with DIY activities and live performances. Admission and snacks are free. Beverages will be available for purchase.



Piaf & So Much More!

Joëlle Rabu in Concert at Centre Stage

The energy that comes from the stage as Joëlle Rabu and son Nico Rhodes perform is tangible—you can almost see it. You will definitely feel it! Known for her ability to delve into many musical styles including cabaret, jazz and heart-wrenching torch songs, Rabu's passion-filled voice and spine-tingling stage presence will leave you spellbound.



Community Forum: Learn How to Assist Refugees Arriving in Surrey

Join us tonight from 6:30pm–8pm at Fleetwood Secondary School (7940 156 St) to learn about what local agencies and governments are doing to assist with refugee settlement and how you can help welcome newcomers to the City of Surrey. Non-perishable food items will be accepted on location (no clothing, please). Volunteer applications will also be available.



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Exhibit examines Jewish architectural influence in the postwar years

by SIMON YEE

Chanel Blouin, museum assistant at the Jewish Museum & Archives of British Columbia, is launching the online exhibit, *New Ways of Living: Jewish Architects in Vancouver, 1955–1975*. The exhibit features Vancouver residential landmarks designed and built by Jewish architects in the postwar years in order to recognize their work and pay tribute to those architects who have contributed to the architectural character of the city.

Blouin, who developed and curated the exhibit, will also host the opening lecture and discussion with several guests, including architect Judah Shumiatcher and architectural historian Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe, at Inform Interiors in Gastown on Jan. 28.

“A lot of the architects are still around and I thought it would be really interesting to get the design and architecture communities involved in this project. It seemed very timely as well, with the [Museum of Vancouver: Your Future Home] urban area exhibition, on the future of Vancouver, coming up soon,” says Blouin.

Form follows function

As part of the 45th anniversary year of the Jewish Museum & Archives of B.C.’s founding, Blouin’s exhibit is part of an on-

line series profiling different facets of local Jewish history in Vancouver. Her exhibit examines the ways Jewish architects who immigrated to Vancouver brought their skills, education and experiences to help develop the region’s housing in the years following World War II. With veterans returning from the war, there was an increased need for housing and Vancouver’s civic leaders felt the region needed a conscious civic renewal.

“The 1950s to 1970s was a remarkable time in Vancouver, marked by transformation and modernization. This is similar to what we’re experiencing now at the crossroads, where city planning could go one way or another, similar to the postwar years,” says Blouin.

The West Coast architectural style was the response. Popular until around the mid-70s, the housing style emphasized post and beam construction, the integration of interior and exterior spaces, larger open room spaces and landscape specificity, such houses built along cliffs overlooking the water and mountains, which made full use of the unique landscape of Metro Vancouver has to offer.

“In contrast to today, where prime real estates in Point Grey and West Vancouver, are built on cliffs, back then architects didn’t know how to build on those landscapes, lacking the engineering



▲ Oberlander Residence I – Peter Oberlander and Leon Dirasser Architects, Landscape design Cornelia Oberlander, 1956.

know-how,” Blouin says. “The Jewish architects were some of the first to experiment on these lots, and they used their homes as a laboratory test-bed for these different ideas.”

Blouin notes the Jewish architects designed housing, which served the needs of the family living there. For instance, Wolfgang Gerson, who is best known for Vancouver’s Unitarian Church, adapted his home to suit his needs as a musician. He designed and built a floor around his piano so his family and guests could enjoy the music, which Blouin says wasn’t conventional at the time.

“There were more partitions in homes at the time. Gerson’s home was a prime example of doing something different and adapt-

ing architecture to serve the needs of families,” she says.

Understanding the ideas behind spaces

The exhibit will consist of architectural plans, oral interviews with living architects or their relatives, landscape images, and other primary source materials documenting these historical residential architectures Blouin has collected in the course of her research. The talk on Jan. 28 will feature some of these materials.

Blouin, who came to Vancouver to study at UBC for her MA in art history, says this is her first curatorial work and exhibition, and since working on this exhibit, architecture and design has become an important part of her life.

“It’s been wonderful,” Blouin says. “It’s interesting to pay tribute to the work of these architects that have helped make this city the way it is.”

Being from Montreal, Blouin was used to seeing older architecture. She says coming to Vancouver and seeing the newer and myriad architectural styles was a bit of shock at first, but she’s grown to love the way architecture serves the city they are located in.

“Buildings are built for a reason and there are ideas behind them. You feel a certain way in certain spaces, and you may not be fully aware of it, but it’s important to pay attention to that,” says Blouin. ✍

Visit the online exhibit at www.jewishmuseum.ca.

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A play by Sean Harris Oliver

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WORLD PREMIERE - FEBRUARY 2016

BRIGHT BLUE FUTURE

Written by Sean Harris Oliver

Arianna and Alexandra are a live-in couple whose relationship is on the rocks. When Carston, Arianna's former boyfriend-now-gay best friend, arrives for an unexpected visit, a fun night out quickly gets heavy. Drugs, booze, and a cute club take-home named Josh push the party - and the partiers - past their limits, and there will definitely be hell to pay in the morning.

Bright Blue Future is set in Victoria BC during the global economic recession of the late 2000s. The story takes place over the course of a Saturday night as four twenty-somethings navigate a substance-fueled evening rife with feelings of inadequacy, sexual tension, and fear of the impending future.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Bright Blue Future has been featured in the Playwright Theatre Centre's Writer's Colony, the rEvolver Festival's Playreading Series, was shortlisted for the 2014 American Actor UK Playreading Festival, and was a finalist of the 2013 Theatre BC Playwriting Award. *Bright Blue Future* is playwright Sean Harris Oliver's first play. His second, *The Fighting Season*, recently won the Georgia Straight's Critics Choice Award and the Cultivating the Fringe Award at the 2015 Vancouver Fringe Festival.

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Left Bank



B.C. Liberals defuse Kinder Morgan pipeline issue just in time for by-elections

Long overdue by-elections are finally taking places to fill two vacant seats in B.C.'s legislature. For a couple of months, opposition MLAs have been calling on Premier Christy Clark to hurry up and call the interim elections in the ridings of Vancouver-Mount Pleasant and Coquitlam-Burke Mountain, where MLAs had resigned earlier in 2015 to run in the federal election.

Early in 2016, Clark finally obliged, setting the two by-election votes for Feb. 2. Melanie Mark is expected to win handily in Mount Pleasant, one of the safest NDP seats in B.C., while a closer race is expected in Burke Mountain, where the Liberals' margin of victory was narrower in the last provincial election. The NDP's Jodie Wickens and B.C.

that they were hostile to business interests and couldn't be trusted. Dix and the NDP, having waited until mid-campaign to come out with a clear position, were unable to articulate a forceful defence of their position. In countless election post-mortems, the NDP's Kinder Morgan stance was cited as a turning point, and used by pipeline advocates to push their case for this mega-project that would see Vancouver's harbour packed with oil export tankers.

What a difference a few years can make. With the Liberals' own reversal on Kinder Morgan, we can perhaps now finally lay to rest the myth that the NDP's stance was what did them in last time. In reality, the pipeline has always galvanized major concern from voters, especially in Vancou-

“The more people have learned about this proposed pipeline, the more politically toxic it has become in B.C.

Liberal Joan Isaacs will battle it out in Coquitlam, but it's not a simple two-way race. The Green Party is running legendary punk rocker and long-time social justice activist Joey Keithley, who is widely respected across party lines for his progressive politics.

For the NDP, strong showings in both by-elections will help bolster the party base, still shaken by the stunning electoral defeat of 2013. After 15 years of B.C. Liberals in power, there is a strong appetite for political change in B.C., but also lingering doubts that the NDP can be the vehicle to inspire a broad enough coalition to oust the entrenched governing party.

Soon after calling the by-elections, Clark surprised many observers by announcing the Province of B.C.'s formal opposition to Kinder Morgan's proposed Trans Mountain pipeline. National Energy Board hearings are currently taking place in Burnaby, and

ver, Burnaby and the north shore here in the Lower Mainland. Besides that, Trans Mountain has been steadfastly opposed from the beginning by the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, who are now joined by a powerful coalition of Indigenous nations.

The more people have learned about this proposed pipeline, the more politically toxic it has become in B.C. Burnaby's Mayor Derek Corrigan has gone as far as to vow to engage in civil disobedience to stop construction, if it comes to that. And he's not alone. There is a diverse and dynamic climate movement focused on stopping Kinder Morgan. The rallies taking place in Burnaby at the NEB hearings are evidence of the community anger and willingness to mobilize against this pipeline.

All this helps explain the timing of Premier's Clark opposition. This is not a principled stand the Liberals are taking, but a quali-



▲ An oil tanker in Prince William Sound.

the planned tar sands pipeline has become a lightning rod of opposition from environmental groups, affected municipalities, and local First Nations.

It's quite a reversal for the B.C. Liberals to come out against the pipeline, especially given the way the issue played out in the 2013 campaign. At the time, Clark and the Liberals pounced on then NDP leader Adrian Dix's announcement of opposition to Kinder Morgan's plans. The mainstream media magnified the Liberals' message that the NDP's stance was proof

fied one, leaving the door open by saying they're not in favour of Kinder Morgan "at this time." With oil at \$30/barrel and Kinder Morgan's stock dropping, this pipeline isn't getting built anytime soon. Maybe Clark knows, that with changes coming from the new federal government to the NEB process, this issue won't be decided for good until after next year's provincial election.

One thing is clear: it's smart politics by Christy Clark to take the issue of Kinder Morgan off the table at this time. ✂



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION
MARCH 5th, 2016

Call for Nominations

The *Shakti* Awards were founded in 2000 in honour of International Women's Day, celebrated around the world on March 8th. The Shakti Awards recognize and honour women who have displayed *Shakti*-strength and energy, in their community, locally or globally. *Shakti* is the mother Goddess, the source of all, the universal principle of energy, power and creativity and represents the dynamic forces that are thought to move through the entire universe. Not only is Shakti responsible for creation, it is also the agent of all change.

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

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Nominee Information

- Name
- Age
- Address, phone number(s) and email
- Name, phone number and email of nominator

Brief summary of reason for nomination - how the nominee's accomplishments relate to the stated criteria, the impact of their role and why they should be chosen to receive a specific award. (Maximum of two pages)

Deadline: February 15th, 2016

Email: shaktisociety2000@gmail.com

Please note that all recipients of the awards should be available to attend the Shakti Award Gala in Surrey, B.C. on March 5th, 2016.



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Global effect of big data

Photo courtesy of SFU

by KATE MURRAY

“It’s starting to show us a lot of things but it’s also starting to not show us a lot of things in terms of these types of algorithms, so it’s a new thing and what it’s going to turn into we don’t know,” says Peter Chow-White, associate professor, SFU School of Communication.

SFU’s Spring President’s Day Colloquium aims to spark debate with a speaker series on Big Data, which began on Jan. 5 and runs until March 22. The speaker series, which takes place in the Burnaby SFU campus, is an interdisciplinary debate defining what big data is and what implications it has on everyday life.

“Big data trends the use of algorithms to search and scrape data from the internet. The use of telephones and other types of surveillance tactics on the web these days have been developing for quite some time but are not

well known specifically to consumers,” says Catherine Murray, a professor at the SFU School of Communication.

Everybody should know about big data

According to Murray, growth velocity is intensifying big data and is relevant to people today.

“I think that the pivotal point was the release of the Edward Snowden papers in 2013, when we realized the scope of what is done and conducted by the five major countries like the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany and France.”

Murray adds that, because of these revelations, we are now starting to see the massive control over our personal information that companies like Google, Facebook or Twitter actually have. “They’re monetizing our personal information at a level and rapidity that is just growing quicker every year,” she says.

Although the benefits of big

data collection are expansive, from its use in the medical field to mine data from DNA to create tailor-made healthcare, to businesses worldwide using it to optimize their social-marketing campaigns, only now is the subject being scrutinized by larger entities, the most recent being the European Union.

One of the original creators of the Internet, Tim Berners-Lee, is among those raising concerns about Big Data and privacy.

“There was a really interesting article in the Economist by Tim Berners-Lee, who actually was very remorseful about the history the Internet has taken; how its being commercialized and colonized, how it is essentially abusing personal information,” says Murray. “He argues for a massive global shift in big data governance and we’re solidly in support of that.”

The rate at which big data is developing is profoundly challenging to monitor as the ad-

vancement of technology is an ever changing and ever expanding entity. The laws put in place are struggling to keep up and have little standing.

“Especially in a Canadian context for policymakers, the laws that govern our privacy were made 20-some

odd years ago and they weren’t made in a time of big data,” says Chow-White.

General public invited

The comprehensible colloquium covers a number of subjects, from Visual Analytics to Disruptive Technologies, culminating in the presentation of students’ final projects on April 5. The complementary presentations are open to bookings and all presentations will be posted online after the event takes place. The general public is invited to participate.

“They [the speaker series] are all targeted at the general public. We have a team of brilliant students who are working on distilling this subject into ordinary language and breaking it down into units. We’re trying to make it a publicly accessible resource,” says Murray. ☞



Photo courtesy of SFU

▲ Peter Chow-White, associate professor, SFU School of Communication.

For more information, please visit www.sfu.ca/engagingbigdata.



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Postcard from India

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It feels as though everyone in India is an entrepreneur. A fair assumption when travelling the country is that no product or service is too insignificant to bargain over. Even those already in employ, such as IndiGo baggage charge collectors, appear somewhat disappointed not to be cajoled. An expectant look, daring you to twist their arm, is included in the fare.

Enterprising ways give theatrical and surprising turns to mundane chores. Groceries promise a thrilling twist. Servicing your car can feel like a hostage crisis. A taxi ride can take more turns than the road even offers.

Take the example of my friends and I needing 10 bouquets shortly before the start of a wedding.

At an otherwise nondescript street corner, we found a busily-threading flower walla (shopkeeper) tending to two customers. Shekhar, the savviest amongst us, leads price negotiations around, and often over, enquiries from other passers-by. Meanwhile, our semi-attendant walla weaves vines and sparkling ribbons around lavish hydrangeas with the dexterity of Goddess Durga. After 10 minutes it all ends in a flurry and, before I know it, we’re back in our taxi high-tailing it down the street.

Do we really have time for this? I come all this way for an Indian wedding and spend the night in florist trade talks. Perfect. Suddenly, we’re thrown forward as the taxi lurches into reverse and, back at the walla’s makeshift worktable, he’s preparing our order with a juggler’s precision. I’m dumbfounded. What just happened?

It dawned on me: that was the negotiation! Worthy of a Penn & Teller finale, I was misdirected by what appeared to be a breakdown when there was never any thought of us leaving the table, so to speak. Our bid was the abruptness of that indignant wheel spin. As I rewind events, I marvel at the choreography – the window left down, the door not quite closed – that solicited an acceptable offer shouted from a block away.

How hard can it be? Awestruck and wanting a chance to lead the haggles, I visit Calangute’s street market to buy fruit. In my first of many mistakes, I pick out a pitiful old woman on her haunches, encircling a bucket’s worth of produce, and ask for four oranges and two bananas.

In my head I’m busy converting the price I’d expect to pay in Van-

cover into rupees and readying myself for an exaggerated lob that I’ll undercut with gusto. Game, set and match. So you can imagine my surprise when I snap back to find her unloading everything she’s got into my hands.

There are fruits I have never seen before and, I think, some rocks in there. As things turn pear-shaped, I come to the conclusion she has launched a war of attrition; by offloading her medley of fruit and stones on me, she assumes I’ll give in to an ignorantly large offer.

My protestations fall on suddenly – or perhaps genuinely – deaf ears, and my attempts to reiterate (in Hindi, mind you) my order are rebuffed by hand shooing and head rolling. Realizing the situation is now beyond saving, I pull the only manoeuvre I can think of and make for the nearest escape, handing her rocks back as I turn.

Not guilefully, as I was shown by Shekhar, or presciently, assuming she would reform her tactics, but out of sheer embarrassment and failure. Whether insults, actual offers or the delayed onset of pity for my feeble attempt, she shouts after me for what seems an eternity.

Wherever you may view yourself, or end up, on the haggle-o-meter, give it a whirl. Who knows, maybe your neighbourhood grocer is up for sparring over the price of grapes, but nobody ever asked. ☞



▲ Delhi flower wallas at work.

CARL DENSEM

Photo courtesy of Carl Densem

Izakayas: a Japanese tradition in Vancouver

by ELIANO ROSSI

An izakaya, which translates to “stay” and “sake shop,” is a lively and informal bar that serves Japanese fusion cuisine in tapas style. Izakaya restaurants have been opening at a rapid pace all over the city, claiming a spot in Vancouver’s diverse culinary scene.

Traditional izakayas are vibrant places where customers are welcomed into the restaurant by someone shouting “*irasshaimase*” (“welcome” in Japanese). Both servers and cooks say it loudly, and with a smile, every time a new customer enters the restaurant.

“At the beginning people were confused by the tiny portions of the food and the menu itself.

Takeshi Hasegawa, vice president of Kitanoya Guu

People can sit at the bar to watch the cooks prepare their food, or at the tables to enjoy the company of a group of friends. In more traditional izakayas, while waiting for the first drink to come, the customer receives an *oshibori* (wet towel) to clean hands and an *otosmi* (a little appetizer) before choosing from a variety of small dishes. Although some restaurants in Vancouver try to follow these traditions, others elect to skip these details.



▲ A small Ikura Tapa, made with salmon eggs.

“In Japan, izakayas are a great place to have a drink after work with friends or colleagues, while eating good food,” says Takeshi Hasegawa, the vice president of Kitanoya Guu, the company that pioneered izakayas in Canada.

A slow awakening

Hasegawa, 38, is originally from Nagoya and moved to Vancouver 15 years ago. Kitanoya Guu opened the very first izakaya restaurant in Vancouver in 1993 at a time when it was possible to find only traditional Japanese sushi or classic yakitori (grilled skewered chicken).

“It took almost six years before Vancouverites figured izakayas out. We did not change anything about the original atmosphere and the idea when importing this concept over,” says Hasegawa. “At the beginning people were confused by the tiny portions of the food and the menu itself. They could not find the food that they were expecting from a Japanese restaurant.”

An izakaya might be the perfect place to taste and sample Japanese fusion. It is a place to try starters like miso cream cheese, chopped tuna sashimi garnished with green onion and seaweed, a kabocha croquette (pumpkin and boiled egg), or mango cheese cake.

“Tapas are based on our traditional cuisine, but chefs feel free to experiment with new flavours, mixing ingredients and tastes from other international cuisines like Italian, German, Spanish, Korean or Chinese,” says Hasegawa.

Try them out or try your hand at them

Almost 24 years after the first one opened in Vancouver, izakayas have become more popular. Currently, there are more than two dozen izakaya restaurants in Vancouver.

Evidence of their popularity can be seen by viewing the annual Dine Out Vancouver Festival guide. A handful of izakayas are taking part in it, giving Vancouverites multiple venues at which to try Japanese tapas.

For those who wish to not only taste tapas, but to learn how to make izakaya-style tapas, there are courses available at The Nikkei Museum and

Cultural Centre in Burnaby. The centre organizes popular cooking classes with renowned local chefs to introduce people to this traditional food.

On Jan. 31, Chef Clifford Chi, who has worked in Guu restaurants for more than a decade, will host a class that includes a lecture, cooking demonstration and tasting of recipes that combine flavours and ingredients of Japan, Asia and Europe. The class is open to anyone willing to learn. ☞

For more information, please visit centre.nikkeiplace.org and www.dineoutvancouver.com.



▲ Dana Claxton, Cultural Belongings, 2015. LED firebox with transmounted Lightjet Duratrans.

Indigenous women and cultural belongings

by SANDRA ZIMMERMANN

Vancouver-based artist Dana Claxton explores the life of Indigenous people in her artwork. Her new exhibition *Made To Be Ready*, which can be seen at SFU’s Audain Gallery, focuses on four selected video and photograph works depicting Indigenous women and cultural belongings.

The exhibition consists of two lightboxes, or fireboxes, as the artist calls them, named *Cultural Belongings* and *Headdress*. The video, *The Uplifting*, and the silk curtains, or windbox prints in *Buffalo Woman 1 and 2*, complete the show. While the lightboxes are the exhibition’s centerpiece, the video and windbox were included because both the curator and the artist felt strong connections to them, due to their content, spiritual similarities and material differences.

Amy Kazymierchuk, the exhibition’s curator, says each work portrays the same woman, Samaya Jardey from the Lakota First Nations-Wood Mountain reserve in Saskatchewan, with whom Claxton has worked with in various projects for over 25 years. Kazymierchuk explains that although Claxton has a very large body of work, she felt the show needed to be sparse and thus focus on significant pieces: four works portraying a woman with cultural belongings.

“The woman in each of the images has a very strong presence. Because each of the artworks is approximately life-size, when a visitor enters the gallery, they face each of the works as a single body,” says Kazymierchuk.

Meaningful installation

The way the art works are installed is crucial, according to Kazymierchuk.

“One work is hung on each of the gallery’s four walls, each directly across from the one parallel. It creates a four-directional cross, which is an important part of the Lakota Sundance.”

The four figures face in a counter-clockwise circle, and Kazymierchuk explains that the show starts with the video of the woman in *The Uplifting*, who crawls from the entrance of the gallery towards the woman in *Cultural Belongings*, who is

but perhaps even back at themselves,” says Kazymierchuk.

In *Made To Be Ready*, Kazymierchuk worked with Claxton for the first time, which she greatly enjoyed.

“I learned so much from Dana about how she approaches reading images, making images, imagining worlds through art and approaching criticism and encouragement in conversation.”

Claxton, who is also an associate professor in the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at UBC, has exhibited work internationally at the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Indigenous belongings: more than just objects

Kazymierchuk explains that the show’s title *Made To Be Ready* was suggested by Claxton, referring to a philosophy regarding Indigenous cultural belongings. The curator says the title counters the notion that Indigenous belongings, like drums, masks or baskets, are simply objects that are stolen, displayed or studied by anthropologists or explorers; these items are made to be used and have a purpose.

“These belongings are, in fact, made to be ready: to be danced, used in hunting and gathering, used in warfare, used in play, used in ritual, used to wear, used to travel,” explains Kazymierchuk. ☞

The exhibition is currently on display at SFU’s Audain Gallery until March 12.

For more information, please visit www.sfu.ca/galleries/audain-gallery.html.



▲ Dana Claxton, Headdress, 2015. LED firebox with transmounted Lightjet Duratrans.

half bent and faces the third work, *Buffalo Woman*, in a warrior pose. *Buffalo Woman* in return stands tall with her arms raised and offers the buffalo skull she carries to the woman in *Headdress*, the last piece of the exhibition.

The curator believes the show invites people to spend time with the works, and she suggests visitors go when not in a rush.

“I think the exhibition really encourages visitors to look closely. Of course at the works,



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CHORAL TAPESTRY

Our Heritage of Song
February 22, 2016 at 8 p.m.
Knox United Church
400 Edmonton Street, Winnipeg

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Repertoire

Healey Willan Behold, the tabernacle of God

Artus Aux-Cousteaux
Missa grata sum harmonia

David Squires Deep Peace
Steven Sametz The Heroine Triumphant

Ola Gjeilo Northern Lights
Samuel Barber Agnus Dei

Carl Orff Four Choruses
from Catulli Carmina

Florent Schmitt En bonnes voix
Jon Washburn Rise! Shine!

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www.brownpapertickets.com



REVITALIZING JAPANTOWN? A Right to Remain Exhibition

October 24, 2015 – January 31, 2016
Opening Reception - Saturday, October 24, 2-5pm

A creative repossession of the human rights legacies of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES)

This multi-layered exhibition looks at the contradictions, co-optation, commemoration, heritage, and redress that have shaped the DTES, as unearthed by a three-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)-funded research project.

An extensive academic research project led by Drs. Jeff Masuda, Audrey Kobayashi, and Aaron Franks from Queens University pursued a unifying exploration of human rights, branding, and place in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. In all, seven research team members spoke with 51 past and current residents of the DTES and analyzed eight oral histories provided by Japanese Canadian Elders. An early public garden project addressed the Right to Access Food. Community engagement art projects under the Right to Remain, Right to Community initiatives included Gallery Gachet, the Carnegie Centre, the Powell Street Festival, Centre A, and the Nikkei National Museum.

The first Right to Remain exhibit held at Gallery Gachet March 6 – April 12, 2015, enlivened Human Rights stories of ancestors who once dwelled in the DTES and placed them in conversation with current residents. Spoken through people's histories, voices, and artwork, this exhibition wove together stories of the DTES, told through the Right to Remain Community Fair workshops, held between July 2014 and January 2015. These stories presented a visually provocative dialogue about the Right of all people to Remain in the places they call home and form community. <http://gachet.org/2015/02/25/the-right-to-remain/>

This final Right to Remain exhibit is an overview of the entire Revitalizing Japantown? project with outcomes from over three years of research. Artwork from local contemporary artists will animate the scholarly results. Featured is a seminal photograph by Greg Masuda and his newest documentary film titled The Right to Remain. CBC aired the film on August 8 and online at cbc.ca/bc, cbc.ca/Edmonton, cbc.ca/Calgary. <http://www.revitalizingjapantown.ca/right-to-remain-film-premiering-saturday-aug-8-on-cbc/>

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
6688 Southoaks Crescent
Burnaby, BC V5E 4M7 604.777.7000 www.nikkeiplace.org

Aurelio: Sharing Garifuna culture and music

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Honduras-based musician Aurelio will be performing various styles of Garifuna music, an integral part of the coastal Garifuna culture, on Jan. 31 at St. James Hall. While the songs are his own, Aurelio seeks to display and share the sound of his culture rather than his own voice as an individual.

Hailing from Honduras, Aurelio Martinez has taken on a role as a kind of representative of Garifuna culture through sharing his music worldwide. Even as a child, Aurelio was met with early praise for his music. Coming from a very musical family in Plaplaya, Honduras, his father having been a well-known troubadour, Aurelio learned how to sing from his mother. His uncles and his grandfather taught him how to play drums, the central element to Garifuna music, to which Aurelio gravitated and excelled at from a young age.

"From as young as eight, nine, ten years old, I was really good at Garifuna drum playing," says Aurelio.

While most children were not even allowed in various sacred ceremonies, Aurelio could be seen performing at such events. By 14, he was considered a respectable Garifuna musician, well-versed in the culture and its music.

have struggled to hold onto culture, with food and music being the most central elements. With the Garifuna being a minority group in Honduras, it can be hard enough to keep the culture alive and well even within the country.

For Aurelio, although it is fame that helps his ultimate goal of sharing his people's culture and music for the world to hear, his musical success has never been a matter of personal accomplishment.

"Our music isn't individual, it's community. When we write a song, we don't see it as 'somebody' writing it. I don't try to be a star; my music isn't talking about 'Aurelio Martinez,' it's about the Garifuna nation. It's powerful music," explains Aurelio.

While politics wasn't originally seen as an option, a local mayor eventually encouraged Aurelio, being an already-prominent figure to run for congress. Aurelio ended up winning, becoming the first Black congressman in Honduras, serving a four-year term in Honduran congress and doing his best to promote Garifuna culture. After a time, he decided politics wasn't his calling.

"I tried to do my best to make change for our community," he says. "But politics isn't for me."

In the end, Aurelio returned to his musical roots and has continued to tour and share Garifuna culture and music with the world. "We're not going to let this cul-



▲ Musician at heart.

Since then, Aurelio has continued to grow as a musician, improving his musical ability by branching out into playing with latin ensembles, and eventually releasing GrupoGarifuna de Honduras with his band LitaAriran, a watershed for recorded Garifuna music. He has since released four other solo and collaborative albums, toured internationally and performed with the likes of English R&B chanteuse Joss Stone and afropop legend YoussouN'Dour.

"Since I am a more international artist, for many here, Joss Stone is known better than me. So seeing this young artist from the U.K. here in our community, to see Joss Stone singing in Garifuna language, we're surprised!" says Aurelio.

Keeping Garifuna culture alive

The Garifuna are people of Amerindian and West African descent who live along the coasts of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Since having been displaced from St. Vincent (in the West Indies) in 1796, they



▲ Spreading Garifuna music.

ture die. I know I must continue my ancestors' legacy and find new ways to express it. Few people know about it, but I adore it, and it's something I must share with the world," he says. ✍

For more information on the event, visit www.capilanou.ca/calendar.aspx

For more on Aurelio, visit www.aureliomusic.net

Exploring new worlds through film

by FLORENCE HWANG

When Lawrence Le Lam heard the story of his father, Lami Lam, a legendary DJ called Blue Jet who played banned anti-war rock and roll music in Taiwan in the 1970s, he thought it would be a great idea for a film. The result was a 16 minute short film entitled *The Blue Jet* that would go on to win the BC Student Shortwork Award at the Whistler Film Festival. *The Blue Jet* will play at the Vancouver Short Film Festival (VSFF) from Jan. 29–30.

Le Lam, who graduated from Emily Carr University in film studies, says he thought the story would also work well as a feature film someday because there is so much to the story.

"They decided to play this kind of music because it was popular among the youth and also decided to make records and hold underground concerts," says Le Lam.

A DJ revealed

Le Lam grew up in Richmond, BC in a world of karaoke bars and bubble tea shops. When he was quite young his dad played rock and roll in the car.

"I always remember him singing along to the songs," says Le Lam.

Over time, Le Lam started asking questions. He eventually found out that his father had played in a band when he was young, played bass and was also a radio DJ.

"He'd say he was only allowed to play one hour of rock and roll a week, but he would play two," Le Lam says.

The B.C. filmmaker originally wrote the script for *The Blue Jet* in 2014. His challenge was figuring out how to turn this story into a film.

At first, Lami Lam didn't think anyone would be interested in his story, notes Le Lam. But later, he realized how interesting the story is.

"It's not something he necessarily likes to boast about. I'm usually the one telling people about it because I think it's a cool thing," says Le Lam.

Extraordinary characters

One film that impacted Le Lam was based on the French book *The Man Who Planted Trees*. The short animated film of the same name is about a man who plants trees over a span of 30 years in a desolate area in the foothills of the French Alps to bring life back to the region.

"Throughout the story, you hear a lot about this extraordinary character, but you never really get to know him. You admire him from a distance," Le Lam says.

Le Lam explains he thought that telling his dad's story through a fan's perspective would keep the myths.

Memory, a strange thing

"It's funny how memory works because the way my dad tells the story there are some inconsistencies with how he tells it and how it actually was. That's an element I try to bring into the



▲ Stills from *The Blue Jet*.

film where the narrator tells you one thing, but you see something else," says Le Lam.

Le Lam wants to find out about these different worlds he hasn't been to that also fall within the worlds that he's seen, such as the

Asian and North American crossings.

Le Lam says he wants to work with Asian Canadian performers he's met through his film project in part because they don't appear in film enough. His first priority,

however, is to explore the Asian North American world around him and find the right people to represent their stories. ✉

For more information, visit www.vsff.com.

Huff Stuff: Darkness and humour inhabit a dream world

by ALISON CHIANG

It's all about the tough stuff, or Huff stuff, for playwright and performer Cliff Cardinal. Solvent abuse, sexual abuse and suicide are featured in his second play *Huff*, a story about what he feels young First Nations are going through. But Cardinal wants to let the audi-

ence have their own interpretation.

"I think that First Nations kids who abuse solvents is really far out there- that expression you can't see the forest through the trees... By doing our best to empathize with that perspective, especially with them, we get to see ourselves from a very unique per-

spective - some beautiful things and some of our unattractive angles," says Cardinal, who wrote *Huff* about four or five years ago.

Huff is a one-man play about a young boy named Wind and his two brothers who experiment with solvents, and deals with the taboo topic of suicide. Cardinal himself performs over twelve characters in the play.

Cardinal, an indigenous artist based in Toronto, says he felt compelled to write a play about startling subject matter.

"It's a scary subculture, which has invoked fear in me," says Cardinal.

Finding his voice

Though Cardinal dropped out of high school at age 15, he later returned to study playwriting at the National Theatre of Canada in Montreal. Acting runs in the family - Cardinal's mother, Tantoo Cardinal, is a well-known actress.

"My mom sent me to the backstage of the VideoCabaret in Montreal. They were doing their history plays, so my tenth grade was spent in the back of a theatre watching rehearsals," he says.

Huff is Cardinal's second solo play. His first play, *Stitch*, a one-woman show about a single mom who worked in porn, debuted at Toronto's Summerworks Festival in 2011. Cardinal's original intention was to write a show for his sister, but she didn't end up doing a lot of acting in the production.

"It was my first play, so I was finding my voice. It had its own

drive and what I was doing was learning to craft a story and write," Cardinal says.

The positive reception of *Stitch*, which included winning awards, encouraged him to write another play. The process didn't quite go as planned, but Cardinal thinks if people are compelled to tell a story or make a piece of art, they will find a way to do it.

"It's weird that I set out to make something that is very beautiful and I never accomplish it; it's always weird and awkward and a bit ugly and a bit loveable. To actually see yourself, myself, in a piece of art was a bit shocking," he explains.

The audience's role

Cardinal says *Huff* has proved to be a positive experience.

"I wrote it - it's my voice in the world and I can actually hear it as reflected by the audience. It's been a defining challenge in my career," he explains.

The interaction with the audience is very important, albeit the subject matter may not come easily for some, says Cardinal.

"It's a dark play. I personally need a dark story, a dark piece of art, unified by pain, and not everybody goes for it," he adds.

Cardinal wants the audience to make their own interpretation. For him, a play doesn't truly become a play until it meets the audience.

Huff will be featured at the Firehall Arts Centre Feb. 2–6. ✉

For more information, please visit www.firehallartscentre.ca.

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▲ Cliff Cardinal plays over twelve characters in *Huff*.

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2015 – 2016

FROM BYRD TO BARD

The Glorious English Tradition
8pm Friday, September 25
Ryerson United Church

Jon Washburn and the Vancouver Chamber Choir explore the magnificent choral music of England, ranging from the rich polyphony of Elizabethan master William Byrd to the jaunty Shakespeare settings of present day composer John Rutter.

MONTEVERDI VESPERS OF 1610

The Early Baroque Masterpiece
7:30pm Friday, October 23
Chan Centre
for the Performing Arts

Early Music Vancouver and the Vancouver Chamber Choir are collaborating in this spectacular performance of Monteverdi's great masterpiece - the monumental *Vespers of 1610*. The Choir joins in with eight outstanding vocal soloists and an orchestra of Baroque instrumentalists from Pacific MusicWorks under the direction of guest conductor Stephen Stubbs.

NEW WAVE

The Latest in Choral Music
8pm Friday, November 13
Ryerson United Church

The 21st century has proved to be a new renaissance for choral composition. There are dozens of outstanding living composers - both young and old - and we will bring you a scintillating selection of recent pieces by composers from Argentina, Estonia, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA and Canada.

CHRISTMAS IN THE ORPHEUM

Renaissance, Baroque & Carols
8pm Friday, December 4
Orpheum Theatre

Nothing says Christmas more than choirs, and this concert brings you the city's finest, singing the glorious voice-and-brass music of Gabrieli and Pinkham, intimate Christmas moods of Derek Healey with harp, and a grand carol sing-along of traditional favourites, as the audience joins in with the choirs and brass ensemble. *Venite! Venite!*

A DYLAN THOMAS CHRISTMAS

A Child's Christmas in Wales
8pm Friday, December 18
Shaughnessy Heights
United Church

Choose the Vancouver Chamber Choir's signature performance of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* (Dylan Thomas) with our favourite Welshman - Russell Roberts - narrating on Friday evening. The concert starts with English, German and international songs of the season conducted by Carrie Tennant, including a special appearance of her accomplished Vancouver Youth Choir.

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

Finding the True Meaning
8pm Saturday, December 19
Shaughnessy Heights
United Church

Enjoy this lively concert performance of *A Charlie Brown Christmas* with actors, jazz duo and the Vancouver Chamber Choir on Saturday evening. This concert also begins with English, German and international songs of the season conducted by Carrie Tennant, with a second appearance this weekend of her delightful Vancouver Youth Choir.

THE MAESTRO'S ART

The National Conductors' Symposium Concert
8pm Saturday, January 23
Ryerson United Church

This year the Vancouver Chamber Choir's remarkable National Conductors' Symposium concert focuses on the music of the Masters - Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Wagner. Five talented conductors from around the world lead the outstanding professional choir along with master conductor and teacher Jon Washburn and pianist Stephen Smith. Join us for an exciting evening of music-making and special insight into the art and craft of choral conducting.

THE SOURCE OF SONG

Gregory's Gift of Chant
8pm Friday, February 12
Ryerson United Church

Gregorian chant is still a seminal force in choral music, even a thousand years after Saint Gregory the Great lent it his name. Jon Washburn and Kevin Zakresky conduct the Vancouver Chamber Choir in an a cappella programme that traces choral repertoire back to the Gregorian chant on which it is based.

CHORAL TAPESTRY

Our Heritage of Song
8pm Friday, March 4
Shaughnessy Heights
United Church

The outstanding repertoire of North American choral music is based substantially on the models of musical immigrants from Europe. Jon Washburn and the Vancouver Chamber Choir illuminate many of these ties in this varied and invigorating concert of music from two continents.

THE LOVE THAT MOVES THE UNIVERSE

Bach, Handel & Schaefer
8pm Friday, March 25
Orpheum Theatre

One of the Vancouver Chamber Choir's most acclaimed performances was the 2010 premiere of R. Murray Schafer's radiant choral/orchestral work *The Love that Moves the Universe*, based on the final lines of Dante's *Paradiso*. In answer to popular demand, we repeat that magical experience, and extend it by singing the equally luminous *Jesu, meine Freude* by Bach and *Laudate pueri Dominum* by Handel.

THE CHAMBER CHOIR AND THE ISELER SINGERS

Two Great Choirs
8pm Friday, April 22
Ryerson United Church

Every few years Vancouver's and Toronto's famous professional choirs join forces in one city or the other - this time, it's in Vancouver. You are guaranteed a sumptuous sonic experience as the ensembles sing together and individually. Two great choirs... an evening of wonderful music... don't miss it!

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A song for the century

by ELISE VARLEY

Toronto-based soprano Neema Bickersteth performs *Century Song*, a hybrid work of film, song and dance that explores the identities and roles experienced by a woman throughout the 20th century, in an effort to "inform one's own identity" as it links to the past. The performance will be held at the Cultch theatre from Feb. 2 to Feb. 6 as part of the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival.

The show features a series of classical songs performed by Bickersteth along with projections of shifting visuals that paint a vivid picture of her character travelling through time.

"It's kind of like a theatricalized recital," Bickersteth explains.

In preparation for the performance Bickersteth began to explore questions about her own heritage as research for the character.

"As I was singing the first piece by Rachmaninoff, I realized I was singing it as if I was a white European - and that was the perspective I had taken to become these characters. I don't think about becoming whatever a black woman would have been in that day. From there, I started to ask, who really is this woman going through time?"

Singing through time

Growing up in a small town in Alberta, Bickersteth is a first-generation Canadian who began singing lessons at age 8.

With parents emigrating from Sierra Leone in the 1960s, Bickersteth's curiosity about the realities faced by those with her heritage throughout the 20th century began to emerge while developing the repertoire for *Century Song*.

"As a first generation Canadian, it's not quite like being an immigrant, but there are unique questions to ask when it comes to understanding your past, and fully linking this to your identity now."

One of Bickersteth's inspirations for the show is a photograph of her great, great grandmother.

spective and it's about what we have to say within our own journeys that is reflected in all of us."

Other inspiration for the show was taken from two pieces of literature with parallel themes. Virginia Wolfe's novel *Orlando*, and an essay by Alice Walker, *In search of our mother's gardens*.

Both of these works chronicle an exploration of identity by travelling through time and reflecting on the past.

"Something that really inspires me in Alice Walker's essay is this idea of an inner artist. Like the search of my own identity through this piece, this woman

“One of my biggest realizations was that I can be the protagonist in a story.

Neema Bickersteth, black actress and soprano

"In the photo she's standing alone in a very European-cut dress, but the material is African. And I began to ask, who is this woman? Where did she come from? Who did she belong to? I feel like those questions really fed into how this piece came into being."

Starting at around 1915, the performance chronicles what life would have been like through the decades of the 20th century, paying homage to the past's struggle and uniqueness.

"I am Canadian, I am a woman, and I am black, and today I sing opera," says Bickersteth. "We can tell stories from our own per-

eventually makes her way to the state of 'now.'"

For Bickersteth, *Century Song* revealed some very personal insights into understanding her identity as a performer:

"One of my biggest realizations was that I can be the protagonist in a story. As an actress, I am often a slave or some stereotypical black female character. That is fine, but I'm not that person. I'm Neema who lives in Canada, and I can be someone that the audience connects to."

Music as words

Bickersteth's performance features a range of classical works by Rachmaninoff, John Cage and an original piece by Canadian composer Reza Jacobs. Each new song moves the character towards a new direction, and chronicles a different piece of the identity making up the character's history.

Jacobs points out that a unique aspect of *Century Song* is that all the music is wordless, a style of singing known as *vocalese*.

"With *vocalese*, we want to cover an emotional palate, and there is certainly a virtuosic element to this. Since there are no words and just vowels, it's about the musical lines and the emotion really comes through."

While Bickersteth is the main performer, a pianist and percussionist join to link the different stages of the performance.

"I would describe it as an opera recital remixed and on steroids," says Jacobs. 🎭



▲ Neema Bickersteth.

► "Verbatim" from page 1

on a passage over the Atlantic Ocean to Newfoundland. Sadly, Great-Great Grandmother never saw Canada, as she died on the ship, leaving her seven children orphaned to the State. Irish Great-Grandma was "placed" in service until she married, much like an Anne of Green Gables story, except the view out her window was not of rolling hills, but of the sugar refinery, just off Powell Street in East Vancouver.

When everyone from northern British Columbia had trickled down to Vancouver, the last family members, from my dad's side, were emigrating from Europe, at that time on the cusp

of the Second World War. Great Grandfather was a writer for a local paper and criticized the Nazi uprising in his homeland in an editorial. No one really talks about how much trouble he got into for saying what he felt, but the last photo of them as a family is them leaving for a steamer ship in the dead of winter with Great Grandmother seven months pregnant with my grandfather. I can't quite imagine their shock when they arrived from a bustling, modern, European city to middle-of-nowhere Saskatchewan, but I'm sure the isolation and hardship was nothing compared to the fate that awaited them as political prisoners in one of Hitler's death camps.

Fast forward about 30 years, and both families had settled in Vancouver - on the same street, four doors down from each other. My mom and dad met as high school sophomores, and I came along about 10 years later. So for everyone who has thought I am Irish, Welsh, British, Italian, German or Polish, you were right. If the Gold Rush had never happened and if war had been stayed in Europe, my families would never have touched North American soil and met each other. I might still exist in some form, but nowhere near the unique mix I am today, which is a truly Vancouver recipe. My roots may not have started in Vancouver, but I am definitely of Vancouver. 🎭



Photo by Jonathan Goulet

Vocal Art-thropology

by HAKIM FERRIA

***Anthropologies Imaginaires*, an avant-garde experimental vocal show by musician Gabriel Dharmoo, was awarded Best International Production at the Amsterdam Fringe Festival in 2015, and is now being presented at the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival from Feb. 1–2.**

"*Anthropologies Imaginaires* is a live art and vocal performance," says Dharmoo, composer, improviser and researcher of ethnomusicology. "I've been exploring imaginary folklore for many years and, as a composer, I want to deal with questions about ethnicity and post-colonialism."

A conceptual art-thropology

"Whimsical, intriguing and innovative" is how Dharmoo describes his show and his work.

Dharmoo is alone on the stage with a video projection and a screen behind him showing interviews of experts talking about different ways of singing over the world. And Dharmoo vocally illustrates those ways.

"The storyline is presented as if specialists have been invited to talk about some populations by a museum that is showcasing different cultures in spite of a traditional exhibition."

Dharmoo says he makes his art accessible and challenging, but

"People who have big problems with what I'm doing and think it's true feel uncomfortable because what I'm doing is unethical. But when they realize it is a satire, they allow themselves to see it as a satire."

Ánthrōpos and *logos*

Anthropology is the study of humanity, and the noun is derived from the Greek words *ánthrōpos* and *logos*, meaning human and speech, respectively. This is exactly what Dharmoo claims to do when studying, talking about and showcasing people: use the medium of his voice.

Dharmoo's mother is French Canadian, and his father was born in Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean where there is a high percentage of Indian ancestry.

"I've always been interested in India," says Dharmoo. "I've been to different countries to look at their traditional music. I learned a lot in India; it was intensive, but I feel I still have a lot to discover."

The process of sharing with musicians from other countries is part of his art.

"Artists have mutual respect, something really magical, a kind of spiritual connection through music. We have a lot of things in common," says Dharmoo.

Dharmoo wants to bring forth an awareness about how people sing differently. He says there is



Photo by Leif Norman

▲ Gabriel Dharmoo.

also entertaining; *Anthropologies Imaginaires* makes people laugh about very serious issues.

"I am just an artist. I am not an anthropologist, or a thinker, in the way I give people answers."

Dharmoo likes the transformation of the audience mind – when someone comes in and thinks what is presented is true and then realizes it's not.

not just one right way of singing, as there is not just one way of thinking.

Dharmoo says people already have their own ideas on many things, so he just gives another point of view, hoping to use fiction to reveal some reality. ☞

For more information, please visit www.pushfestival.ca

UBC OPERA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 14, 2016
Media Contact: Miles Linklater
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UBC Opera is Joined by Conductor Jonathan Girard, and the UBC Symphony Orchestra for a Lively Production of Strauss's *A Night in Venice*.

Vancouver, BC – The **UBC Opera Ensemble** joins forces with the **UBC Symphony Orchestra** under the baton of conductor **Jonathan Girard** in its presentation of Strauss's operetta, *A Night in Venice*, for four performances, February 4–7, 2016, on stage at the **Chan Centre for Performing Arts**.

THE STORY: The plot of this farcical romantic comedy is as full of twists and turns as the city of Venice itself. The Duke of Urbino, a notorious womanizer is bored in Venice when he meets the wife of an elderly senator. Flirtation and intrigue ensue during a Carnival ball, with a colourful cast of characters including a barber, a fisherman's daughter a spaghetti chef and a capricious nobleman. The men might try to dupe the women, but the women are too sharp to be fooled.

THE PRODUCTION: **Rebecca Burks**, a graduate of the UBC Theatre program designs the wonderful set (complete with Venetian gondola!) and **Jeremy Baxter** brings his beautiful lighting design to this fanciful operetta. Stage director, **Nancy Hermiston** creates the energetic and magical atmosphere of a Venetian Carnival and is joined by conductor **Jonathan Girard**, to masterfully blend stage movement and music together with results that are sure to delight and entertain audiences.

THE MUSIC: *A Night in Venice (Eine Nacht in Venedig)* is considered to be one of the most beautiful of Strauss's operettas. Although largely unknown in North America, this Viennese treasure is a favourite in Germany and Austria where it has become one of the most performed and recognized operettas alongside *Die Fledermaus* and Lehár's *The Merry Widow*.

THE CAST: The talented singers from the **UBC Opera Ensemble** have come to UBC from across Canada and around the world. All roles are double cast with Herzog. The Duke of Urbino performed by **Scott Rumble** and **Matthew Gaskin**, Annina by **Nicole Brooks** and **Mariah Muehler**, Pappacoda by **Alireza Mojibian** and **Ian McCloy**, Ciboletta by **Tamar Simon** and **Marie Civitarese**, and Caramello by **William Grossman** and **Brent MacKenzie**.

***A Night in Venice* by J. Strauss II | UBC Opera Ensemble with UBC Symphony Orchestra**
In German with English surtitles™. Libretto by F. Zell and Richard Genée.
Chan Centre for Performing Arts, 6265 Crescent Road, UBC | February 4, 5, 6 at 7:30 pm | February 7 at 2:00 pm
Tickets are available at UBCoperatickets.com, by telephone at **604.822.6725**
Or in person at the Chan Centre Box Office.

These opera performances are made possible through the generous assistance of the Chan Centre Foundation and The David Spencer Endowment Fund at UBC.

UBC a place of mind THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | **UBC100** | CHAN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS | UBC MUSIC | UBC School of Music 6361 Memorial Rd. Vancouver, BC www.music.ubc.ca

January 26–February 9, 2016

Cultural Calendar

by JAKE MCGRAIL

Lost Words: Political Edition

Jan. 26
The Emerald Lounge
555 Gore Ave., Vancouver
www.pitheatre.com

Lost Words is a series focused on banned, censored and controversial plays, and what makes them like that. Whether they're written to be negative towards a party in power, or become investigated for what they produce, their stories and productions will be shared in this showing of banned and controversial works.

Yiddish Glory

Jan. 27
Richmond Hill Centre
for Performing Arts
10268 Yonge St., Richmond
www.rhcentre.ca

A few years ago in Kiev, Ukraine, archivists in the manuscript department of the Ukrainian National Library found a number of sealed boxes. They held handwritten Yiddish documents containing thousands of songs written by Yiddish speaking Jews in Ukraine during World War II. Joseph Stalin's authorities seized the papers and sealed them, seemingly destroying them forever. Now these songs will be performed for the first time in almost 70 years at the Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts.

Sam Sullivan's Public Salon 24

Jan. 27
Vancouver Playhouse
600 Hamilton St., Vancouver
www.globalcivic.org

The Public Salons are presented by the Global Civic Policy Society as a way to present, listen, discuss and promote ideas that can entertain

and be of use in the community. The 24th edition of the Public Salon will feature an author, a poet, a TV host, a radio broadcaster, a microbiologist, a marathoner and more.

The 28th Annual Massacre Improv Festival

Jan. 27–Feb. 13
Vancouver TheatreSports League
1502 Duranleau St., Vancouver
www.vtsl.com

The Vancouver TheatreSports League is an internationally renowned theatre company that is recognized as one of the best producers of improvisational talent. The Massacre Improv Festival is back as teams from renowned theatre companies from both Canada and abroad compete in what will be a funny and fantastic competition.

Mount Pleasant Community/ Public Art Jam

Jan. 28
Heritage Hall
3102 Main St., Vancouver

The Mount Pleasant Business Improvement Association is inviting its members along with local artists, businesses and organizations to share what they think could be fun and engaging displays of public art. Bring your creativity and ideas to the discussion on how to improve the area.

New Impressions: Making the Common, Exceptional with Julie McIntyre

Jan. 30
ArtStarts Gallery
808 Richards St., Vancouver
www.artstarts.com

ArtStarts puts on free arts-based workshops where kids and families can learn from great artists



▲ Yamato Drummers of Japan.

in fun 45-minute workshops. The next workshop is with Julie McIntyre and is focused on printmaking. Learn how to make fantastic prints using basic materials and equipment around your home.



▲ Print made by Julie McIntyre.

Open Waters: Marine Painting

Feb. 1–29
Uno Langmann Limited Fine Art
2117 Granville St., Vancouver
www.langmann.com

This exhibition explores marine painting, a record of design, invention, battles and voyages through-

out history. Alongside of objets d'art from Europe and North America are paintings from artists including Vilhelm Arnesen, Abraham Hulk and Carl Frederik Sorenson.

Science of Cocktails

Feb. 4
TELUS World of Science
1455 Quebec St., Vancouver
www.scienceworld.ca

For only one night the Science of Cocktails will make Science World into Vancouver's largest cocktail laboratory. This fundraising event (for Science World's Class Field Trip Program), invites you to sample unique, crafted cocktails from local bartenders alongside delicious food pairings from Railtown Catering.

Yamato, the Drummers of Japan

Feb. 6
Queen Elizabeth Theatre
630 Hamilton St., Vancouver
www.yamatodrummers.com

Taiko is a musical instrument deeply entrenched in Japanese culture, and the Yamato Drummers of Japan will be bringing their electrifying and dynamic music to Vancouver in this one night only exposition of athleticism, theatrics, agility and speed.

Family Day at Fort Langley National Historic Site

Feb. 6–8
Fort Langley National Historic Site of Canada
23433 Mavis Ave., Fort Langley

A fun family adventure for Family Day weekend, Fort Langley National Historic site will be hosting a fun day of activities for all. From exploring the chores and work of a 19th century family to watching blacksmith and coopering demonstrations to participating in the family scavenger hunt there will be plenty of fun for everyone.

► "Integration" from page 1

cultural Helping House Society (MHHS) in Vancouver to organize a place to stay and access settlement services to help him adjust to Canadian culture and customs.

MHHS is a non-profit society that helps immigrants integrate into the community through orientations, training and social assistance. Hossain is involved with their youth settlement program, that gives him access to workshops, advisors and mentors.

Volunteering fastest way to make connections

MHHS introduced Hossain to volunteering.

"I'm grateful to be living in a country like Canada where you can volunteer," says Hossain. "As a volunteer, I have gained work

experience and an employment reference."

Volunteering is an important part of the settlement process for many immigrants. For Hossain, volunteering at Universal Relocations Services turned into a job offer after only a few weeks. Now he can focus on his next challenge – finding affordable accommodation in Vancouver.

Hossain also enjoys volunteering at the Richmond Animal Protection Society Cat Sanctuary. Feeding and cleaning up after these furry felines forces Hossain to practise his English language skills. During each shift, he observes the animals for signs of distress and it's important for him to be able to share his findings with other staff members. These interactions create opportunities for Hossain to build new

friendships and learn about Canadian culture.

"I'm not a very outgoing person. Volunteering forces me to talk to strangers, which is good for me," says Hossain.

Arts programs shine a light on youth settlement in B.C.

Richard Carpiano is a professor for the Department of Sociology at UBC and an expert on social capital, social networks and communities. He explains that immigrants are faced with a number of challenges once they arrive in Vancouver. They need to make new connections to develop a sense of belonging.

"Immigrants need access to social services like child care, affordable housing, employment that fits their skill sets and the ability to assimilate through cul-

tural connections or activities like art, culture or even sports," says Carpiano.

Non-profit organizations like MHHS, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and MOSAIC all have settlement programs to support immigrants and refugees. These organizations address a need in B.C. communities to help newcomers feel they are a part of their community.

Rubin Mudhar, a coordinator for youth programs at MOSAIC, oversees workshops like The NuYu (meaning Newcomer Youth) Popular Theatre Program. Up to 20 youth aged between 14 and 24 enrol each term. The last production was called, "My Challenges Coming to Canada," which allows youth to explore their personal challenges of immigration in a community forum of teachers, parents and friends.

"It's an awesome place for youth to meet new people, practise their English, and share some of the challenges they're going through as a newcomer to Canada," says Mudhar.

Finding connections within a community is an important part of the settlement process for all newcomers. Immigration services provide guidance and options, but to truly understand Canadian culture and feel a sense of belonging newcomers need to venture out on their own to access community activities like sports, arts and culture.

"Settlement takes [for] newcomers a lot of perseverance and determination," says Choo. "Don't feel discouraged. Canadians are very welcoming and ready to accept you." ✍



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Street Photography by Denis Bouvier



A lot of bull!

Royal Sweet Diamond, a bronze sculpture by Canadian artist Joe Fafard, is the name of this life-size bull at the corner of Georgia and Richards Streets in downtown Vancouver. Viewing the bull, it does seem to exhibit a sweet disposition. It would seem more natural in a pastoral situation rather than in the bustling scene in which it finds itself. Looking across the street at the new Telus Garden, one wonders if it is focusing on the red lights displayed and will become provoked. This, of course, is part of the beauty of the bull in this setting. It makes us focus on the stark contrasts of the pastoral versus the metropolis.

Telus Garden is also displaying green. This photo was taken around Christmas time, hence

the red and green. But green has a special meaning for the new Telus Garden that would have us believe they have brought the pasture to the city. In many ways they have made a valiant attempt.

The Telus complex takes up nearly a whole city block between Georgia and Robson and Richards and Seymour Streets. It was a cooperative effort between Telus, Henriquez Architects, and real estate developer Westbank. There are 24 floors of office space facing Georgia St. and 54 floors of a residential complex on the Robson St. side, as well as retail space on the street level.

For environmental sustainability, it features 300 solar panels, the largest number on a Vancouver building. Its energy efficient system reduces demand from

conventional sources by 80 per cent and reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 1 million kilos a year. There are 10,000 square feet of outdoor garden space on various upper levels, some of which grow produce. Rainwater is recaptured, recycled and used to irrigate these spaces. Of special note is a system that provides fresh air rather than recycled air, which is a great health benefit for office workers. These features and others have gained Telus Garden Leed Platinum certification. All this should put a blush on Royal Sweet Diamond's face, knowing the large amounts of byproducts resulting from raising cattle like methane, carbon dioxide and massive water use.

There are also some unique architectural features like the

beautiful 300-foot steel and beetle wood canopy that extends a whole city block on Georgia St. It has been likened to a blue whale's spine and ribs. It provides a unique public space that begins inside the lobby of the main office building and extends outside in front of that part of the building that houses the Glowbal restaurant. The canopy roof features 302 panes of curved blue glass from Spain, each unique and etched with a leaf and branch motif. The inspiration for the canopy was Emily Carr's Cathedral.

Another unique architectural feature are two cantilevered office spaces that extend 6.5 m over Richards St. and 7.3 m over Seymour St. Some feel this is a dangerous usurpation of public space. Telus leases this air space

from the city of Vancouver for about \$9,600/year.

All in all, it's a unique architectural achievement with a lot of positive environmental features. It's an expensive prototype and this is reflected in what have become typical high-end market prices for the project's condos. What would be wonderful to see in the near future is affordable housing with all these green features. And Royal Sweet Diamond would love to see some pasture he could access outside on the street level.

To learn more about Royal Sweet Diamond's creator, see www.joefafard.com

Don Richardson

Recipe by Selma van Halder

Tibetan butter tea

Running the risk of putting you all off my writing, today I'll give you a love it or hate it recipe: Po Cha, or Tibetan Butter Tea. In the highlands of Tibet this is a staple drink, served three to four times a day to warm the bones and provide enough sustenance (caffeine, fat) to last the day and save you from horribly chapped lips. Traditionally made with yak butter, this savoury version of your afternoon brew is easily replicated with goat's milk, even if you don't own a churn. It's possible to make butter tea with your regular cow's butter and cream, but switching to whole fat goat's milk instead will give you an earthier taste more similar to yak than cow. All you need is a very strong black tea, preferably of the smokey kind. Tibetans use tea from the Pemagul area and cook their brew down till very,

very strong. Yak butter and salt are added and the mixture is churned for several minutes to reach a creamy consistency. For a homemade version the tea can be replaced with other strong, smokey black teas like Lapsang Souchong. Add butter, salt and goat's milk and blend together. Really, try it. It's delicious.

Ingredients

- 4 cups of water
- smoky black tea, like Lapsang Souchong
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 tbs butter (unsalted, cow's milk)
- 1/3 cup goat's milk

Method

1. Boil the water and simmer with the tea bags until very strong, for at least 10 minutes.
2. Pour into blender, add milk, butter, and salt and blend together for about 3 minutes.
3. Serve hot.



▲ Warm yourself with a cub of Po Cha.



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