



The Source

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Photo courtesy of David Wong, Sea to Sky Architecture

Verbatim

Vancouver through the senses

by NICOLE FINDLAY

There are few cities in the world that have the ability to transport me to different places at different periods of my life. Walking the streets of Vancouver is like stepping into a time machine that launches me back to other cities – Hong Kong, Tokyo, Osaka, Amsterdam, New Delhi, Mexico City.

Sometimes the trip down memory lane is triggered by a shopfront sign, others by a scent reminiscent of almost forgotten street food savoured in a foreign place, or it might be an overheard conversation among friends whom I pass on the street. I close my eyes and listen. These little snippets of language – sometimes in Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Dutch or Spanish – can unleash a torrent of memories of conversations in other countries. Just like that I'm standing on a Vancouver street corner waiting for the light to change, but I am also thousands of miles and many years away at the same time.

From one day to the next I never know what I will pull from Vancouver's bag of tricks. I just know that I can expect both a new experience and a reminder of things past. It is both exhilarating and comforting at the same time.

I moved to Vancouver last fall. Although I am from Ottawa, I'd been living in Mexico for the past three years and when the time came to move back to Canada I knew it was also an opportunity to embark on a new adventure. I considered the Maritimes and Toronto but felt the pull of the West, although I'd never been further than Calgary. Vancouver's mild climate and beautiful scenery were a draw but ultimately it was the city's multi-cultural community that cinched the deal.

Years ago I lived in Japan. As my home base for three years, See "Verbatim" page 5

The fine art of feng shui

by BRENNA TEMPLE

To most, feng shui sounds like a great idea, but difficult to learn. Feng shui is the ancient Chinese art of placement to create balance in a living space, no matter its size.

Amidst chaotic city life, taking time to make life outside of work appealing to the senses can seem a little unattainable without the right skills.

Vancouver is home to a number of talented feng shui experts who can recommend ways to

add peace and balance to any living space.

Feng shui basics

Jerry King is the founder of White Dragon Consulting, a business that provides classical feng shui consultations using traditional Chinese methods.

Based in Vancouver, the business caters to a diverse array of clients for both residential and commercial purposes.

According to King, feng shui is derived from Chinese traditions. "Feng shui in Chinese literally means wind and water. It

is known as one of the Chinese Five Arts and is a practice where land/property is analyzed," says King. "The analysis is then further used to determine how we can activate positive energy while providing remedies for negative energy and problematic areas of the property."

Feng shui helps residents find peace and balance within the confines of their living space.

"Feng shui is often used to ensure harmony for the property's occupants. Solely analyzing the property is not enough," says

King. "We may need to evaluate the individual's energy through their birth details to determine their fortunes and what we can do to enhance the individual's life."

Feng shui is used to balance multiple variables in one's life and is not just limited to the property one owns.

"I also provide divination for my clients for specific questions that they may have about their lives such as investment decisions, lawsuits, health analysis, options in education, career

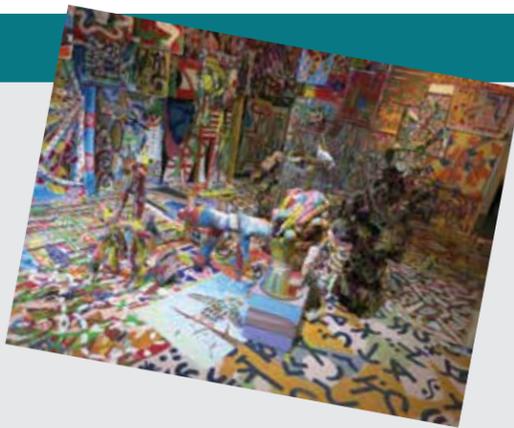
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Community Profile



Photo by Michal Tulinski

Polish history and heritage – building Vancouver and the risk of Wet Monday

by CURTIS SEUFERT

The Canadian Polish Congress (CPC), initially created under the name Federation of Polish Society in 1933, was founded to join the various Polish groups in Canada, as well as to acknowledge notable Polish life-time achievements.

According to the 2011 census, the CPC caters to 1,010,705 people of Polish descent and their mandate is to consolidate, organize and unify Polish groups in Canada.

Building Vancouver

According to the CPC, much of the Polish immigration to Canada occurred before and between World Wars I and II. Polish engineers were brought to Canada during World War II to help in

World (designed as the Expo 86 preview centre).

From Holy Saturday to West Monday

Polish heritage in Vancouver goes further than engineering and architecture, as many Easter traditions have their roots in Polish and other Slavic cultures. The most popular being painted Easter eggs. On Holy Saturday, or Wielka Sobota, Polish people, among many others who now also practice this widespread tradition, paint hard-boiled eggs, or *pisanki*.

Although this and other Easter traditions are celebrated according to the Western Roman Catholic Calendar, rites passages and traditions such as this one are also heavily influenced by pagan tradition.

Rita Findlay, board member of Polish Friendship “Zgoda” Society, notes the most important

The idea of an Easter basket is sometimes thought as one for kids, filled with chocolate goodies or for an Easter egg hunt, but for the Polish it involves bringing a basket of sausage, butter, cakes and other foods to be blessed and eaten after mass.

The last festive day is Wet Monday, or *lany poniedziałek*, which originally involved boys and men splashing women they liked with water. Now, the day is more commonly known as *Śmigus-Dyngus*, *Śmigus* referring to the water splashing itself, and *Dyngus* meaning “ransom,” referring to the act of a girl offering an Easter egg in exchange for not being splashed.

While *Śmigus-Dyngus* is not as commonly or widely celebrated in Vancouver as other Easter traditions, Findlay says the risk of getting splashed still exists if one isn’t careful.

“My husband, who is not Polish, did not know the tradition of *Śmigus-Dyngus* until one Monday when he woke up with a surprise! You can imagine my husband’s surprise when he woke up to a cold glass water on *Śmigus-Dyngus*,” says Findlay.

On April 22 to 23, the Vancouver Polish Theatre will be debuting *Kantata Na Cztery Skrzydła (Kantata for Four Wings)* at the Evergreen Cultural Centre in Coquitlam. Described as a “comedy with elements of horror,” the piece will be performed in Polish with English subtitles. ✂

For information, visit www.kpkbritishcolumbia.com or www.polishcommunitycentre.com.

For more information on *Kantata Na Cztery Skrzydła*, visit www.polishtheatrevancouver.ca.



Photo courtesy of Vancouver Polish Theatre

▲ A performance from members of Vancouver Polish Theatre.

war efforts, marking an important part of Polish-Canadian heritage – building, designing and engineering in Canada. Polish Engineer Bogue Babicki played a large part in the building of the Vancouver Law Courts, UBC Thunderbird Stadium, the Museum of Anthropology and Science

activity on Holy Saturday is preparing the *Święconka* feast.

“The most important event of Wielka Sobota (Holy Saturday) is when Poles go to bless the food at the *Święconka*. No matter what life throws at you, to not have the *Święconka* on Easter is inconceivable,” says Findlay.

Erratum

In “Doost” (Friend): *Initiating spiritual conversations on stage* (Vol 16 No 16, page 8), we mistakenly stated that the co-director of the play *Doost* was Chelsea Handler. Her name is Chelsea Haberlin.





The Board of Directors of the Vancouver Chamber Choir invite you to join us for a festive fundraising dinner in support of the Choir’s Community Outreach and Education Programs.

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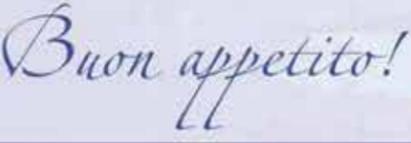


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Empowering women to be their own heroines

by FLORENCE HWANG

Life coach Claire Yeung wants to help women become the heroine in their lives. She didn't become the heroine in her own life until just recently. She will be speaking at the Canadian Immigrant's first Multicultural Women's Conference and Fair, which will be held Mar. 31 at the Croatian Cultural Centre.

In September 2012, she suffered a mysterious virus, quit a 23-year law career, did some introspection and re-evaluated her life.

"When I was working on regaining my health, I started looking at other careers. I really started doing some soul searching to figure out what do I love doing? What is it about my work that I enjoy? What don't I like? What skills do I have?" says Yeung.

She enjoyed being an assistant coach for her varsity hockey and tennis teams. Professionally, she worked as an in-house lawyer and was a manager of a labour relations department. She liked teaching them about labour-relations and labour law. She was most proud of these experiences.

"I enjoyed watching them grow and watching them flourish. And watching them move on to other employers to become managers of labour relations in their own right," says Yeung.

Reflecting on next career move

The decision to launch into a career as an author, life coach and entrepreneur didn't come easy. During her reflection, she asked herself why she became a lawyer. Yeung came to Canada with her family from Hong Kong when she was nearly seven years old. Her career choices were laid out by

ed about her book launch, even giving copies of her books to her friends.

"Once they realized that it was about me finding my voice and finding my purpose in the world, that allowed them to let go some of their beliefs that we thought you should have continued to be a lawyer," says Yeung. "My mother's very excited and proud of that fact that I figured it out in terms of this is what I'm meant to do in terms of my life."

Advice for women

Yeung says it's important for women to carve out time for themselves first, but it is a very difficult shift for most women –

“ So much of who I am and my life, obviously being Chinese, is about honouring my family as well.

Claire Yeung, life coach

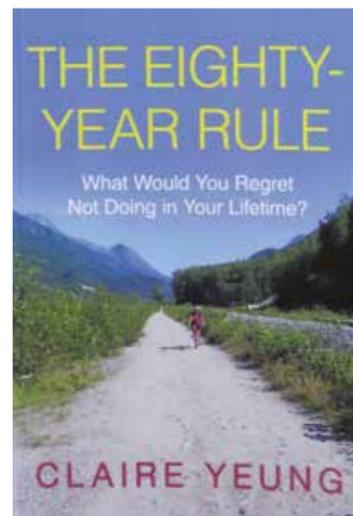
one that won't happen overnight. She says it takes two to three months for women to make that shift by making one small change at a time.

"If you think you can, within a week, make this monumental shift, in my perspective and in my life, that just won't happen," she says.

She encourages women to start small: 10 minutes to have a quiet, peaceful space.

Inaugural women's fair hosted by Canadian Migrant magazine

Women of all ages, cultures and immigration backgrounds are welcome. Husbands and children are welcome too, as there will be a small activity area.



▲ Claire Yeung.

her parents: doctor, accountant or lawyer – professional careers which Chinese highly esteemed.

"It really was the health crisis that allowed me to rethink what became my self-limiting beliefs, really, in terms of culture. And partly, I think it was for me, my fear of what would my family think?" says Yeung.

Initially, it was difficult for her parents to understand why she would quit a seemingly good job.

"At the same time, so much of who I am and my life, obviously being Chinese, is about honouring my family as well," she says.

She has dedicated her book to her late grandfather on her mother's side. She and her family lived with her maternal grandparents when she moved from Hong Kong.

Now, her parents are supportive. They were quite excit-

Women are encouraged to pre-register for this free event.

"While there are many common information needs between men and women, I think women have a subset of questions or areas of information that they are seeking that might be different from men, such as issues around work life balance, being a mom and a professional, doing that juggling act is a bigger issue for women than men in many cases," says one of the organizers, Margaret Jetelina. ✉

For more information or to pre-register, visit www.canadianimmigrant.ca/womensfair.

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Left Bank



Housing affordability crisis finally takes centre stage in B.C. Legislature

Opposition NDP serves notice the issue will be central to next provincial election

The Lower Mainland's crisis of affordable housing will be a major issue in the next provincial election in British Columbia, which is scheduled for May 2017.

This is a big deal, and a most welcome development. After years of simmering rage, and heated discussion at the municipal level, the debate about Vancouver's out of control real estate market has finally boiled over to the provincial level.

The opposition NDP has recently turned up the heat on the affordability emergency, and the governing B.C. Liberals are scrambling to cool things off again and to convince the public they are finally going to take action.

Last week, David Eby, the NDP's housing critic and MLA for

board felt compelled to issue a stern warning to the BC Liberals: "Clark's Liberals are also failing to pick up on the depth of the anxiety felt by many about housing affordability. With 60 per cent of British Columbians living in the Metro Vancouver area, the party is exhibiting a politically perilous sensitivity gap, one that opposition New Democrats are only too happy to capitalize on. Housing is a basic need, and with the price of single-family homes soaring beyond the reach of those who 'don't have a million,' and centrally-located condos becoming prohibitive as well, Liberals should be more concerned."

The day this public scolding by the *Vancouver Sun*, Clark convened a news conference to



Photo courtesy of the Province of B.C.

▲ Premier Christy Clark announced March 18 that the Province of British Columbia is taking further action to address "shadow-flipping."

Point Grey, held a town hall style meeting about the outrageous cost of putting a roof over one's head in Vancouver. The turnout was huge, with over 600 people cramming in to make their voices heard. The forum was more than just a venue for Eby's constituents to blow off steam; the NDP followed it up the next day with two proposed pieces of legislation to address issues related to housing market speculation. They also indicated that similar town hall meetings would be organized throughout Metro Vancouver and beyond.

Last week's events and announcements can be understood as the provincial NDP serving notice to Christy Clark and the BC Liberals that they would be making the housing emergency a key plank in their public outreach efforts leading up to next year's election.

This is a most welcome, and long overdue, development in B.C. politics.

For years, the majority of discussion of this crisis has been confined to Vancouver City Hall and the smaller pool of media that cover municipal politics. Activists have, justifiably, criticized Mayor Gregor Robertson and Vision Vancouver for their financial backing from big developers and for a failure to use all the leverage at their disposal to create more affordable housing. But overall Premier Clark and her government have not faced enough pressure for their laissez-faire approach to the housing market.

Clark is now feeling the pressure, and it's coming from many directions, including her party's traditional allies.

After the boisterous town hall, even the *Vancouver Sun* editorial

announce that her government planned to take action on "shadow flipping," the unethical practice of carrying out multiple sales on a property to escape taxes and, in some cases, launder dirty money, which was exposed earlier this year by the *Globe and Mail*.

Even at her news conference, however, Clark showed she still doesn't get it. In defending her concern for the equity held by private homeowners, she, according to CBC reporter Richard Zussman, "[compared] buying a home in Vancouver before the boom to investing in Google at the ground floor."

That type of thinking is the problem. Housing is a human right, not a privilege, nor an investment, nor a commodity. That basic idea was enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Canada signed on to this foundational document nearly seventy years ago. Article 25 of the Declaration says:

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."

When something is a universally recognized human right, we don't sit back and shrug our shoulders when the market fails. We have a responsibility as citizens to demand that our governments – in Metro Vancouver, in Victoria at the provincial level, and Ottawa at the federal level – step up to ensure everyone's right to a safe and dignified home is respected. ✎



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🕒 April 13 & 14, 10am–1pm
📍 Vancouver Public Library Oakridge Branch, 191–650 West 41st Ave
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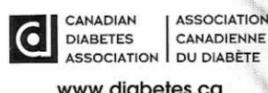
MOSAIC is a multilingual non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society.

"Traditions are a big part of my culture. Unfortunately, so is diabetes."

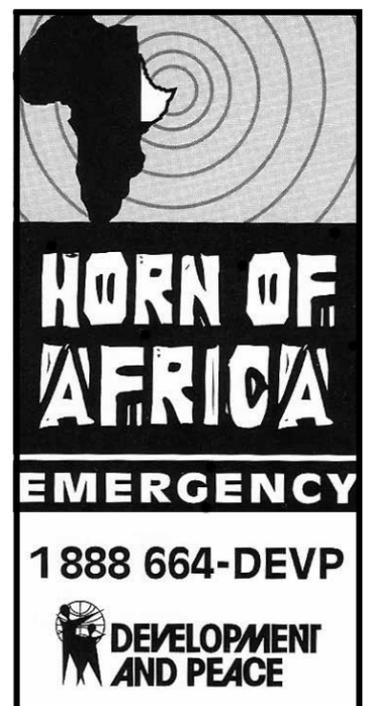
Bernie, First Nations counsellor

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Saving ocean treasures from plastic pollution

by JULIE HAUVILLE

David Pennington will hit the road from the Mexican border for the Ocean Rescue Run on April 18. The Canadian will run over 2,700 kilometres, reaching Vancouver in about 44 days. This journey begins with a life shift that not only includes Pennington but also Indonesia and its ecological struggles.

Born in Prince George, Pennington moved to Victoria at the age of three. He grew up moving back and forth between Victoria and Surrey. Perhaps this constant movement made him content with the unknown.

"My current lifestyle is still very new to me. Two years ago, I wasn't feeling satisfied with where I was going in life. I asked myself questions that forced me to do some soul searching: If I were to die tomorrow, would I be happy with what I have accomplished in life? What would I have done differently?" he says.

These questions led him to leave his desk job for a kayak.

The "Amazon of the Sea" invaded by plastic

Pennington decided to visit Indonesia while cycling across Africa. He wanted to kayak and realized there was no better place than Indonesia, which includes over 18,000 islands to do that. It took him six years to make that dream come true.

His plan was to kayak throughout the islands for two months, blogging and supporting local homestays in Raja Ampat, a re-

mote region near Papua New Guinea. Considered the "Amazon of the Sea" the area suffers from many pollution problems.

"I was aware of the waste issue before, as tourists had brought it up on Internet forums. But while kayaking, I noticed how serious the problem really was and decided to devote my time to it," he explains.

He hired Ranny, a local guide with similar concerns – together they started Friendly Drifter to focus on the waste issue in Raja Ampat.

Pennington points out that all of Indonesia needs to improve their waste management practices. Like most developing countries, their focus isn't on waste. But for the moment, Friendly Drifter's main focus is in Raja Ampat because 75% of all hard coral species in the world exist here. The oceans surrounding Raja Ampat contain more marine bio-diversity than anywhere else on the planet, making this area incredibly important.

"The locals aren't completely to blame, a lot of plastic ends up on their shores from other areas of Indonesia," he says.

Locals see the need and want to find a solution. An interview of Friendly Drifter initiated a series of events that resulted in a town clean-up with over 150 volunteers. Pennington wants to bring awareness to this situation in Raja Ampat to North America through the Ocean Rescue Run that will take place in April.

"My aim is to have it completed in 44 days which is just over 60 kilometres per day," he says.



▲ Clean up at Raja Ampat near Papua New Guinea.

Along the run, Pennington plans on completing interviews with local press.

"There is more and more media coverage on plastic waste in oceans lately. The more people hear the message, the more they will hopefully think twice about their individual impact," he adds.

It only takes one generation

Pollution is a concern that touches everybody but according to Pennington not everybody has the same weapons to make changes.

He feels that Canadians have both the education and resources to deal with pollution problems.

"[But] in Indonesia, we are literally starting from scratch," says Pennington.

For thousands of years, their culture has used the ocean and waterways as a vessel to dispose of waste.

"They need to be educated on the harmful effects plastic has on the environment. We are literally working against habits formed for many years and for simple convenience. However, it only takes one generation to implement change, that's why educating children is so important," he says.

Pennington hopes the run will help fund Friendly Drifter's large

aspirations. The organisation will use the funds to build and operate a waste management facility in Waisa and then construct a barge for collections throughout the surrounding islands.

"We will start a community compost program, educate children, and work with community leaders to spread the message. Once we feel operations are self-sufficient we will move to other areas in Indonesia to replicate and streamline the process. We have already had inquiries to do so," says Pennington. ✉

For more information, visit www.friendlydrifter.com.



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At the Peretz Centre 6184 Ash Street
doors open at 12:30**



World champion ballroom dancer Pierre Dulaine has a dream: to see Jewish and Palestinian Israeli children dance together. A passionate man with humble beginnings in Jaffa, he returns to attempt what seems to be an impossible feat: teaching children ballroom dance in a divided society. With warmth and tenderness, this inspiring documentary captures the children's amazing transformation, offering hope that for a new generation Dulaine's dream will become reality.

Directed by Hilla Medalia
90 minutes

The Source
forum of diversity

► "Verbatim" from page 1

Osaka became the jumping off point to travels in South East Asia and India. Each of these cultures were so different from my own Canadian experience. I was always learning something new, challenged by something completely foreign and charmed by the exoticism of the cultures I ventured into.

Vancouver is home to many diaspora communities from the Far East while still retaining its original British and Indigenous influences. The combination of histories, values, culture and languages weave a multicultural tapestry unlike anywhere else I have been. To my utter delight, I even discovered a burgeoning Latin American presence here.

in Stanley Park, the afternoon wandering through Chinatown's Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, followed by an early evening romp through Queen Elizabeth Park?

In any single day, Vancouver residents are exposed to a myriad of different languages, scents, sights, flavours and cultural experiences. More often than not these are simply absorbed as part of daily life and not consciously noticed. For native Vancouverites the multi-cultural landscape they have grown up with is simply home. For transplants and newcomers, Vancouver is a city unlike any other in Canada—the perfect combination of East and West.

I came to Vancouver on my own. I know few people here,



▲ Vancouver: a city for the senses.

There are few other cities where I might have a breakfast of bangers and mash, rajas con crema tacitos for lunch and my choice of pho, okonomiyaki or fresh fish & chips for dinner.

In what other city could I spend the morning marveling at First Nations' totem poles

and I am still learning the city by navigating through it. Sometimes it is a daunting and lonely experience, but I am comforted by the daily reminders of my experiences living in other countries. This combination of the exotic and the familiar is likely why Vancouver feels like home. ✉



Photo by Mike, Flickr

Cherry blossoms – who, what, where

by NAOMI TSE

Every year, the flowering cherry blossoms signify the arrival of spring, their beauty captivating many. Now in its 10th year, the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival has helped spread interest in cherry blossoms and facilitated community education on the trees.

Before the festival officially begins, David Tracey, a community ecologist, leads a group through Oppenheimer Park. The park is the site of the 'Legacy Sakura' trees planted to commemorate the first wave of Japanese immigrants who settled in the area. He says that hundreds of cherry trees were gifted to Vancou-

ver from Japan in the 1930s and planted in Stanley Park at the Japanese cenotaph.

In the 1950s, more cherry trees were donated by the Japanese consul as a symbol of the relationship between Canada and Japan. These trees were planted along the Cambie Corridor and around the monument in Stanley Park.

"Cherry blossoms have a really deep meaning tied to Buddhism," says Tracey. "Their fleeting beauty sends the sad but beautiful message that life could end at any time and we should appreciate every moment."

Cherry scouts

Douglas Justice, associate director and curator of collec-

tions at the UBC Botanical Gardens, serves as the resident expert on cherry tree identification for the festival. Justice says that the festival enables community members to be-

come 'cherry scouts' who help identify and locate different types of cherry trees. "It became obvious that the real power was to use the community to search out [cherry] trees, take

pictures and send those out to everyone so that we could collectively figure out what they were," says Justice. "Nobody had an inventory of the trees [in the city] which I found interesting."

10th anniversary celebration

To celebrate the festival's 10th anniversary, founding execu-

"Their fleeting beauty sends the sad but beautiful message that life could end at any time and we should appreciate every moment.

David Tracey, community ecologist

Justice has been hosting yearly Blossom Biology workshops during the festival to teach potential cherry scouts the basics of cherry blossom plant and flower structures so that they will be able to go out and scout for cherry blossoms. The workshop takes place at VanDusen Botanical Gardens each year.

"At the end of the evening, most people have a much better idea of how to recognize major groupings of cherries," says Justice. The UBC Botanical Gardens has an online forum that is used largely for cherry scouts to post pictures and generate discussion on the whereabouts of flowering trees. As a result, the festival has been able to create neighbourhood maps with more than 2,100 locations of ornamental cherries. Fifty-four cultivars have now been identified, and the city has approximately 40,000 cherry trees in its inventory. According to Justice, the oldest tree is around

75–80 years old, located at the cenotaph in Stanley Park. Although the festival was slow to take off due to a lack of funding, Poole hopes that it will expand into a cultural mainstay similar to the 104-year-old cherry blossom festival in Washington, DC. ✂

The Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival will take place from March 24–April 17. For more information, please visit www.vcbf.ca.

According to Tchi, feng shui can help work a person's small apartment size to their advantage, despite having a limited living, working and sleeping space. "Basically, you need to create pathways of energy in your small space and provide as much privacy as possible for your bedroom. Each space will ask for specific solutions; you might be working from home, for example, thus you will need to deal with more space dividers in your home," says Tchi.

She uses feng shui to create vibrant, healthy and beautiful spaces, focusing specifically on architecture and home decor. She uses dividers like screens, tall plants, bookshelves or curtains to designate different living areas.

Feng shui is often used to find the right home decor within a living space. "Good feng shui decorating will never scream for attention or fight with the style of the home, but rather create an energy that is vibrant, happy and harmoniously complementing the already present identity of the home or office," says Tchi. ✂



Photo by Mel Yap

▲ Douglas Justice at a tree planting ceremony at VanDusen Gardens.



Photo courtesy of Linda Poole

▲ Linda Poole, founding executive director of the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival.

► "Feng shui" from page 1 planning and date selection," says King.

Infusing nature with feng shui

David Wong works as an architect at Sea to Sky Architecture, a Yaletown-based business that infuses nature with feng shui.

The business aims to address the urban challenge of reduced wildlife habitats by encouraging clients to consider integrating an urban habitat into their projects.

Wong's ability to incorporate feng shui into landscaping and architecture projects stems from a year of backpacking through China.

"During my university days, I spent about a year backpacking through China photographing and documenting material for my thesis on feng shui. After my research thesis, I designed a museum building as a graduation project based on feng shui principles," says Wong.

A few years after graduating, Wong set up a practice in Singapore catering to health and wellness resorts. Designs were drawn based on nature and sustainability.

Wong returned to Vancouver after a decade in Asia to focus on projects that have nature as a central focus.

"I now undertake a number of projects from housing to long-houses, and I love every moment of it," he says.

It's important to approach feng shui with a strong sense of ethics in order to best serve the other person. Wong notes that some practitioners take advantage of their clients' supersti-

tions rather than focusing on the true principles of feng shui.

"Remember to apply common sense, and to understand the origin of why a recommended solution had been applied."

Wong recommends that people reflect on the realities associated with nature when trying to resolve their landscaping issues with feng shui. He advises to "immerse yourself in nature." Observing other cultures' solutions for living and shelter will also en-

hance understanding of nature's balance and using feng shui.

"It's amazing how we always rely on new technology in efforts to resolve perceived problems when the answers have already been resolved by our ancestors," says Wong.

Incorporating feng shui into architecture and home decor

Rodika Tchi is a feng shui consultant and writer for her Vancouver-based business, Tchi Consulting.



▲ Extension of external concrete wall into entry hall wall.



▲ Mix of organic and non-organic elements of nature.

Photos courtesy of David Wong, Sea to Sky Architecture

THE VANCOUVER SOUTH AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL APRIL 8TH – 10TH



Afrikaans language films have always been a big hit at VSAFF and we're thrilled to announce the outstanding *Dis ek, Anna* as part of our 2016 lineup. This subtle and thoughtful film takes us to a terrible place, yet manages to find hope in our shared humanity. *Dis ek, Anna* was recently nominated for seven South African Film and Television Awards, including best feature and best director for Sara Blecher.

Sun., April 10, 7 p.m.



Each year, VSAFF screens one film from an African country other than South Africa. This year our spotlight falls on Ethiopia and the powerful *Difret*, from executive producer Angelina Jolie. *Difret* is based on the true story of a young Ethiopian girl and a tenacious lawyer embroiled in a clash between cultural traditions and equal rights. **Winner:** Sundance Film Festival Audience Award.

Sat., April 9, 7:30 p.m.



Using never before seen archival footage, *RFK In The Land of Apartheid* tells the little known story of Robert Kennedy's 1966 visit to South Africa during the worst years of Apartheid.

The film follows Kennedy to the site of his famous "Ripple of Hope" speech at the University of Cape Town and his encounter with Afrikaans students at Stellenbosch University – then a bastion of Apartheid ideology. Kennedy also meets with banned President of the African National Congress and Nobel Peace Prize winner Chief Albert Luthuli.

Sun., April 10, 1:30 p.m.

VSAFF proceeds fund the important work *Education without Borders* is doing in township schools in Gugulethu, South Africa. VSAFF and EwB are 100 per cent volunteer run.

Taking the time to drown

by FABIO FRANCO

Sussurri dall'Acqua, an Italian translation of Canadian poet Maureen Scott Harris's *Drowning Lessons* by translator Alessandra Bordini, will be featured at the Italian Cultural Centre, Il Centro, on March 30. Bordini will read from selected excerpts in English and Italian, accompanied by the Toronto-based poet and 2005 Trillium award winner.

Bordini first became interested in Scott Harris's work while completing her masters in literary translation at the University of Siena, Italy. She found her poems brilliant and meaningful and committed years to translating and publishing them. The persistent collaboration between the poet and translator paid off, and *Drowning Lessons* became available to the Italian audience in early 2016.

"*Sussurri dall'Acqua* is the result of a slowly unfolding process, consisting of numerous interactions, iterations and inevitable interruptions. That said, it was a most rewarding experience, and I would do it all over again," says Bordini of the collaborative project and friendship that she developed with Scott Harris.

Slowing down

When asked if poetry still has a place in a society obsessed with

barely recognized grief" including "absence, loss, things forgotten or missing, the experience of insubstantiality."

Pleasures and challenges of translation

Bordini grew up in Sardinia, an island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, in an environment full of nature where she claims the rhythm of sea tides played an important role in shaping her life and thoughts. Bordini found it relatively easy to connect with Scott Harris's poems that in some way have assimilated a similar pace.

"*Flowers for my Mother, This house is Full of Longing* and *Dreams of Speaking* spoke to me in a clearer and more sonorous voice than others, containing images, rhythms and sounds that I was able to internalize quickly and naturally," says Bordini.

Other poems have proved to be more challenging for Bordini, as she says the uniqueness of the poetic work doesn't leave much room for terms and concepts related to a specific culture or context.

"Not surprisingly, the hardest challenges posed by translating *Drowning Lessons* arose from the presence of culture-bound terms – references and allusions that are intimately bound up with the source culture – and, having no equivalent in the target culture, defy translation" Bordini explains.



▲ Maureen Scott Harris.

speed, efficiency and the latest technology marvel, Scott Harris's answer to the dilemma is clear.

"It seems to me that poetry is essential in an age of distraction. One of the reasons poetry is a challenge for many readers now is that it takes time, and our tolerance for things that take time has shrunk," she says.

The water of life

Nature is central in Scott Harris's works; the willingness to reconnect with earth, even in a heavily populated context such as Toronto, goes back to her childhood. Scott Harris grew up in Manitoba, and while she has lived in other places since then, her connection with wildlife is alive and meaningful.

"Nature has been important to me since I was a child, and so it also feeds my writing, and permeates it," Scott Harris explains.

But there is an element of nature that draws her attention more than anything else: water. She says the aquatic imagery embeds her works and seems to serve as medium, a means to reconcile the end and the beginning of the human experience.

While metaphorically immersing herself in the water, Scott Harris says she brings to the surface "the underwater world of



▲ Alessandra Bordini.

Scott Harris doesn't speak Italian, which could have made the process very complicated, but she says she is able to recognize a certain pace in the Italian translation that she enjoys.

"To have my poems read with the devotion and receptivity necessary for translation – and to hear the music they make in another language – made me very happy," she says. "I never expected to find my poems leading a life in Italy, but it gives me great pleasure that they are." ✍

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



Photo courtesy of Aaron Schubert

Jonathan Goldstein: comedian or humorist?

by SUSAN HANCOCK

Jonathan Goldstein is an author, scribe and storyteller. With the accelerating growth in the podcast industry, he's found a niche in writing and producing podcasts. Goldstein's gravelly voice stands out on shows like CBC's *WireTap* and *This is America*.

The Source caught up with Goldstein on the phone from Brooklyn, New York, to get a sneak peak of his upcoming performance at the Chutzpah! Festival in Vancouver and to learn about

stein. "There isn't an out loud ha ha. Maybe an occasional chortle, or a muffled hee hee. But nothing out loud, nothing too labourious: that's a humorist."

Goldstein will be in Vancouver on March 31 for the Chutzpah! Festival, a multi-disciplinary performing arts festival held at the The Norman & Annette Rothstein Theatre. He's still mulling over what material to use for his performance, but he did hint at a story about his nephew's circumcision.

"It's kind of 'Jewie.' What isn't funny about a newborn having the tip of his penis shorn off?"

the birth of Jesus from the point of view of his neurotic mother's boyfriend Joseph."

What's next for Goldstein?

Goldstein is currently working on a new podcast series for Gimlet Media. The theme of the show has a similar tempo to *WireTap* and *This is America*, but the similarities end there. Goldstein describes his latest project as "real world therapy," describing how the show is about people who are trying to solve a problem.

The premise of the show is to demonstrate how human experiences transform peoples' lives – in both good and bad ways. Goldstein will explore his own past and the pasts of other people to identify the transformative crossroads in each subject's life.

"The show is predicated on the idea that everyone has moments in their past where they experience something that is traumatic, but also a transformative crossroads," says Goldstein. "Through storytelling, I'm going to try to resolve some of the issues in the present by going back to the past."

One of his first subjects will be his father who is now 81. Goldstein wants his father to reunite with his brother who lives in Florida. His father hasn't spoken to his brother in many decades, and no one, including his father, can remember how the feud started. As his father gets older, Goldstein has a pressing need to find closure for his father. He uses a road trip as an opportunity to revisit his father's childhood to figure out what went wrong.

"The road trip was funny and moving," says Goldstein.

While Goldstein's humour can be dark, he avoids going to dark places in his own life by not taking himself too seriously. Lately, he's been enjoying British philosopher Alan Watts, an early importer of Eastern thought for Western audiences.

"[Watts] reminds me of some simple truths on how we're all part of the same universe," says Goldstein. "It's a bit hippy-dippy, but somehow it has a way of lifting you out of a painful moment in your life to give you a crane shot of your life, a more objective view of the smallness of your problem and the unimportance of your ego." ☞

For more information on Goldstein's upcoming performance, go to www.chutzpahfestival.com.

“You can take away some of the horror by turning it into comedy.

Jonathan Goldstein, author, scribe and storyteller.

his next project scheduled to air this summer.

Goldstein's raw and self-deprecating sense of humour is immediately noticeable and has a similar vibe to Woody Allen. Yet, Goldstein doesn't consider himself a comedian, nor a humorist.

"Imagine someone sitting behind a desk onstage, reclining in a chair, maybe playing with their suspenders," says Gold-

stein says sarcastically. "It's hilarious."

Goldstein uses dark humour to awaken his audience's consciousness to deeply rooted social norms and practices. He believes there is something comforting about dark comedy.

"You can take away some of the horror by turning it into comedy," Goldstein explains.

"I might also tell the story of



Photo courtesy of Aaron Schubert

▲ Jonathan Goldstein.



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Vancouver Chamber Orchestra
Jon Washburn, conductor

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George Frideric Handel *Dixit Dominus*

R. Murray Schafer *The Love that Moves the Universe*

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we can best help you.



Being a part of art and discussion

by ALISON CHIANG

Imagine literally stepping into a painting – a painting that begins on the floor and goes up the wall. This is the first thing you will see, and walk on, when you enter Patrick Cruz's exhibition *Bulaklak Ng Paraiso* (Flower of Paradise) at Centre A, Vancouver International Centre For Contemporary Asian Art.

The exhibition is a multimedia project that showcases Cruz's work as a painter and collaborator, showcasing the work of other artists in video, sound performance and a book launch. It also displays Cruz's continual questioning of identity and belonging.

A part of the art

Bulaklak Ng Paraiso (Flower of Paradise) began with a project Cruz did with Yactac Gallery, a twin artist collective originally based in South Vancouver, in 2014.

"The Centre A team liked what they saw and invited me to do a show – two years later," says Cruz, 28, of his first solo show at a public gallery.

When Cruz pitched his idea to Centre A, he says he wanted to involve the UBC Philippine Study Series or PSS, an organization founded by members interested in having conversations on displacement and issues surrounding migration and identity.

"PSS is also coming from an an-



▲ *Bulaklak* exhibition at Centre A.

thropological standpoint as there are some anthropologists in the group," explains Cruz, who came to Canada in 2005 from the Philippines.

For *Bulaklak Ng Paraiso* (Flower of Paradise), PSS contributed

a video installation about social workers in Hong Kong, which Cruz says is like a documentary.

Though he paints a lot, Cruz says it's not the only medium he uses.

"With this video project, I was

interested in incorporating other people's work as part of the dialogue, and I saw the capacity to expand the discourse around my work and around Filipino diaspora, immigration and how these conversations can flow in and out with collaborators," Cruz says.

Including different art mediums in the exhibit is an important way for Cruz to express himself and his thoughts.

"My reasons behind merging different mediums are kinds of metaphors of being a Canadian, a Filipino-Canadian, being this hybridized identity. For me, it's a direct correlation of how I express this uncertainty – what it means to be Canadian, what it means to be Filipino," says Cruz.

On March 4, Cruz introduced *Bulaklak Ng Paraiso* (Flower of Paradise) and says he was delighted to see other Filipino artists come for the opening of the exhibition.

"I was very honoured that Lani Maestro (internationally acclaimed Filipino-Canadian artist known for works such as *her rain*) came by," says Cruz.

The art in conversation

Cruz says the painting on the floor now has footprints, from the guests; it has definitely been transformed.

"With an installation you're implicated in the art, so you're a part of it and the art talks to

you; you're in conversation with the art, even if you're not talking about the art (necessarily)," he says.

Cruz says the support from the Filipino community helps to make this conversation stronger.

"Personal stories are not that far from the politics of why migration happens. These small narratives brought forth by immigrants, not just Filipinos, take part in the installation," Cruz explains.

Through his painting, Cruz wants to talk about issues of immigration – what it means to be displaced and what it means to be a modern person coming from a developing country, landing in a developed country and learning to adapt.

"If you want your voice to be relevant, I think you have to be responsible. I don't want to make art that you just put on a wall and that's it and the conversation ends. Art has the power to raise awareness; it may not be the cure for the society's ills, but it has different functions that can change your perspective, that can trigger something and that responsibility is precious," says Cruz. ✎

Bulaklak ng Paraiso (Flower of Paradise) is on display at Centre A until May 7. For more information, please visit the following sites: www.centrea.org, www.patrickcruz.org and www.ubcphilippinestudies.ca.



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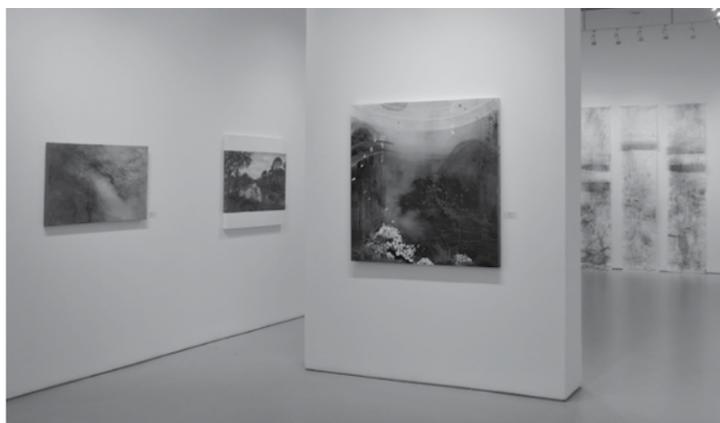
The 'installation' of Tony Yin Tak Chu in CityScapes' Ebb and Flow exhibit

by SOPHIA DELAFONTAINE

This year's *Ebb and Flow* exhibit at the North Vancouver Community Arts Council features artist Tony Yin Tak Chu's drawing installation inspired by the Chinese pictograph for water. The theme of the exhibit is enhanced by four other artists – Carole Arnston, Sylvia Bayley, Tracey Tarling and Michal Tkachenko – whose paintings are encouraged by the concept of water.

Tak Chu's current work featured in the exhibit, *Lui Shui* (Drifting Water) makes reference to water as a Chinese character in the form of a pictogram, an early development of Chinese characters.

"I like the viewers to experience different ways of art making, different mediums," says Tak Chu. "It is more fun than confronting a piece of painting."



▲ The work of Tony Yin Tak Chu, Sylvia Bayley, Tracey Tarling and Michal Tkachenko is on exhibit at the CityScape Community Art Space.

Born in Hong Kong, Tak Chu moved to Canada in 1996. Post-graduation from the Emily Carr School of Art and Design visual art program, he moved from being an artist and a painter into mixed media installation.

Raised in a single parent household, Tak Chu first went into drawing and designing because he saw it as a way to pursue art as well as a way to support his family.

"I was interested in fine art even when I was 17 or 18 years old," says Tak Chu. "Supporting the family was the right thing to do."

Making the move

Along with his move to Vancouver, it took a number of steps for Tak Chu to move to where he is now artistically.

"When I first came to Canada, I needed to study and improve my English speaking and writ-

ing," says Tak Chu. "I met this art teacher at South Hill Education Centre in Fraser St., Vancouver. She was a kind and multicultural minded person, and advised me to pursue my art journey."

The motivation behind Tak Chu's transition into installation artwork comes from an enjoyment of its technicalities.

"I worked as a draughtsperson at an architectural and engineering firm in Hong Kong, and I like the architectural sense of space planning," says Tak Chu. "If a same piece of work can become a different work at a different space, why not go for it?"



▲ Artist Tony Yin Tak Chu.

But the medium is just a single aspect of the product.

"Art making is only part of the journey, whether it is painting or sculpting, the medium should not affect the importance of the artist's work," Tak Chu says.

Emotion is evoked from viewers through different art forms and is very much subjective;

however, the installation medium adds new elements to viewing artwork.

Differing dimensions: Applying the past

Tak Chu's *Lui Shui* was done using the medium of tracing papers.

"[Tracing papers are] the materials that architects or engineers used for design and drawing before computer aided design became popular," says Tak Chu. "Installation art offers different dimensions as the viewers can walk through it, look at the work from different angles, through the spaces and experience the tension within the art pieces."

The artist's history as a draughtsperson brings a sense of comfort when working with these materials again.

"This translucent material works well with lighting, and this lightweight material can go anywhere with me," adds Tak Chu.

Tak Chu's work *Lui Shui* is only a part of the five-person show that is the *Ebb and Flow* exhibit, curated by Stefanie Wysota of CityScape.

"Sculptural or installation arts reflect the relationship of art and humans, the sizes, proportions, the contrasts and tension," says Tak Chu about his personal pieces, which add a sense of movement and life to structure. "All these elements contributed to a successful piece of work." ✎

For more information, please visit www.nvartscouncil.ca and www.saatchiart.com.

World music fusion: flamenco and brass

by ELISE VARLEY

Music groups Orkestar Slivovica and Ventanas will perform at Seven Dining Lounge on April 1. Featuring a full brass band, Toronto-based ensemble Ventanas has teamed up with the Slivovica Social Club to celebrate the cultural history of the Balkans, Spain and the Mediterranean. The performance will combine sounds from traditional trans-Mediterranean and Balkan music with a colourful twist of Flamenco song and dance.

Though each group brings a unique sound to the stage, both were formed out of a love for discovering and preserving the sounds of centuries past. From soft ballads and love poems to wedding songs and choruses sung by the whole band, this collaboration embraces tradition while also creating something entirely new.

Oliver Schneider, band member and founder of Orkestar Slivovica, describes it as a hybrid of genres.

"It's as if a New Orleans and Mariachi band got together and went to Turkey to create a whole new sound," he explains.

Combining flamenco and Sephardic melodies

The lead singer of Ventanas, Tamar Ilana, has been singing and dancing to this music her entire life. While born and raised in Canada, she travelled so extensively

sounding like crying sometimes. Sephardic music takes more of a bird's eye view of the stories and doesn't express it as intensely. But I mix them anyways," says Ilana, laughing.

Despite both genres having roots in the Balkan area, Ilana points out the historically significant observations around the pairing of these two genres: Sephardic music originated from the Jews who were expelled from Spain, and Flamenco came with those immigrating to Spain.

"While these roots have remained, the exact rhythms and repertoire in Morocco are going to be a bit different in Spain," says Ilana. "But there is some overlap, so it comes together nicely with the band."

Ventanas fuses these sounds together in a new way by taking instruments that may not have been present in one world and introducing it to the other. Collaborating with Orkestar Slivovica is just another method of producing the innovative sounds they set out to create.

Orkestar Slivovica

For the twelve-piece brass band Orkestar Slivovica, a similar devotion lies at the heart of the group. Born and bred in Vancouver, band founder Oliver Schneider became captivated by the distinct heritage and intricacies of Balkan music and the sounds of Serbia in particular.

"When forming the band initially, I actually didn't know much about the music. I took a research



Photo by Zahra Saleki

▲ Ventanas' lead singer Tamar Ilana.

throughout Spain with her mother as a girl that it became a second home. Picking up many traditional songs during these trips, she also gained a rich understanding of the people and culture behind the music.

Her mom, an ethnomusicologist and a singer, took Ilana travelling with her around the Mediterranean, gathering Sephardic songs and performing them.

"My mom's goal was to collect and learn these folk songs before they were lost. So, I learned with her and started singing them," Ilana explains.

Ventanas' repertoire is a unique mix of Flamenco and Sephardic music. In speaking about the group's musical style, Ilana's passion for the music shines through in her explanation of the joining of the two genres.

"Flamenco can be very intense and emotional in expression, even

trip to Serbia to try to understand it better. I found the key to understanding [the music] was to learn the dances that go with it – that's what makes the music come alive," he explains.

Much of Slivovica's repertoire has its origins in the genre from which it was formed: wedding and party tunes. Because of this, the band has made a name for itself in the Vancouver Serbian community, especially when it comes to having a good time.

"This music has a lot of complexity and improvisation to it. We are most drawn to playing Turkish-influenced music from the south of Serbia. It's immensely fun to play; where we end up musically in a given night really depends on how the audience is engaging with us," says Schneider. ✍

For more information on this show, please visit www.caravanbc.com.

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Cultural Calendar



▲ The Arabian Nights plays at UBC March 17–April 2.

by JAKE MCGRAIL

Sarvenaz Amanat: Self-Hell

Feb. 12–April 2
1515 West 7th Ave., Vancouver
www.sarvenazamanat.com

Twenty-one ink drawings and four sculptures will be on display in this exhibition of works by Sarvenaz Amanat. The work was inspired by meeting Art Spiegelman and seeing his work. Spiegelman's work often involves trauma and many different emotions, also a part of Amanat's pieces.

The Arabian Nights

March 17–April 2
UBC
2329 West Mall, Vancouver
www.theatrefilm.ubc.ca

Written by Tony Award winner Mary Zimmerman and directed by Evan Frayne, *The Arabian Nights* is a journey through many of the lesser-known tales from *One Thousand and One Nights*, a collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian stories compiled during the Islamic Golden Age of the 8th to 13th centuries.

The Government Inspector

March 25–April 17
Jericho Arts Centre
1675 Discovery St., Vancouver
www.jerichoartscentre.com

This adaptation of Nikolai Gogol's classic comedy focuses on a small Russian town that is terrified an incognito inspector will soon be arriving to investigate them. During the commotion, a civil servant, recently arrived from Saint Petersburg, is suspected of being

the inspector, and the suspect in question is more than happy to have them believe that. How long will he be able to keep up the deception?

VanDusen Great A-Mazing Egg Hunt

March 26
VanDusen Botanical Garden
5251 Oak St., Vancouver
www.vandusengarden.org

Rain or shine, the VanDusen A-Mazing Egg Hunt will be a treat for all those who attend. Kids from ages 2-10 years will have a blast with six different hunt areas, a bunch of fun activities and an opportunity to meet the Easter Bunny! After the hunt, you can explore the vast 55-acre botanical garden.

Family Art Day

March 26, 12–3 p.m.
Contemporary Art Gallery
555 Nelson St., Vancouver
www.contemporaryartgallery.ca

Join Field House Artist-in-Residence Fabiola Carranza making fantastical shadow puppets. Create paper props and costumes – then play with them in front of light while you draw and trace their movement. Presented in collaboration with ArtStarts on Saturdays.

Capture Photography Festival

April 1–28
Various locations in Vancouver
www.capturephotofest.com

Established in 2013, the Capture Photography Festival showcases emerging photographers and is

a way to engage the community through their art. Over 50 galleries across Vancouver are presenting photography along with public installations, tours and films.



▲ Crossing by Valerie Durant, one of the photos on display during the Capture Photography Festival.

Kimono Show

April 3
Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre
6688 Southoaks Cres., Vancouver
www.centre.nikkeiplace.org

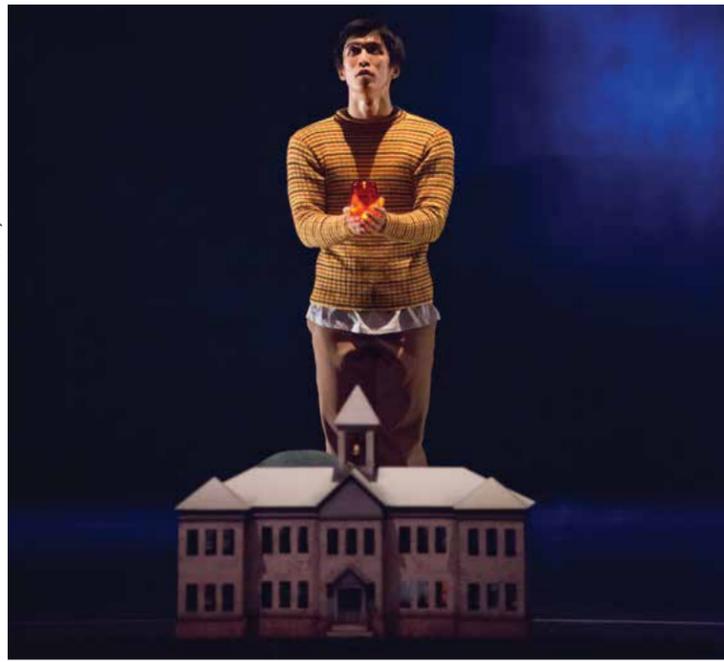
Kimonos, a traditional Japanese garment, will be presented at the Kimono show. The show will have many vendors showcasing the different types and designs of both kimonos and their accessories. Visitors will also be able to try on these beautiful robes.

Going Home Star: Truth and Reconciliation

April 7–9

The Queen Elizabeth Theatre
600 Hamilton St., Vancouver
www.rwb.org

Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet presents *Going Home Star*, a performance that pays tribute to the survivors of Canada's infamous residential schools. Originally envisioned by the late Cree elder and activist Mary Richard, this performance tells the story of Annie, a young First Nations girl and her travels through abuse and injustice.



▲ RWB Company dancer Yosuke Mino in *Going Home Star*, 2014.

Reel to Real Film Festival

April 8–15
Various locations in Vancouver
www.r2rfestival.org

Reel to Real is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to show-

ing a wide range of culturally diverse and authentic films and programming to youth. This will be the 18th annual Reel to Real festival, with an incredible range of film, including multiple genres and countries making up the program list.

Fractured Land

April 13
Evergreen Cultural Centre
1205 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam
www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca

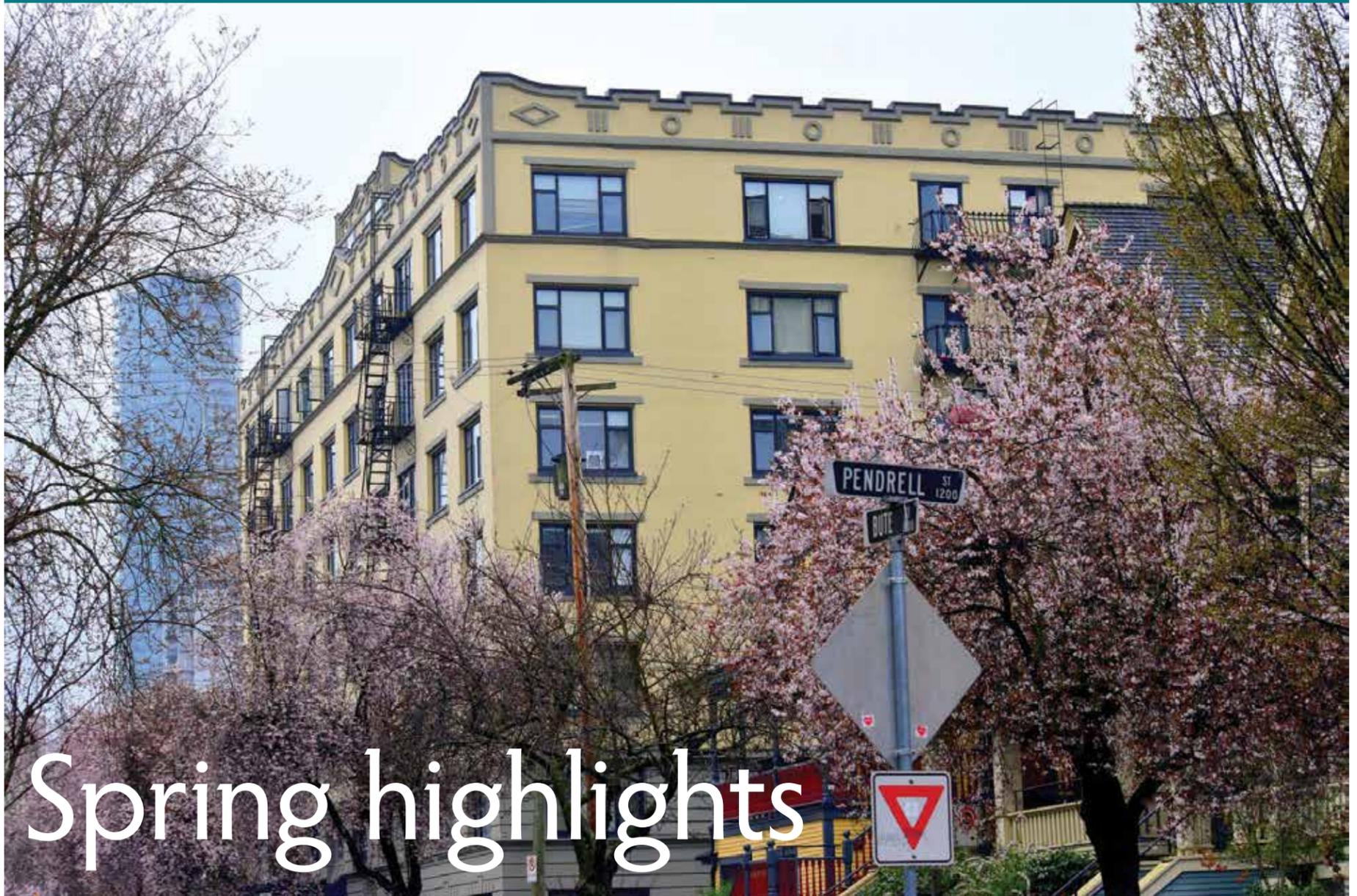
Fractured Land will be showcased at the Evergreen Cultural Centre this April. It's a movie that follows Caleb Behn, a young Dene lawyer who has to reconcile the fractures he has in himself, his community and in the world. The screening will be followed by speaker Caleb Behn himself.



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Spring highlights

What signifies spring in Vancouver better than cherry blossoms! This beautiful array of trees in pink bloom is outside the charming Strathmore Lodge Apartments at Bute St. and Comox St. in the West End. It overlooks Nelson Park on Mole hill.

The Strathmore, one of Vancouver's early apartment buildings, was originally named the Royal Alexandra when built in 1909 on the site of a house built in 1891. The builders were the Lighthouse brothers who made a living by managing the apart-

ments they built. After a terrible fire in 1927, the Royal Alexandra was restored and renamed the Strathmore Lodge.

It was originally surrounded by houses similar to those we see restored in the block between Bute and Thurlow and Pendrell and Comox Streets. This is part of the famous Mole Hill Preservation Project. In 1950s, Vancouver City Hall wanted to provide more green space in the area, which became today's Nelson Park. In order to achieve this, many heritage homes were purchased by

the city and demolished. At the same time, densification was beginning in the form of taller apartment buildings and like today, affordable housing was being lost. The Mole Hill Living Heritage Society was formed to save the houses in the restored block described above and, after many years of struggle, the project was finally completed in 2003. The houses are divided into multiple units providing about 170 affordable spaces. There is a beautiful laneway mid-block with a charming greenway connecting

to Comox St. It's a calm oasis in an urban environment that carries us back to a gentler time.

In the left background of this picture we see a shadowy tower looming. This is the infamous Trump International Hotel and Tower on Georgia St. Due to some of Trump's provocative statements while currently running for the US Republican presidential nomination, people wanted the name changed but were unable to do so. The tower was designed by the late Arthur Erickson. The 67-storey building will have the first 15

floors as hotel space and the rest will be high-end residential.

We certainly cannot fault the real estate tycoon for cashing in on Vancouver's lucrative market. After all, this is supposedly his forte. Maybe he should take to heart the adage: "Don't give up your day job!"

For further enjoyment of spring cherry blossoms, there is the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival, March 24–April 17. For a list of events: www.vcbf.ca.

DON RICHARDSON

Recipe by Selma van Halder

Polish Easter Babka with lemon zest and rum raisins

In Slavic Europe, Easter is arguably the biggest of all the Christian holidays. In Poland, Easter-related traditions take place for over a week. Palm Sunday to Wet Monday is marked with religious rites and practices, some of which have their origins in pagan times. The decorated Easter egg, for instance, is a pagan symbol for fertility and spring, gladly incorporated into the Christian story of Passion and Resurrection. As with all religious holidays, food is of utmost importance. On Easter Saturday, baskets of food are taken to church to be blessed, which is then eaten as part of the Easter Sunday meal. Easter breakfast in Poland will always include hard-boiled decorated eggs, cold meats, and babka. A babka is a yeast cake or a sweet bread, and tastes like a delicious fruity cake/bread hybrid, comparable to the Italian panettone. This version has lemon zest and sultana raisins soaked in spiced rum for extra spring flavour.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup warm water
- 1/4 tsp active dry yeast
- 2/3 cup warm milk
- 3/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2 whole eggs, beaten
- 2 1/4 cup AP flour
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 1/2 cup spiced rum soaked raisins (soak at least an hour before using)

Method

1. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Let stand for about 5 minutes, until frothing.
2. Place butter and milk in a small saucepan and heat until butter is melted. Beat the eggs in a separate bowl, then add vanilla.
3. In a large bowl, add sugar and salt. Pour the warm milk and butter mixture over the sugar and whisk by hand or slowly beat with the paddle attachment of your mixer until sugar is dissolved.

4. Make sure mixture is warm, but not hot to the touch. Add egg mixture. Then add yeast mixture and mix until well combined.
5. Slowly add the flour and mix thoroughly. The dough will be of a thick cake batter consistency. If you're making this mix by hand (and not in a mixer), start this step with a whisk and switch to a wooden spoon or silicone spatula as the batter will be too thick for a whisk. Stir in lemon zest and raisins.
6. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 10-inch bundt or babka pan with cooking spray or butter. Pour batter into prepared pan and cover lightly with greased plastic wrap. Let rise in a warm place for about 45 minutes.
7. Bake for about 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean.
8. Cool babka on a wire rack. Glaze with any desired glaze or serve as is with some room temperature butter.

