



Photo courtesy of YWCA Metro Vancouver



Verbatim

Normalizing the differences

by HADRIEN RIVAYRAND

To leave your native land, your hometown, is never an easy task. Plenty of questions, and sometimes a few doubts, will overwhelm you. So in my opinion it's important to settle in a place that suits oneself best despite cultural or even geographical differences.

Before flying off for Vancouver, many people were intrigued by my choice. What had pushed me to make me

“It is indeed sometimes hard to realise that I'm in a North American country...

choose this destination, less well-known in France than other cities such as Montréal, Toronto or even Ottawa? Beyond my desire for adventure and emancipation, my first objective was to blend into this Anglophone Canadian city to learn their language and their habits. Although I had heard of the open-mindedness of the city, I did not imagine what I would actually find. The local population is as diverse and mixed as the downtown buildings and the jagged, mountainous scenery overhanging the city. Maybe I was faced with the true definition of “multicultural,” which was finally taking on its full meaning.

Being from Paris I was no stranger to rubbing shoulders with different cultures. The one thing that hit me was the overall symbiosis that reigned in the heart of Vancouver. It was as if difference were the norm with every characteris-

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Helping youth deconstruct media

by FLORENCE HWANG

The YWCA wants high school students to have a more critical eye towards media. The organization is hosting its fourth annual conference called *YOUth, Deconstructing the world around you*, an interactive conference for high school students to discuss critical issues in the media that impact their lives. Organizers expect about 70 youths to attend the free conference on Nov. 19.

Chantelle Krish, the associate director of communications and advocacy with YWCA Metro Vancouver,

says being critical of media goes beyond just television and movies.

“It really extends to social media as well. So they learn what's behind the message and who's behind the image. How can they create their own media to counteract some of the negative things they are seeing?” says Krish.

For example, if they see negative postings online they can choose how they react to it by not sharing or liking it.

“We try to encourage them to learn about all these different things so then they are empowered to make change in the communities or themselves,” she says.

One of the key advocacy priorities of the YWCA is to end the sexualization of women and girls.

“We try to mitigate the harmful impacts of hypersexualization, which includes things like increased mental health disorders among young women and men, societal tolerance of sexist attitudes and violence, depression, [and] low self-esteem,” says Krish.

Empowering community contributions

As of last year, the conference has evolved from the staff leading the conference to the youth themselves. Some of the speakers include Hootsuite and The Next

Big Thing. LGBTQ + Awareness in partnership with QMUNITY will talk about common misconceptions people have about the LGBTQ+ community. There will also be a talk about healthy relationships and dating, as well as social media and its impact on mental health.

“This year, we've added a little more structure. The committee is involved in everything in the conference, from workshop design but also marketing, communications, event management, [and] sponsorships,” says Krish. “So they're learning a number of skills being provided with leader-

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Looking beyond stereotypes and butter chicken
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Community Profile



Photo courtesy of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Cultural Center Canada Society

▲ Children demonstrate Bosnian folk dance at an event put on by the BHCCVC.

Bosnian community finds peace

by JAKE MCGRAIL

Established in 2009, the **Bosnian and Herzegovinian Cultural Center Canada Society (BHCCVC)** is an organization dedicated to bringing the Bosnian community of the Lower Mainland and the rest of B.C. together. The Society's purpose is to help keep their cultural traditions and practices alive while cultivating a sense of togetherness among its members and the community around them.

In April of 1992, the Bosnian War broke out after Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from the dissolving Yugoslavia. The fighting lasted for over three years and forced many Bosnians out of their country, with thousands of refugees coming to Canada.

A new start

Azra Vajzovic, a member of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian



Photo by Amilia Vajzovic

▲ Azra Vajzovic.

Cultural Center, is the daughter of two of the many immigrants that came to Canada in that time period. Her father was held in a concentration camp for eight months, but was released with help from the Red Cross and was able to meet up with his wife and Vajzovic's older sister. They were sent to Canada in 1993, with Vajzovic born in Regina shortly thereafter. The family then moved to Vancouver because they heard there were lots of other Bosnians living there. When the BHCCVC came into being Vajzovic and her family became a part of it.

"I've been with the Center since I was a pre-teen," says Vajzovic. "It's a way for the community to be together, to have one place to meet up."

That was helped further in 2011, when the Society got its own facility. Before, they had to rent out other organizations' buildings but now they have a main center point, where they host potluck dinners, youth education classes and many different traditional events, festivals and celebrations.

"My sister and I were part of the folk dance group at the Center," says Vajzovic. "The youth in our community all get together and whoever wants to, can join. We performed at a bunch of different places like charities, the European Festival, hospitals, schools... all over."

Keeping the culture alive

Along with being fun, the dance group is a way to bring the youth in the Bosnian community together, and a way for them to learn and be a part of their own culture here in Canada. There

are classes at the Center where kids can learn the dance and music of Bosnian culture as well as how to write and speak in the Bosnian language.

"For young kids, they have the chance to practice writing and speaking in Bosnian," says Vajzovic. "Being here in Vancouver and in English schools, they obviously don't learn the language. If you don't maintain your Bosnian, you'll lose it."

The feeling of being in a community and being able to learn the cultural traditions of their families and ancestors has fostered a sense of togetherness that manifests at the Center.

"People want to go there," says Vajzovic. "Kids want to go because it's fun to meet with your friends and be with your culture. For me, being part of the folk dancing group was great because everyone can stay in touch and stay together as a group."

One of the events that everyone comes together for is the Annual Bosnian Festival, which is held in the summer. It's a day-long event that includes lots of cultural food, dancing and singing, with performances from other Bosnian groups from outside of Vancouver. It's a day of fun and getting to know everyone in the community, and one that shows what the Center has been able to do for its members.

"It's helped me maintain my Bosnian culture and heritage," says Vajzovic. "It's one thing to be taught by your parents, it's another having your own community where you can meet and learn with others." ✍

For more information, go to www.bhccvc.com.

Erratum

Last issue's verbatim, "Acceptance is subjective," was written by Janmie Gunawardena. It was mistakenly attributed to Marine Sclear on the English section. We apologize for the error.

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Global citizenship: something to talk about

by LEY DOCTOR

Global citizens, according to the NGO Global Citizens Initiative, are those who identify beyond their own country's physical and cultural borders with a more international community.

Are we all global citizens? Should we be? The tough questions of how humanity should feel about itself at home and on an international scale will be tackled in a discussion entitled *I am not a global citizen and I am happy about it. What about you?* The global citizen Inclusive City Philosopher Cafe will be held Nov. 16 at the City Centre Library in Surrey.

the same period, according to reports from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

According to Immigrant Services Society of B.C., Surrey also settled the largest number of government-assisted refugees in the province. Approximately 700 people arrived in Surrey between 2010 and 2013. According to the National Household Survey, the most common countries government-assisted refugees emigrate from include Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia.

As a rapidly growing and changing city, Surrey has many ways of embracing multiculturalism. The creation of the Inclusive City Philosopher Cafes in the

“Global citizen means being a citizen of the world, understanding culture and global awareness.

Mayyadah Al-ani, moderator of I am not a global citizen and I am happy about it. What about you?

“Global citizen means being a citizen of the world, understanding culture and global awareness,” says one of the discussion’s moderators, Mayyadah Al-ani.

Exploring culture and society

“This topic [global citizens] is likely to be discussed in multiple ways such as education, health and society. Thus, it is likely that people will have different points of view that they will want to share in this matter,” says Al-ani.

This is the third event in an ongoing series exploring culture and society through Surrey’s Inclusive City Philosopher Cafes. This particular talk will be moderated by two members of the Surrey Local Immigration Partnership: Preeti Hiro and Al-ani.

Both women are professionals who are deeply involved in their community. Hiro is a businesswoman and author. The two are also members of the Surrey Immigrant Advisory Roundtable.

fall of last year is an example of how the city encourages inclusiveness.

“There was a clear difference between my background culture and the culture I started living in when I came here,” said Al-ani, who arrived in Canada from Iraq, and has been a Surrey resident since 2013. “It wasn’t that hard for me to assimilate this new culture; however, I still had to seek help from friends, peers and supplementary resources to bridge the two cultures together,” she said.

One of the ways new members of the community can get involved is by volunteering. This provides exposure and practice for both language skills and social skills in a new country.

“I enjoy and admire volunteering because it gathers people together for no materialistic goals and merely inner satisfaction,” Al-ani explains. “Volunteering adds to my experience of this culture and explains clearly to me



▲ Global citizenship engages us all.

Hiro and Al-ani will help direct the discussion through this multifaceted issue.

“This is the first experience of its kind [for me],” says Al-ani, who has moderated academic talks but nothing of this style or scope.

“I am sure I will gain new experiences from learning the culture of others in this diverse society [and] that will give me an insight into this great culture that I am recently a part of,” Al-ani said.

Embracing multiculturalism

Surrey takes in more newcomers to Canada than any other municipality in B.C. and continues to grow. From 2001 to 2011, Surrey’s immigrant population grew by over 60 per cent. The immigrant population of Metro Vancouver grew about 24 per cent during

how this culture functions and what its needs are.”

“As for me,” says Al-ani, “I don’t see myself as a global citizen. I have contributed in the education field globally and significantly... but I can’t define myself as such as I view the term as having a much deeper meaning.”

The monthly Inclusive City Philosopher Cafes were created in partnership between Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, SFU and the City of Surrey. Discussions are designed around specific topics with the goal of talking through the opportunities and challenges that arise from living in a fast-growing multicultural community.

For more information about this and other Inclusive City Cafes, visit www.surreyilip.ca.

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Left Bank



B.C. First? Christy Clark goes with a Trump-like slogan

The long nightmare known as the U.S. presidential election campaign has finally come to its end. I feel stupider just for having followed it. Donald Trump, that unrestrained id of right-wing xenophobic politics, has been melting the world's collective brain for more than a year.

That his opponent was a cynical, hawkish, Wall Street backed Democrat like Hillary Clinton made the whole ordeal even more uninspiring. The decline of the U.S. empire is not a pretty sight. Once the promise of democratic renewal and genuine reform offered by Bernie Sanders was snuffed out, the whole thing was a painful ordeal to observe.

Scariest even than Trump's proto-fascist tendencies was the thought of what comes next. What will happen when a younger, more disciplined, and more intellectually capable Trump-like candidate comes forward echoing The Donald's dangerous anti-immigrant discourse?

The new, rebranded far right in Europe shows that once these types of extremists polish their image a bit they can contest for long-term institutional power and build veritable mass movements. From Austria to France, Hungary to the Netherlands, the xenophobic right poses a mortal danger to the lives of people of colour, and to the future of democracy itself in Europe.

Canadian politics can sometimes feel tame and safe by comparison. Although Rob Ford's otherworldly run as mayor of Toronto could be seen as a parallel

to Trump in terms of his vulgar, outrageous style, contemporary Canadian politics has not seen as mainstream a manifestation of an openly xenophobic politics. Trump opened his campaign by slandering Mexicans coming to the United States as "rapists" and "criminals," and by calling for mass deportation and the construction of a wall across his country's southern border. We'd all like to think such a crudely racist appeal would end the aspirations of any Canadian politician.

So imagine my surprise when, on Sunday as the B.C. Liberals were wrapping up their election readiness weekend gathering in Vancouver, I heard Premier Christy Clark and her party unleash their new slogan, "Putting British Columbians First," along with the Twitter hashtag #BCFirst. I was flabbergasted that they'd choose a line that echoes Trump's "America First," which has origins in the U.S. nationalist movement of Father Coughlin in the first half of the twentieth century.

Now, of course, Christy Clark didn't follow up with a call to "Make B.C. great again" or lambast immigrants as criminals or rapists, but it was nonetheless disturbing to see this slogan. Maybe it's just the product of a communications team looking for a vaguely boosterish line that included B.C.; maybe they didn't even consider the similarity to Trump's slogan.

I don't think "putting British Columbians first" is a conscious effort to appeal to Trump supporters; they're just too few in number in B.C. But it may well be a nod to the xenophobia that motivates parts of the right-wing voting base everywhere, even if here in B.C. it often takes more subtle forms.

Maybe "B.C. First" is getting a test run to replace Clark's old "Families First" slogan. Touting your commitment to families in a province beset by endemic child poverty is awkward. Perhaps better to turn the page to something more general.



▲ Premier Christy Clark shows off her new slogan.

to Trump in terms of his vulgar, outrageous style, contemporary Canadian politics has not seen as mainstream a manifestation of an openly xenophobic politics. Trump opened his campaign by slandering Mexicans coming to the United States as "rapists" and "criminals," and by calling for mass deportation and the construction of a wall across his country's southern border. We'd all like to think such a crudely racist appeal would end the aspirations of any Canadian politician.

But the danger of anti-immigrant bigotry is still very real in Canada and must be fought in all its manifestations, whether it appears above ground or below. White supremacists, for example, have recently been organizing openly in the Fraser Valley and parts of the Lower Mainland.

The other possibility is that "B.C. First" is meant to encourage voters to forget that this province allows foreign and out-of-province political donations. The B.C. Liberals' coffers are full, with significant money coming in from overseas donations, especially the real estate, mining, and oil and gas sectors. That's a glaring threat to B.C. democracy that Clark has exploited for her party's advantage.

In fact, one big donor to the B.C. Liberals is Holborn, the Malaysian-based multinational development company that has partnered with none other than Donald Trump to build a new luxury hotel and condo tower in downtown Vancouver.

There seems to be no escaping the toxicity stirred up by Donald Trump. The least Christy Clark could do is not copy his old bigoted slogans. ✍



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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.

SFU lecture series starts conversation on South Asian stereotypes

by NAOMI TSE

This year SFU's department of history's annual lecture series will focus on Canada's 150th birthday. As a part of the lecture series, historian and professor Bidisha Ray will be moderating a panel discussion on South Asian stereotypes titled *Life isn't all Bhangra and Butter Chicken! Deconstructing BC's Punjabi-Canadian Culture*.

Guest speakers will include: Balbir Gurm, faculty member at Kwantlen Polytechnic University and activist; Mo Dhaliwal, entrepreneur and founder of the Vancouver International Bhangra Society; Shushma Datt, the first female Indian radio journalist and head of Spice Radio.

The panel discussion, slated for Nov. 1, will be semi-structured and allow for audience participation.



▲ Bidisha Ray, history professor at SFU, will lead discussion on South Asian stereotypes.

It's going to be a very fun conversation that has to do with life stories and funny anecdotes and also touching upon the depth of the issue itself and the tensions related to being a hyphenated identity in Canada," says Ray.

Discovering identity

Ray completed her Ph.D. in history at the University of Manchester after completing her undergrad in political science, a MA in international relations and a M.Sc. in gender and development. She currently teaches modern South Asian history at SFU. As she went through her studies, Ray discovered that history was what connected all of her interests.

"I wanted to find out how things have come to be how they are, and looking at changes over time helped me understand myself and my own place in the world," says Ray.

In terms of having a hyphenated identity, Ray says that everyone has their own preference as to whether they would like to be referred to as Indo-Canadian, Punjabi-Canadian or simply Canadian or Punjabi.

"Some people who believe their origins need to be highlighted in their identity, some believe that they have grown up here and identify as Canadian," says Ray.



▲ South Asian culture is more than just bhangra.

"I believe there's also a third piece, people who would like to only be called Punjabi and feel that citizenship is a matter of choice, a passport is not who you are."

Mistaken identity

Ray says that Punjabi Canadians in particular have been victim to a wide variety of stereotypes and some are also historically accurate.

"Living in BC, everyone assumes I'm Punjabi!" says Ray, who is from the state of West Bengal.

According to Ray, Punjab is one of 36 provinces in India and stereotypes of all South Asians have been minimized to just Indians and further minimized as to being just Punjabi people.

"People have a tendency to reduce people to a lazy stereotype whether they are Chinese, Indigenous or European," says Ray. "Sometimes it's very interesting to see what images they associate with different communities."

However, despite the fact that some stereotypes such as 'all Indians like to eat butter chicken

and dance Bhangra' may seem harmless and inoffensive, this reduces the person to their food and dance choices and is a display of cultural arrogance for the person insinuating these stereotypes.

"We have to understand that this causes aggravation to people in the community who have been working hard to keep the diversity of their culture alive and assimilate positively in Canada," says Ray. "If they have put in effort to learn the nuances of broadly speaking 'white' culture, then the same respect can be rightfully expected but doesn't always happen."

While not everyone from a seemingly homogenous community will share the same experiences, it is important to recognize and celebrate differences.

"It doesn't matter if it's a positive or negative stereotype. If there's no thought or respect, it's negative," says Ray.

Although having one discussion will not be enough to deconstruct all the stereotypes, Ray hopes that, with the audience's participation, a wider conclusion can be drawn about what it means to be a hyphenated identity. ✍

For more information, please visit: www.sfu.ca/history/events/lectures/canada-150/bidisha-ray-panel-canada-150.html



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surrey
art gallery
engaging
contemporary art

Still life in all shapes and sizes

Kick off the fall with a fabulous art party. Still life—one of the most popular genres of art—takes over the Surrey Art Gallery this fall with five still life-inspired exhibitions and projects filling the galleries and halls. You'll get to see people's relationships with objects around their home and studio and glimpse the sometimes odd yet intriguing treasures people collect.

Mimetic Workshop: Studio Still Lives of Fiona Ackerman and Kelly Lycan, Sept. 17–Dec. 4

The artist's studio—a space frequently depicted with a career's worth of painted canvases, numerous paintbrush-filled tin pots or carved sculptures in progress—is said to have been disappearing in the past few decades. No longer needing to make work in a studio or with their own hands, many artists prefer instead to make their art exclusively from their portable computing devices or in office environments and cafés, and often contracting manufacturers to complete the work. Yet, the artist studio endures both for artists who make art and also as a subject in popular films, books, and visual art. Fueled by the large archive of photographic documentation and feature films of modern artists (such as Matisse, Picasso, Pollock) at work in their studio, the last thirty years have seen a dramatic increase in visual art made about the artist's studio. Painter Fiona Ackerman and sculptor/photographer Kelly Lycan are two Canadian artists who explore the space and symbolism of the studio in their image and object making. While the power of their art relies on a tension between the real material objects or spaces and imagined ones, their images also strike at the very nature of creativity and creation itself.

Small Stages: Still Life from the Permanent Collection, Sept. 17–Dec. 4

Paintings of bowls of fruit, flowers, and objects on a table top are imagery commonly associated with classic still life art, but what about a photograph of books with miniature llamas on them, or a chandelier sculpture of kitchen and garden utensils? Drawn from the Gallery's permanent collection, the artworks in this show depict carefully arranged—and sometimes unusual—scenes that reflect on and expand the still life genre. This exhibition features a range of still life compositions, from traditional to contemporary, including works by Sarindar Dhaliwal, Gu Xiong, Carole Itter, Alex McLeod, and Joe Plaskett. There's painting, sculpture, photography, and prints to explore—something for everyone!

Memento Mori: A Juried Exhibition of Contemporary Still Lives, Until Nov. 13

The Arts Council of Surrey presents this juried exhibition of artworks by local artists that explore contemporary ideas about the still life genre. The exhibition consists of numerous paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs that consider the meanings and symbolism of still life imagery in the 21st century.

April Hickox: Variations Primaries, Until Feb. 26, 2017

April Hickox's grid of monochromatic video animations alludes to the history of still life, the limits of the archive, and the material traces of artistic education. The artist takes a vast array of art school props, used for many years in drawing and painting classes, and reorganizes them into whimsical and, at times, absurd new groupings. With these stop-motion compositions, Hickox investigates the manner in which "art" is determined, how it gains value in our society, and what are its otherwise invisible aspects.

Jay Bundy Johnson: Being still (life) shows us who we are, Until Jan. 10, 2017

Concurrent with these exhibits, Jay Bundy Johnson: Being still (life) shows us who we are is being presented in the Surrey Art Gallery's TechLab. This sound installation consists of electronic objects and mechanical devices—including toys, speakers, VCRs, microchips, and magnets—that have been manufactured over the past half century. The artist dismantles these objects and reassembles them in an array of sculptural compositions inspired by still life painting. By pressing buttons, the visitor interacts with the resulting 3D wall mural of circuit boards, motors, gears, speaker cones, lightbulbs, and wires to create fleeting soundscapes of things past.

Surrey Art Gallery is located at 13750-88 Avenue, Surrey, BC, Canada. 604-501-5566 | surrey.ca/artgallery
HOURS: Tues-Thur 9am-9pm | Fri 9am-5pm | Sat 10am-5pm | Sun 12-5pm | Closed Mondays and holidays.

Finding home in landscape

Two cultures joined in art

by EIJA JIMENEZ

Watercolour painter Sandy Blass will be appearing at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver (JCCGV) to debut her first solo exhibit *No Other Country...* The exhibit expresses Blass' inner feelings toward her dual identity of being from both Canada and Israel.

As a Diaspora Jew, Blass finds herself in the middle of two cultures. Born and raised in Calgary before moving to Vancouver, Blass identifies as a Canadian, however, her connection to Israel springs from growing up in a rich Jewish culture. Blass says she is not simply from one land, but from both.

One and the same

Blass's exhibit, a collection she deems culturally and spiritually influenced, opens Nov. 24 and will feature ten paintings highlighting the landscapes of both Canada and Israel.

"There's this saying in Israel amongst Israelis. They say 'I have no other country' because they're born there. Me as a Diaspora Jew, it's not quite the same," Blass says. "You say 'no other country,' but really you have two."

Blass never had any problems accepting one culture or the other; on an intimate level, she has constantly felt a balance between the two. She says she isn't half-Canadian or half-Israeli, but rather both Canadian and Israeli entirely.

"I love it there. I love it here," says Blass. "They're both landscapes that are endlessly informative. They always speak. I think the Canadian landscape is truly overwhelming that way. Israel can be equally so, just because there's so much history there."

The combination of the landscapes and history of both Canadian and Israeli atmospheres



▲ Akko Beach (Echo Beach), watercolour.

gives Blass a sense of familiarity; these commonalities between the two cultures are where she finds solace.



▲ Artist Sandy Blass.

"Because I'm able to go back and forth [between Canada and Israel] often enough, it's never really felt like [choosing one or the other]," Blass says. "It's sort of on a soul-heart level, the push-pull between the two places."

Blass says her artwork mimics her connection to both Canada and Israel, and she captures this feeling of push and pull in her landscape paintings. Immortalizing Canadian nature such as Gabriola Island, as well as Israeli sights like Akko Beach, Blass is able to recreate the feeling she has while embracing her dual identity. As Blass puts it, she is in awe.

So awe-inspired by the landscape and history of both her countries, Blass uses watercolour

to capture that feeling on canvas.

"In a way, it's kind of eternal because it's so constant and so unchanging where everything else around us – culturally, socially, politically – changes so quickly," Blass says. "You go to a place like [Canada], or you go to a place like Israel, which has ancient, ancient history, you see more of the eternal nature of those kinds of things."

Speaking through watercolour

Though she has used other paint mediums like oil and acrylic in the past, Blass found her love for watercolour in high school and has returned to it time and time again. Blass says watercolour is a finicky medium to use – the colour doesn't remain consistent

nor does the way it spreads itself on the paper. That is why Blass prefers it.

"I don't have 100 per cent control. The painting isn't done when I finish painting. It's done when the water stops moving," she says.

Blass uses watercolour as the medium she feels best to capture the beauty of the landscapes that remind her of her identity.

"I've always wanted to express what I felt on a soul level," says Blass. "I think that the mountains speak, and the prairies speak, and the sky speaks." ✍

For more information, please visit the following sites:

www.jccgv.com
www.blassart.com

► "Verbatim" from page 1

tic accepted without constraint – a force that an entire country wanted to depend on. It was a sort of ideological revolution without violence. The overall vibe emerging from the city was one of serenity, but with a sense of aesthetic shock present every day.

It is indeed sometimes hard to realise that I'm in a North American country, so powerful is the melting pot. Besides, national identity and Canadian pride are not very pronounced, as opposed to the United States for example. No doubt this may be due to the fact that one in two inhabitants isn't born in Vancouver. People live here (mainly based on the encounters I have had) for professional opportunities and the quality of life. It is as if the city is still searching for an identity for itself, as is often the case in countries as young as Canada. This is a quality that might call out to certain people, such as myself, who come from a continent with a more pronounced everyday history.

But Vancouverites know how to do justice to their environment and are ahead of the Europeans in this matter.

They are very proud of it and showcase and preserve it in consequence. If you want to be part and parcel of the "city" you have to respect the rules. Despite a relatively high cost of living, the locals like to lead a healthy lifestyle. So it is not surprising to find a number of organic restaurants or people jogging in one of the numerous city parks. For example, on the beach, in front of stores and on terraces, smoking is prohibited. Alcohol is not strongly favoured either, not being tolerated in public spaces, as opposed to say, cannabis. Besides these few "elementary" rules that sometimes totally contradict the Latin spirit (which is hard for a Frenchman to suppress), Vancouver doesn't hide its ecological ambitions. Nearly half of all urban trips are carried out by bike, on foot or by taking transit with many projects under development. The advantages in Vancouver are real, and besides being able to breathe a little fresher air than elsewhere, you can also stroll along the streets without fear of stepping in dog poop, unlike Paris. ✍

Translation Barry Brisebois

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EMMA Talks

The 'grit' of things

by ALISON CHIANG

EMMA Talks, an accessible platform for people to speak openly, will be hosting their fifth talk since their launch in April 2015, which will take place at the SFU Woodward building on Nov. 16.

"It is similar to Ted Talks and Pecha Kucha, but EMMA Talks wants to showcase people in marginalized communities- it's an awesome model that wants to engage community," says Melanie Matining, community organizer who will be presenting this month.

EMMA stands for Engaging Monologue and Mutual Aid, and Matining says its mandate is to have speakers who are women, trans, queer and gender non-conforming folks. Presenters include local activists, community leaders, authors and women in academia, and tickets to EMMA

Creating spaces for conversation

"There isn't often a space where people can bring up really, really hard conversations based on storytelling, based on one's personal experiences, taboo subjects, the elephant in the room," explains Matining, who gives the example of challenging and understanding race and the system of power.

Matining says EMMA Talks wants to get to the 'grit' of things, and to focus on the human experience through story telling and sharing.

"What does it mean to be living in this space that is predominantly white, straight, male [powered] and able-bodied?" she asks.

Matining worked at Heartwood, a social and community restaurant, for three years.

there haven't been many places to sit down and get to know each other," she says.

Prior to Heartwood, Matining worked as a curriculum developer with youth organizations centred on youth empowerment, history of migration, working with youth of colour and figuring out what platforms and spaces the community needed.

"My work and community experience has been centred on access and belonging: how do we create these spaces," says Matining, who has also organized community panels and discussions on depleting community spaces in Vancouver and creating a sustainable network for these spaces.

A settler's tale

Matining, who emigrated from the Philippines to Vancouver at age 10, says a lot of her work also revolves around what it means to be an immigrant settler.

"I never had the conversation of how Canada was built as a nation [when we were young immigrants]; we didn't talk about the displacement of Indigenous people and the history of Indigenous people. It's important to have conversation with and be in solidarity with Indigenous people because as a settler, I am perpetuating colonialism," she says.

Matining's presentation for EMMA Talks is about physical space and social movements and is focused on Indigenous solidarity.

"It's about land and place- we need to talk about solidarity. I'm grateful for organizations such as Reconciliation Canada for having more conversations about this and others such as the missing and murdered Indigenous women," she explains.

Matining wants to challenge others to further relationships



▲ Melanie Matining.

The vision of Heartwood was for marginalized communities to create dialogue around accessibility.

"One of the most revolutionary things I've learned is that love and friendship is at the centre of the movement building that I would like to do," she adds.

Matining says youth would come into Heartwood to organize events such as a queer youth poetry night where participants talked about their own personal experiences. With the recent closure of Heartwood, Matining is focusing on what drives these spaces as well as thinking of people on the frontlines.

"Especially when speaking about social justice and activism, often times [in my experience]

with the Indigenous people by talking about Indigenous issues. She says there is a difference between acknowledging the issues and understanding how citizens are implicated in these histories, since certain issues still continue. "When we say, we are on the unceded land of the Coast Salish people, that acknowledgement should be an action, not just words," says Matining. ✍

Donations to Matining's talk will go to The Unist'ot'en Camp, an Indigenous community where people are trying to protect their land from pipeline projects.

For more information:
www.emmatalks.org
www.unistoten.camp



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Sharing a musical reflection of Bosnian history culture through sevdah

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Bosnian singer Amira Medunjanin never considered becoming a professional singer, having never formally studied music. However, she says music was always there in her life, something to turn to through ups and downs. Medunjanin will be performing selections from her album *Damar* at Christ Church Cathedral Nov. 12.

Often referred to as a kind of “Bosnian Blues”, the musical style sevdah is very emotional, talks of love and yearning, and carries with it a long history of Bosnian culture.

almost a sin. So I just waited for the right moment to follow the path I wanted to go down.”

The musical style that Medunjanin employs is called sevdah. The name, she says, is tied to two words: the Turkish word *sevda*, meaning a forlorn yearning of love, and the Arabic word سوادده (sāwdâ), referring to “black bile,” one of the four bodily fluids once said to control emotion by ancient Greek and Arabic doctors.

Sāwdâ was supposedly tied closest to the level of someone’s melancholy, a characteristic not uncommon in a sevdah: the musical style is often referred to as the “Bosnian Blues”.

“The feeling of sevda is basically something that represents



Photo courtesy of Amira Medunjanin

▲ Bosnian Blues singer Amira Medunjanin.

“Music was always there, as my little world of comfort,” says Medunjanin. “Whenever I felt blue, in trouble, or going through any sort of emotional crass, I would hide away in that world and I felt better.”

Following the path

For Medunjanin, making the switch to music full-time was a shift in identity: from someone working in the European Commission to becoming a full-time musician.

“At some point, I felt it too overwhelming. It was like becoming two different people, which is really difficult to handle,” recalls Medunjanin. “So I said goodbye to the job I had, and dedicated myself to music completely.”

Taught at a young age by her mother, the music had always been an important part of her life. However, it had seemed too intimate to share with many people. Eventually though, she began to realize the inevitable path of sharing her musical voice.

“I strongly believe in destiny. There are certainly things that are somewhere, written for you in your life,” says Medunjanin. “This was obviously my destiny.”

Sevdah: history echoing through music

Once Medunjanin realized her musical path, it still took some time to know and understand the kind of music she wanted to perform – as it was important not only to her, but to her cultural history that it is done carefully and knowledgeably.

“With the traditional music of my country, it’s a very tangible, sacred thing – like a tradition that is embedded in our genes, and everybody knows it,” says Medunjanin. “To mess with it is

the state of mind after listening to sevdahinke (songs in the style of sevdah),” says Medunjanin. “It mainly talks about human emotions. It’s quite general, but applicable even now, though many songs were written five centuries ago.”

For Medunjanin the evolution of the word sevdah reflects the shifting path of the style itself, and of the often tumultuous history of Bosnia in general.

“They’re beautifully written, but it can be difficult to translate, since many words are terms that remain from Ottoman times, or from the Austro-Hungarian Empire,” says Medunjanin. “Throughout history it seems that we’ve always been under someone’s boot, but I always try to look at the positive of becoming a melting pot of different cultures.”

Medunjanin says in her dealings and talks with people in the European Commission, many didn’t know much more about Bosnia than the recent war and genocide from which the country and its people were recovering.

She notes this was an important part of discovering the path of sharing her culture through music.

“When I worked for the [European] Commission, I would meet people from all over Europe. We would discuss certain things about my country, and I would realize that they didn’t know much about my country,” says Medunjanin. “I felt sort of obliged to let them know that we are a people with a 1000 year history, with gorgeous music they should know about. I said to myself that this was the best way to show to people who we truly are.”

For more information, visit www.amiramedunjanin.ba



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Announcing the UBC School of Music 2016–2017 Concert Season

Vancouver - The UBC School of Music announces the 2016–2017 season of performances and special events by our ensembles, faculty, and guest artists. The following are selected highlights:

The UBC Symphony Orchestra and UBC Choirs will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the opening concert of the Chan Centre with a very special performance on April 8, 2017 to honour and thank the Chan Centre and Chan family for supporting student performance and excellence at UBC. A *Song of Joys* by composer and UBC faculty member Stephen Chatman will be featured along with Mozart’s final masterpiece *Requiem Mass in D minor*. Chatman wrote *A Song of Joys*, with words from Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* as a companion piece to Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9*. It was this symphony, with its iconic “Ode to Joy”, that was performed by UBC music students in the spring of 1997 as the gala opening concert of the Chan Centre.

Internationally-renowned composer John Corigliano will be in residence at UBC in November. The Corigliano Festival will culminate November 19 with a spectacular evening at the Chan Centre featuring performances of his music by the UBC Symphonic Wind Ensemble, UBC Choirs and UBC Symphony Orchestra with violin soloist and faculty member David Gillham. Works include *Fern Hill*, *The Red Violin: Chaconne for Violin and Orchestra*, and *Symphony No. 3: Circus Maximus*. The festival and residency will also include a talk and discussion with excerpts of Corigliano’s opera *The Ghosts of Versailles* performed by the UBC Opera Ensemble. All events in the Corigliano Festival are part of the Master Mind Master Class Series presented in partnership with Alumni UBC.

The UBC Opera Ensemble presents three fully staged productions:
November 3–6 Menotti *The Consul* at the Old Auditorium
February 2–5 Tchaikovsky *Eugene Onegin* at the Chan Centre
June 22–25 Strauss *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Old Auditorium
For more information about each production, visit music.ubc.ca/opera.

Music on the Point: Concerts with Personality featuring faculty artists and guests:
October 21 Brahms chamber music with David Gillham violin, Eric Wilson cello, and Chiharu Iinuma piano
November 25 In Praise of Bach! Miranda Wong piano
January 20 Archytas Quartet with quartets by Bartók and Beethoven
Dale Barltrop & David Gillham violins, David Harding viola, Ariel Barnes cello
March 3 Oskar Morawetz Centennial Celebrating his life in music
The Music on the Point series is presented in partnership with UTown@UBC.

The School’s ever-popular **Wednesday Noon Hour** series begins September 21. Highlights include: **Microcosmos Quartet** with works by Dutilleux and Bartok (Sept 29); A late ‘60s blue note modal bag with the **Steve Kaldestad Quartet** (Oct 12); “Sanglots” Chansons of Love and Loss with Patrick Raftery tenor and Terence Dawson piano (Jan 25) and Bach’s *Musical Offering* with the PBO Chamber Players (Feb 8).



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Cultural Calendar

November 8–22, 2016

by SIMON YEE

Compared to the early autumn months of September and October with its fresh falling leaves and crisp air, November feels like a gloomy month. Halloween is over, Christmas is still a month away, the fallen leaves are soggy, the days are rainier, the trees are barer and the atmosphere is solemn. But there's much to see and do this month. Honour our veterans and fallen soldiers at a Remembrance Day ceremony, attend an art opening and a movie festival, watch some live performances and, for the men, grow out your facial hair for Movember awareness. Here are a few events to mark down on your calendar.

* * *

Remembrance Day Ceremony

Nov. 11
Various locations
throughout Canada
www.legionbcyukon.ca

One hundred years ago this month, the Battle of Somme concluded, where the Canadian Corps fought alongside British Commonwealth and French troops in one of the bloodiest battles in human history. Today, Canadians hold Remembrance Day ceremonies on November 11 in order to commemorate and honour the sacrifices Canadian soldiers made for freedom. There are many Remembrance Day ceremonies held in many municipalities in Metro Vancouver. For a ceremony near you, visit the Royal Canadian Legion website.

* * *

Fan Expo Vancouver

Nov. 11–13
Vancouver Convention Centre
www.fanexpovancouver.com

Pop culture extravaganza Fan Expo returns to the Vancouver Convention Centre this month, featuring autographs and photo ops with



▲ Autumn Hills, one of the artworks on display at Place des Arts this month.

celebrities, exclusive merchandise, cosplay sessions, workshops, exhibits and more! Watch your favourite comic artist produce their comics live, go behind the scenes in a brainstorming session with sci-fi screenwriters, and meet and greet cast members from some of the latest animes, web series and TV shows airing today.

* * *

Place des Arts November Exhibitions

Nov. 13–Dec. 16
Place des Arts, Coquitlam
www.placedesarts.ca/gallery

Visit the Place des Arts Gallery as they unveil three new exhibits for the month of November. Check out Leora Gesser's exhibit *Boundaries*, which examines the artist's perception of the changing landscape and environment using mosaics and patterns to explore the myriad harmonies and chaos found in the natural world. Sandrine Pelissier's *Ethereal Landscape* examines the balance between opposing concepts in biology, showing how the most asymmetric biological entities become geometrically symmetrical as one looks at the cellular level. The *Positively Petite* exhibition collects miniature artworks from various local artists featuring assorted unique pieces in time for the holiday season. Their opening

reception will be held on November 13 at 2 p.m.

* * *

Exit 22 Company's A Christmas Carol

Various dates between Nov. 16–27
BlueShore at the Cap,
North Vancouver
www.capilanou.ca/blueshorefinancialcentre

Get your Christmas fix in early, by attending a circus adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* at the BlueShore Centre at Capilano University. Taking a meta-perspective on the classic tale, this adaptation follows a group of clowns and travelling players who have to make two last minute replacements for the roles of Scrooge and Tiny Tim by drafting a props person to play Tim and a cynical stage manager to play the miserly crank.

* * *

East Side Culture Crawl

Nov. 17–20
Various locations in the Downtown Eastside, Vancouver
www.culturecrawl.ca

Over 475 artists will be opening their studios to the public for four days as part of the East Side Culture Crawl visual art festival. Emerging and internationally established artists will be demoing their artis-

tic processes: watch textile artists build organic vats, glass blowers create glass sculptures, clay makers mold chalices on the potter's wheel and stump artists using their chainsaws to carve artistic wood figurines.

* * *

Layers of Influence: Unfolding Cloth Across Cultures

Nov. 17, 2016–April 9, 2017
Museum of Anthropology,
University of British Columbia
www.moa.ubc.ca

Join curator Jennifer Kramer at the Museum of Anthropology's latest exhibit, *Layers of Influence*, displaying humanity's history and relationship with cloth. Throughout human history, clothing has demonstrated the wearer's status, enhanced their self-identity and provided an outlet for its maker's creativity. Kramer will showcase the diversity of cloth made with a variety of materials across a multitude of cultures and time periods.

* * *

West Coast Christmas Show & Artisan Marketplace

Nov. 18–20
Tradex – Fraser Valley Trade & Exhibition Centre, Abbotsford
www.westcoastchristmasshow.com

Want to get your Christmas shopping done early? Why not come down to the Tradex Centre in Abbotsford for the West Coast Christmas Show? Check out holiday knick-knacks, décor ideas, handcrafted toys and ornaments at the artisan market. Children can learn model making, decorate and bake Christmas cookies, and listen to storybook time at Santa's Workshop. Plus, there will be plenty of live family entertainment, festive foods, and presentations and demonstrations on all three days.

* * *

Balkan Roots

WISE Hall, Vancouver

Nov. 19, 7 p.m.
www.caravanbc.com

Come on down to the WISE Hall to listen to a wide selection of live traditional Balkan music. Join traditional Macedonian virtuoso Stefce Stojkovski as he entertains audiences with the zurla, the gajda (bagpipe), tarabuka drums and other southern Balkan instruments. Other performances include contemporary music band Grupa Dunbarov, vocalist band Zlatna Mountain, tamburitza band Djeram and Balkan folk dancer David Bilides. For tickets, check out Caravan B.C.

* * *

Hopscotch Festival

Nov. 21–27
Various locations
www.hopscotchfestival.com

The 21st annual Hopscotch Festival will be in Vancouver from November 21–27, featuring some of Canada's premium whiskeys, beers and spirits available for tasting. This festival will also host live entertainment, delicious dinners, distillery tours, BBQ parties and master (tasting) classes.

* * *

Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival

Nov. 22–25
Various theatres in Metro Vancouver
www.vimff.org

This outdoor and mountaineering-themed film festival has been promoting active lifestyles on the cinematic screen since 1998, featuring films that inspire and educate audiences about life at high altitudes. Watch alpine enthusiasts and adventure climbers scale the tallest cliffs, listen to documentary filmmakers as they shed light on some of B.C.'s ancient and endangered forests, and follow the experiences of some of B.C.'s professional skiers as they ski across breathtaking vistas.

► "Youth" from page 1
ship opportunities that they can carry with them for hopefully a long time."

She says the youth who have joined the YWCA Strong Girls, Strong World Youth Advisory Committee and attended the conference have learned a lot.

"That's been an empowering experience for them, and a lot of them have reported that that's kind of what they wanted and what they needed to be able to contribute to their communities. We've had a number of youth come back for a second year," she says.

Passions of youth

Sarah Park first got involved with the YWCA through their

Welcome To My Life Program, a program that helps Grade 7 girls transition into high school. A third-year integrated science student at UBC, Park enjoyed working with the YWCA so much she joined the youth advisory committee.

She says media often portrays youth in a negative light.

"Youth should not try to fit into the mould ... but rather stick with what they're passionate about, because that's when others can really see the genuine and a realness of what youth are doing. The youth are passionate about something, and they are willing to go out there to do something to affect society," says Park.

Paul Kedebe, also on the com-

mittee, got involved (he joined September 2015) because he was interested in the subject matter: gender roles and how that plays a part in society.

"We're presenting new ideas about what ways we can make society a more acceptable place for gender inclusiveness. That's what I love about this community – the whole discussion of it and you could see everybody has a big passion for what they do, in terms of wanting to be in the discussion and wanting to find a way to make the world a better place," says Kedebe, a first-year University of Toronto political science student.

Ever since he joined the committee, it's enlightened him to see how differing opinions of

different subjects regarding the generalization of women or minorities in media play a big role in society. Also, he hopes more youth see the bigger picture about how the media impacts them and how they function in the world.

It's important for youth to have their voices heard, but there are some challenges, he notes. However, he thinks youth can take steps to cause a ripple effect in their own communities to counteract misconceptions of them in the media.

"I think starting awareness within our circle, to get the word out even more, so people in our social circle, people around us, are cognizant about images in the media [and that

they] are not truly reflective of what youth can do," says Kedebe.

Kedebe hopes youth who attend will take part in the conference's activities.

"The one thing that I hope people would get out of the conference is their voices are more powerful than they think they are. I think people need to be vocal about a lot of things," says Kedebe. "I think through the workshops that we had last year, not only will it build the confidence that people need to be able to voice their opinions about these types of issues, but to be able to take action as well." ✉

For more information, visit their facebook page: www.facebook.com/YWCAYouth



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The Mission to Seafarers: Flying Angels Club

Located at 401 East Waterfront Road at the foot of Dunlevy Avenue, this house represents the historic area from which the City of Vancouver began its development. Vancouver's first public school, the Hastings Saw Mill (circa 1865), the Hastings Mill Store (1865) that housed Vancouver's first post office, library and community centre were all located around this site.

Today only the Mission to Seafarers building remains, hedged in by the railway on one side and the busy Port of Vancouver (POV) operations on the other. Due to security measures after 9/11, the only access by walking or driving is an overpass at the foot of Main Street.

The house was built by BC Mills Timber and Trading Co, in 1906 as the offices for the promotion and sales of prefabricated houses, schools and churches. Each office showcased a different type of BC wood: fir, hemlock, red cedar, balsam. Unfortunately the offices were painted over in the 1920s. In 1930, Vancouver

Harbour Commissioners occupied the site until 1936 when the National Harbours Board purchased the building. In 1973, Mission to Seafarers took possession of the house which it leases from the Port of Vancouver for one dollar a year.

The Mission is part of a worldwide organization begun in 1835 and has a presence in over 250 ports. The services this mission provides are truly remarkable. It ministers to the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of sailors who visit Vancouver. As listed on their website: friendly staff offer seafarers a comfortable lounge, chapel, billiards room, used clothing store, shop for snacks, souvenirs and toiletries, telephone booths, computer cyber-cafe for internet access and e-mail, international money transfers, cable television, phone cards, free magazines and books. A worship service including Mass/Communion can be held either at the Mission or on board ship when requested. Chaplains visit ships and are always available. (At Christmas, gifts are provided and delivered to the ships.)

All the missions are managed by the local diocese of the Anglican Church but they operate ecumenically with a team of Anglican, Catholic, Protestant and lay chaplains.

There is also medical assistance and legal advocacy. Many seafarers suffer from poor working conditions including long hours, low wages with few benefits, maltreatment, and nine to ten months of separation from their families. All this causes mental stress prompting ill health and even suicide. There is also the threat of piracy and storms. There was a case of a sailor washed overboard and ship officials tried to establish it as a suicide to avoid the family's insurance claim. The Mission provided legal assistance in this case to successfully gain the insurance for the family involved. There is a log book from the early 1900s at the Mission with the names of sailors who have died in the Vancouver area.

Meanwhile the very existence of the Mission's building is being threatened with the expansion of POV's Centerm Terminal. This is a 72-acre full-service container

terminal operated by DP World Vancouver (DP), a Dubai-based company which leases it from POV. 90% of all consumer goods worldwide arrive by ship from other countries. At POV, DP handles approximately one-fifth of arriving goods. Considering the enormous amount of goods handled and the \$9 billion annually in output POV generates for the Canadian economy, port expansion will trump other concerns like the integrity of the Mission to Seafarers.

DP already has plans to place generators in the park on the north side of the building just feet away from the Mission. There is a sculpture in the park composed of 3 stones by Gerhard Class commissioned by the Vancouver Historical Society (VHS) in 1966 that commemorates the 100th anniversary of the building of Hastings Mill. The sculpture will have to be relocated and maple trees will have to be cut down. First Nations call the site Kumkumalay – big maple trees. Although this is a historic site, the City of Vancouver does not have the final say here as POV is federally controlled.

The POV expansion may further limit access with ID check requirements. According to the VHS, the Mission at one time served up to 24,000 mariners a year; last year, with limited access and fewer crew members due to technology, only 3,500 mariners visited.

The Mission relies on all its work from charitable donations. Managed by the compassionate Kathryn Murray, there are seven paid staff members as well as volunteers. The Mission logo contains the image of a flying angel, hence Flying Angels Club is an alternate name. It's inspired from Revelations, 14:6 which reads: Then I saw another angel flying high in the air with an eternal message of good news to announce to the peoples of the earth; to every race, tribe, language and nation.

It's open to visitors.
www.flyingangel.ca

Please visit www.thelasource.com for more pictures.

DON RICHARDSON

Recipe by Jen dela Luna

Tufahije (with maple syrup)

I'll admit that I wasn't too familiar with Bosnian cuisine when I was given this assignment. What I was delighted to discover is that its focus is truly on the ingredients at the heart of the dish. While I am a big fan of sauces and accompaniments to any dish, I also appreciate dishes whose simplicity let the ingredients shine. Such is the case with this delicious dessert.

Typically, each tufahija (tufahije is plural) is poached in a simple syrup (equal parts sugar and water), but I decided to put a Canadian spin on it and use maple syrup instead. The

result is that the poached apples are imbued with a delicate, delicious nutty flavour which pairs perfectly with the hazelnut mixture within. All these components complement the apple itself, which remains the star of the show. This dessert is easy to do for both small and large groups, and can be prepared well in advance of your next fall or winter party... or just a cozy night in. Enjoy!

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 4 Gala apples (any baking apple will do!)
- Juice of half a lemon

- 3-1/2 cups water
- 1-1/2 cups maple syrup
- 400 g Greek yogurt (plain or vanilla)
- 2/3 cup roasted hazelnuts, crushed
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon

Method

1. Peel the apples and core them, taking out a bit more beyond the centre for the filling. Immerse the apples in lemon water so they do not oxidise.
2. In a saucepot, combine the water and maple syrup and heat up to a gentle simmer, on medium heat.



3. Place the apples in the syrup and poach gently until tender but still holding their shape, approximately 15–18 minutes.
4. Take the apples out gently and allow to cool, and set the

poaching liquid aside to reserve.

5. Place the hazelnuts in a bag and, using a rolling pin or mallet, crush them to a fine texture.
6. Incorporate the nuts thoroughly into the yogurt, and mix the spices in as well.
7. Fill the cooled apples with the yogurt mixture.
8. Ladle some of the poaching liquid over the apple. Garnish with more hazelnuts, and optionally a dollop of whipped cream or a scoop of vanilla ice cream. The apples can be served room temperature or chilled.

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