

Love-hop, the
kindness of being
Page 5



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Photo by Lisa MacIntosh

Verbatim

Please forget my accent

by MARIA GIRON

In Vancouver, everybody comes from somewhere else. I've always liked this aspect in a town, being multicultural. However, one of the things that confused me the most in Vancouver is the way people make you notice, on an awfully regular basis, your own accent. With 52% of the population speaking another mother tongue than English, I thought that nobody would care much about other people's accents. Now you hear it, now you don't. This not the case. When the question "You've got an accent, where are you from?" arises, I feel the same awkwardness a woman middle-aged woman would when asked her age. My brain translates the question as: "Your English is terrible, what country tried to teach it to you?" Then comes the compliment "Your English is so good," which you can only compare to someone spitting out a piece of pie and flattering the cook afterwards.

Maybe I wouldn't be so sensitive about it if the question wasn't asked so often. A simple "hello" on my part can become a trigger. Invariably, in response, people list the places they've been in France: Cordes-sur-Ciel, Villemur-sur-Tarn, Saint Sulpice-La-Pointe. I'm kidding, it's always Paris. Surprise! And Provence and Marseilles if they feel adventurous. I know all the holiday stays of my usual hot-dog vendor by heart, because he goes over them every time I see him. He never seems to remember that I'm the very same French girl as last time, though. At least he probably doesn't notice how I stuff myself with his hot-dogs.

One day, in the elevator of my building, I said hello and I was asked, once again, where I came from. It was the second or third time that day (I'd al-

See "Verbatim" page 8 ➤

Women making their marks in arts and culture

by ALISON CHIANG

Ahead of International Women's Day on March 8, three women share their successes and challenges.

Whether through music, words or fashion, each one knows her place in the world as a woman and creator.

The colours and sounds in the eclectic

Although from Ontario, singer Alysha Brilla's heart always calls for British Columbia where she feels at home.

"A lot of my music is written in and around nature – the fact that [nature] is so concentrated [in Vancouver] gives me a boost of inspiration," says Brilla.

Her three favourite artists are Bob Marley, Amy Winehouse and Mexican-American singer Selina Quintanilla-Perez.

"My music is a mix of these three artists and their music, which is old influence pop and jazz. It's upbeat, rhythmic and it tells stories," she explains.

Growing up in a mixed household – her mother, a Christian-raised Canadian of European background and, her father, a

Muslim-raised Indian from Tanzania – meant that Brilla was exposed to a variety of cultural aspects

"I listened to a lot of different music growing up: my mom would sing us church hymns, Irish folk songs, and I would hear from my dad a bunch of Bollywood music so it was really eclectic growing up," she says.

Brilla says the Canadian music industry is largely owned and operated by white men; she has received both sexist and racist remarks.

"I'm light-skinned so I have the social capital that comes along

with that; in some cases, I'm white representing and have ease of access in certain situations. Even though I recognize my privilege in certain ways, it doesn't stop me from making the industry positive for people regardless of where they fall on the spectrum," says Brilla.

Brilla will be performing at the Evergreen Cultural Centre, March 2.

Words on paper and words spoken aloud

"They put me in poetry...I was a little disturbed by this," says

See "Women artists" page 5 ➤

Also in this issue



Poetry with a
twist of pain
Page 6

Artist pin-points
linguistic hindrances
Page 9



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Community Profile

Meaning is in the eye of the photo beholder

BY BETTY SHEA

Bryan Myles, director of the Bill Reid Centre for Northwest Coast Studies, will be presenting **Early Photography of Northwest Coast First Nations and narrating historical photos of First Nations communities dating back to the 1850s. The talk will be held on March 7 at the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts.**

Myles’s interest in historical photography started when he met George MacDonald, a pioneer in archeological work on the Pacific Northwest Coast.

“I started scanning [and digitizing prints] back in 2007 for George, who I met in Ottawa when I was doing my master’s,” says Myles. “I’m familiar with the over 60,000 images in his research collection.”

Myles was further inspired by an article from the Royal British Columbia Museum that described the journeys of photographers in government sponsored expeditions called ‘tours of inspection.’ While the research notes contain details unavailable in any photo collection, they lacked the imagery available in the photos that Myles was digitizing.

“So I started going through our image collection and attaching information provided in the article,” he says. “It presents a narrative

objects in their collections are being reinterpreted,” says Myles.

His presentation is an example of this reinterpretation.

“Part of what I talk about is how these pictures go from being symbols of colonial authority to later becoming commercial products, and then being repurposed again to become sources of indigenous pride,” he says.

The presentation primarily deals with photos that originate from a series of government expeditions between 1856 and 1881.

“The tours of inspection in 1873, 1874 and 1881 were done with Israel Wood Powell who was the

identity,” says Myles. “It’s almost a subversion of the intent of the original image.”

Meaning is not static

What caused this change in the use and interpretation of these photos? Myles believes that the answer partly lies in increased First Nations activism and involvement in curating museum exhibits, in more collaboration between First Nations artists and museums and in our society’s changed attitude towards indigenous cultures.

“Now we have political and ethical will, as well as the tech-



▲ Inhabitants of Chief Weah’s “Monster House” pose with Israel Wood Powell in 1866.



▲ Coast Salish salmon weir on the Cowichan River, Vancouver Island, 1866.

that a lot of people would find interesting.”

Reinterpreting our relationship with First Nations

Myles has a Master of Sociocultural Anthropology degree, but his focus shifted after meeting MacDonald and moving to Vancouver.

“Now my work is focused on how museums are opening up and how

Superintendent of Indian Affairs in BC. He had initiated these trips to persuade the First Nations that there was a strong force watching them,” explains Myles.

Besides this show of force, Powell needed to report back to the federal government of progress in pacifying the First Nation communities. He hired photographers to take pictures of the ships’ officers standing among the sitting First Nations people to show that they had been ‘subdued.’

Yet, society’s engagement with photographs is constantly evolving.

“Now we’re using them to show cultural continuity, pride and

nology, to add the voice of First Nations,” he says.

Myles further explains that meaning is not static. He argues that photos are not fixed representation of reality, and that viewers should consider the context and negotiations that would have occurred between photographers and their subjects.

“You don’t see the pictures where indigenous people refused to be photographed in the archives and you don’t get to see their agency in rejecting colonialism,” says Myles.

In displaying these historical photos, Myles hopes to start a discussion with the intent of instilling respect and understanding of a shared colonial past with First Nations. He also hopes to create access to material locked away in archives.

“These objects and images show how First Nations society and culture have a totally different outlook on world values that are as equally important as ours,” he says. “There’s a lot to offer on our understanding of ourselves and what we value as truth. I like calling those claims to truth into question.”

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

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# Yazidi Discussion Circle hopes to affect change

*by* FLORENCE HWANG

**All levels of government should do more to help the Yazidi women and children heal and recover from trauma, say the Remember Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE) organization. The Yazidi Discussion Circle will be held at VIVO Media Arts Centre (Feb. 24).**

"If you don't care for people, you can hurt them for seven generations. There's nothing worse than silence, secrets and denial. We know that," says Chris McDowell, moderator for ROSE.

It's been more than two years since the start of the Yazidi genocide, a genocide confirmed by former Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephane Dion in 2016, but ROSE wants to raise awareness about it.

## Exploring Canada's role in helping Yazidi women

Some questions up for discussion include: What are three things we want the federal government to do about providing trauma care? What can be done by provincial and civic governments? What roles can educational institutions play in providing support?

"That's why we're having this discussion ... to bring together a lot of different people who have expertise and people who are curious, and people who are caring and to figure things out together to make recommendations to the government from the grassroots," says McDowell.

The Yazidi, a religious minority, are predominantly ethnically Kurdish. They have been persecuted for their religious beliefs. On August 3, 2014, ISIS attacked the Yazidis as part of a crusade to “purify” Iraq and its neighbouring countries of non-Islamist influences.

According to ROSE's website, many of the Yazidi men and boys were slaughtered along with "older" women. Young women and children were forced into sex slavery and tortured by the ISIS military. According to the United Nations report, there were daily unspeakable atrocities committed against thousands of Yazidi women and girls.

### Affecting change

McDowell didn't know what to do to affect change, but when she heard about One Billion Rising, a movement that Eve Ensler (the author of the *Vagina Monologues*) created to fight violence against women internationally, it changed her.

She posted articles she read on the Remember our Sisters website. The organization wrote letters pleading for members

of parliament to take in Yazidi women and girls as refugees because at that point, McDowell says, the federal government was not taking them in deliberately based on grounds of religion. She wanted the Canadian government to step up and take action. McDowell says people might think the issues of the Yazidi women and youth are too ugly for them to bear.

"But really, we need to face the ugliness that's happening. This is ISIS. We really need people to learn about and pay attention – to say this is an atrocity and we have to stop it," she says.

On top of basic needs, McDowell says Yazidi women and children will need trauma care – something which Canada still needs to offer. She points to Germany, which has 20 safe houses where women and children can get counselling for their traumatic experiences.

"We're part of a different society, one that is more open, where we value therapy, we value honesty and we value healing. To not provide the opportunity to survivors of such extreme torture would be such a serious mistake. It will cost us more money in the long run," says McDowell.

Angela Marie MacDougall, executive director of Battered Women's Support Services, will be the Master of Ceremonies. Senator Mobina Jaffer will pro-



▲ *Angela Marie MacDougall, executive director of Battered Women's Support Services, speaking at the vigil in Vancouver on December 6, 2016.*

vide a background on what has happened to the Yazidi people and her insights into Canada's role in supporting Yazidi women and girls as refugees. Jenny Kwan, MP – Vancouver East will talk about the current situation regarding Yazidi women and girls and offer her insights into Canada's role in supporting refugees.

For more information, visit [www.rememberoursisterseverywhere.com](http://www.rememberoursisterseverywhere.com).

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# Left Bank



## Rich Coleman reveals true face of a government that has failed to help the poor

Week of events planned to demand action on poverty

This month included a rare sighting at the provincial legislature in Victoria: politicians doing their jobs and actually debating in that underused public building. After Premier Christy Clark cancelled the fall session, the legislature is briefly convening before the Liberals, NDP, and Greens head out on the campaign trail for the election in May.

The latest session of the legislature may be short, but there have been some memorable moments. During a debate on Feb. 16, to take one example, Liberal MLA Rich Coleman defended his government's record on poverty: "We have to remember that a person on social assistance, a single person on social assistance in British Columbia, gets double the annual income of a person in the Third World."



▲ MLA Rich Coleman behaved in a Trump-like manner in the BC legislature.

When this remark drew howls from the opposition benches, Coleman taunted his critics in a Trump-like manner: "I know you don't like it when I tell you how good this country is, but that's fine. All I ever hear is negative, negative, negative, destructive, pessimistic attitude..."

Later that day NDP MLA Lana Popham blasted Coleman, tweeting that his behaviour in the legislature had been "astoundingly unprofessional."

Rich Coleman's performance is, however, revealing of the character of the professional politicians who make up the current government.

Coleman is not some powerless backbencher going on a rant. He is the second most powerful politician in the B.C. government, wearing multiple hats as deputy premier, minister of natural gas, and minister responsible for housing. Because of that, it's fair game to say that his comments reflect the callousness and irresponsibility of this government. Rather than address the needs of the most destitute and precarious people in this province, they prefer to make excuses based on irrelevant comparisons and to denigrate anyone raising these critical issues.

It's fair game to say Coleman's comments reflect a government that just doesn't care about the poor, because for 16 years they've failed to show us oth-

erwise. Social assistance rates have stagnated while the cost of living has soared. Homelessness is at record levels, and the crisis of housing affordability puts tens of thousands of households one paycheque away from eviction. Surely the minister responsible for housing is aware that the rent is a little higher in Vancouver than in Managua?

Faced with a government of this character, there is little point in "speaking truth to power." The Liberals have shown they don't care, and apparently when you raise issues with them they'll just accuse you of bellyaching anyway. Far better to change who's in power so that the truth will have a chance of not falling on deaf ears.

Thankfully there's an election in just over two months, and people in B.C. will have a chance to decide whether to grant another four years to this government.

Unfortunately, given the current state of our politics, there's a tendency to ignore or give short shrift to matters related to poverty reduction and elimination during election campaigns. Parties, even those with a strong mandate from their members to work to reduce inequality, tend to focus obsessively on the so-called "middle class." (Justin Trudeau, rather than utter terms like working class or poor, has instead sometimes referred to "those aspiring to join the middle class.")

What's lost when we don't talk about these things are the real people at the bottom of this province's social and economic hierarchy. It's not pessimistic to talk about improving conditions for the poor. What's really pessimistic is the old saying, echoed in the rhetoric of politicians like Coleman, that "the poor will always be with us."

Thankfully there are many social movement campaigns coming together to address the crisis of poverty in B.C. Starting Feb. 25, the Poverty Reduction Coalition and allies are organizing a Poverty Free B.C. week of action, culminating in a rally outside the Vancouver Public Library at 12 Noon on March 4. Events throughout the week will highlight potential solutions to the crisis, including increasing the minimum wage, significantly raising social assistance rates and implementing affordable childcare across the province.

Concrete solutions to reduce and eliminate poverty are available. In a province as wealthy as B.C., all we need is the political will. It seems the rich will always be with us, but it's about time we made them pay something closer to their fair share in taxes. That's all it would take to make poverty history. To deny this possibility while defending the privileges of the rich and super-rich is the worst kind of negative and pessimistic politics. ✍



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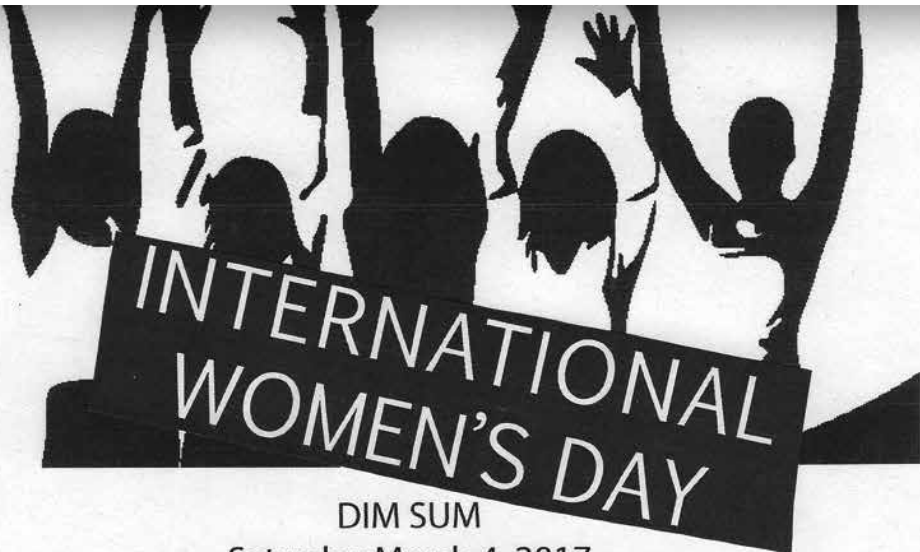
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# Singer-songwriter with an unexpected message

by SUSAN HANCOCK

**The idea of kindness and the variations of love that co-exist within society is the topic Kinnie Starr will invoke at the next EMMA Talks.**

“I’ve always been interested in platforms that are well-curated, like EMMA Talks or TED Talks,” says Starr. “Women’s voices are often phased out of a lot of arenas, so EMMA Talks makes an effort to create a space for women to share their ideas.”

The underground conscious hip-hop and rap artist will share her views of love and kindness Feb. 28 at Djavad Mowafaghian World Art Centre – Goldcorp Centre for the Arts.

Emma Bergman who co-directs EMMA Talks with Corin Browne, first saw Starr perform eight

years ago and was drawn to her contributions on social issues related to gender equality, First Nations land rights, and the importance of protecting waterways.

“Kinnie Starr is a singer, so we hear some of her thoughts through song. I love giving people the opportunity through EMMA Talks to go deeper into subject matter that is important to them,” says Bergman.

### The love hop artist

“Love hop” is how Starr defines her music – an unlikely angle for a rap artist.

“I’m not considered a rap artist because my lyrics are about family, love and communications,” says Starr who is of French, German, Irish and Mohawk heritage.

Starr says the media reserves the title of rap artist for angry

black men who rhyme about jostling for power in the violent, drug popping, impoverished cities across America.

Even her music is not referred to as conscious rap, despite the fact that many of her songs have a political message.

“ I’m not considered a rap artist because my lyrics are about family, love and communications.

Kinnie Starr, rap artist

“Guys are called conscious rappers, but if you’re a woman and you’re political, then you’re categorized as spoken word or a poet,” says Starr. “A woman loses credibility as a rap artist because she’s not hard, not gangster enough. It’s stupid.

Rap music has evolved over the last 40 years or so. It’s a growing culture, and like any culture it should grow and change.”

### Kindness trumps all

The topic of kindness and love has been percolating in Starr’s

herself and was reliant on her family’s care.

“It’s been pretty humbling and frightening, and pretty illuminating,” says Starr. “Before the accident, I was accustomed to being a person on the front lines of a lot of con-



▲ Kinnie Starr, activist and artist.

Photo by Robin Gartner

mind for a very long time.

“It’s something I’ve been writing about and thinking about since I began making art,” says Starr. “Even before I started doing graffiti, before I started producing music, I was interested in the meaning of kindness and the action of love.”

Starr believes that the act of kindness is critical to humanity. For instance, Starr asks people to think critically about why kitten images go viral through social media and at the same time acknowledge the millions of negative viral messages that successfully glamorize the hateful conversations shared by extroverted personalities.

“Anyone who is interested in the conversation of why we want to be better people, should be interested in what I might be talking about,” says Starr.

### Hard times teach kindness

Starr was in a tragic car accident two year’s ago and was left with a concussion that caused a serious visual and spacial reasoning disorder. In a flash her world turned upside down; she was unable to dress

versations. And as an artist, I enjoyed talking about difficult subject matter. But since the accident, I’m much more reluctant to put myself in harm’s way.”

Four years prior, Starr produced the album *We Are...* by Digging Roots, which won the Juno Award for Aboriginal Recording of the Year in 2010. Her fan base was growing, she was touring, and revelling in the invitations to collaborate on albums with other hip-hop artists. It was a pivotal stage in Starr’s music career when she was forced to take a step back.

Today, after some very dark days, Starr is writing music and performing again. She’s hesitant to include details of her hard times as part of her monologue next week, but recognizes how recovery has expanded her understanding of kindness.

“When I was injured, I felt useless,” says Starr. The process of recovery has helped me learn to love myself again.”

For more information, visit [www.eventbrite.ca](http://www.eventbrite.ca) Or [www.kinniestarr.ca](http://www.kinniestarr.ca).

### ► “Women artists” from page 1

Jónína Kirton, poet, author and facilitator.

Kirton, 62, says that although she was grateful for being accepted into the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Writer’s Studio program in 2006, she had assumed she would get into the non-fiction writing group.

The 2016 Mayor’s Arts Award for Literary Arts emerging artist recipient says being placed in the poetry group was a positive experience.



Photo by Ayelet Tshori

▲ Jónína Kirton, Métis/Icelandic poet, author and facilitator

“Oh my goodness, I’m such a poet! I thought my writing was terrible and my poetry juvenile and knew nothing about poetry,” she says and acknowledges SFU for seeing the potential in her.

The title of Kirton’s first collection of poetry *Page is Bone, Ink is Blood*, published in 2015, came from a dream.

“A big part of my journey is tied to my genealogy, checking more deeply into my genealogy, blood and history – how many memories I have of my ancestors. It’s about an exploration of a woman who didn’t know much about her ancestry,” says Kirton who adds her father denied his Indigenous roots.

Kirton writes about taboo subjects including “private information” about family dynamics, though she notes that she is not writing for sympathy, but rather for younger women who may be dealing with similar issues.

Her new book, *An Honest Woman* out this April, depicts the triangular relationship between mother, father and daughter, drawing from her own experiences and also looking at other families, particularly where fathers were dangerous.

“Every woman can relate to fear, of being threatened. Po-

etry is largely metaphorical, but it touches upon these feelings women can relate to...but also good feelings such as feeling joyful, feeling good in your body and being in nature,” says Kirton. With an aim to make women feel safer in the world, Kirton considers herself becoming more of a feminist every day.

### Dressing the part

What is designer and owner of JAC by Jacqueline Conoir, RozeMerie Cuevas’ go-to outfit?

“Slouchy boy pants with a soft, feminine silk blouse and an interesting coat or blazer. That encompasses my personality: strong, feminine and a bit edgy,” says Cuevas, whose boutique is located in South Vancouver.

Cuevas’ love for fashion design started at a young age. She began to sew her own clothes at 12-years-old, citing a photograph of her late mother, Jacqueline Conoir, working by her sewing machine as her influence.

“I’m convinced she’s been there with me the whole journey,” says Cuevas of her mother, who died when Cuevas was five-years-old.

Cuevas, who is half French, half Croatian, started the Jacqueline Conoir line with her husband, Thomas Cuevas, in



Photo by Lu Weiwei

▲ RozeMerie Cuevas, designer and owner of JAC by Jacqueline Conoir.

1985 upon returning to Vancouver from Paris where she went to study fashion design. Cuevas created her second clothing line in 2011: JAC. The name is derived from the first name initials of Cuevas’ mother, Jacqueline, followed by Cuevas’ daughters, Andrea and Celine.

“The message of JAC is: JAC lives freely, leads by example, loves

life, project success, inspires, empower action and knows what she wants” says Cuevas.

Recognizing the evolving nature of fashion, Cuevas identified the need to rebrand her company and develop an all-encompassing line that shifts from business-centric clothing to designs that include more culture and lifestyle.

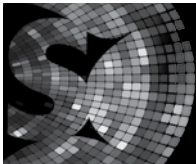
“What I find is that women all over the world, are essentially the same. What makes us a little different is our culture and our traditional beliefs but a core essence and values of a woman are pretty much the same (the challenges and obstacles): some things that restrict us is that we don’t get to meet women from all around the world,” she says.

For more information:

Rozemerie Cuevas JAC owner and main designer [www.jacbyjc.com](http://www.jacbyjc.com)

Jónína Kirton Métis/Icelandic poet, author, facilitator [www.joninakirton.wixsite.com](http://www.joninakirton.wixsite.com)

Alysha Brilla Indo-Tanzanian musician [www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca](http://www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca)



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# When art reflects life

by EIJA JIMENEZ

**Jane Byers and Kara-lee MacDonald will be reading their poetry at the Notional Space in East Vancouver, on Feb. 22, along with Elizabeth Bachinsky and Leanne Dunic.**

Both poets found their form of expression through poetry that speaks of resilience. Byers writes about LGBT history in her new book, *Acquired Community* (Caitlin Press, 2016) while MacDonald details her struggles with bulimia in her own collection, *Eating Matters* (Caitlin Press, 2016).

### Acquired Community

Byer’s *Acquired Community* makes references to acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). A great portion of the poems she wrote takes place during the AIDS epidemic. “That crisis brought people together and we acquired our community that way,” says Byers.

A community of people came together in a time that was one of its darkest in history. What Byers strives to recall within her poems is a remembrance of LGBT history both in good times and in bad.

One of the poems she will be reading at the Notional Space is called “March on Washington, 1993,” which she considers a pretty topical piece right now. Her book contains what she calls parade poems and is the genesis of her book.

“I was writing about parades and how much of an impact they had on coming out,” says Byers. “It’s our collective stories, and I’m looking at how resilient we are as a community.”

That community has grown and, though Byers says progress has been meandering rather than linear, her poems are a call for people to remain steadfast and fighting.

“My friend is an ally and she asked, ‘Why do we need a Pride Parade in Nelson?’ It was really interesting for me to ponder that question,” Byers says. “In a way, this book is my response

[ALOT] is a way we can have the collective records there for people to access,” explains Byers. “The oral part is important because it’s essential to have people’s stories recorded and the archive reminds us there is a place for us.”

### Poetry as power

MacDonald uses her experience with anorexia and bulimia to highlight her healing

language. I felt like it gave me a power over it.”

The power she received from writing has been helpful in aiding her progress, says MacDonald, who is still on the road to recovery from her eating disorder. Her favourite poem, which is an imagined dialogue between herself and the ghost of the late Princess Diana, shows the theme of perseverance throughout her collection.

“It’s a positive and powerful poem about picking yourself up again and carrying on.

*Kara-lee MacDonald, poet*

process. For her, poetry was a sense of control over her situation and an outlet to express her feelings.

“What I was trying to do when writing was identifying

“It’s a positive and powerful poem about picking yourself up again and carrying on,” MacDonald explains. “I like to read a couple [of poems] that make people laugh because it tends to



▲ Kara-lee MacDonald, author of *Eating Matters*.



▲ *Acquired Community* by Jane Byers.

concrete feelings and dealing with bigger ideas and concepts,” MacDonald says. “Poetry allows me to use things like metaphors and play with

be a pretty heavy subject matter. You can see it in their faces that it’s hard to hear sometimes.”

The combination of her experiences along with the dark humour she puts into her poems allows them to resonate deep within her readers. MacDonald notes that though not everyone may have a full blown eating disorder, weight and body image is still something that affects society, but what helps her heal is writing and time.

“Every day you have to wake up and make that decision,” MacDonald says. “We don’t have a lot of time, and every time I think that I want to binge, I just think about our limited time and how it’s not worth it.”

For more information, visit [www.plenitudemagazine.ca](http://www.plenitudemagazine.ca) or [www.caitlin-press.com](http://www.caitlin-press.com).



## AMSSA Webinar Series: Virtual Learning Exchange

An Interactive Day of Exchanging Knowledge, Resources, and Tools with the Settlement and Language Sector

Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017  
Location: Online  
Event Time: 8:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (PST) 8 Online Sessions

Each session is 60 minutes (45 minute presentation, 15 minute Q&A). Participate in as many online sessions as you would like.

Participants will be able to connect with community stakeholders involved in the settlement & integration of immigrant and refugee populations. The intent of the virtual exchange is to provide training, increase knowledge & awareness, and have the audience leave with tools & resources on various topic areas.

These interactive sessions are targeted to front line staff (Settlement Workers, Career Facilitators, Community Connections Workers, LINC Instructors), Managers, Supervisors, and community stakeholders working with immigrants and refugees.

### EVENT SCHEDULE

The Virtual Learning Exchange will be an all-day online series of interactive sessions, with a variety of stakeholders engaging with the B.C. Settlement and Language Sector on the following 8 topics:

8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  
AMSSA Introduction & Technical Testing with Participants  
Please log on early to check your connections

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Small Business BC Resources, Small Business BC– Laura Avelo

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Challenges of Refugee & Immigrant Mental Health in Metro Vancouver, Cross Cultural Psychiatry Program, Vancouver Coastal Health – Dr. Soma Ganesan, MD, FRCPC

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
What are the Mental Health and Substance Use Information Needs of Newcomers and their Supporters? Findings from Recent Consultations with the BC Multicultural/Settlement Sector, Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division – Sarah Hamid-Balma

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Ending a Fixed-Term Tenancy Under Special Circumstances, Residential Tenancy Branch, Audrey Panter

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
The BC Childcare Subsidy, Ministry of Children and Family Development – Lisa Maisonneuve

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Creating Informal Literacy and Language Opportunities within a Formal Learning Environment, DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society – Janice Bexson

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Fresh Voices: Journeys, Reflections and Learning, Fresh Voices Initiative, Vancouver Foundation – Alejandra Lopez

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Integrating CLB Assessment into your ESL Classroom, The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) – Lisa Herrera and Sarah Schmuck

### REGISTRATION

This event is funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and is free for all service provider organizations (SPOs) funded by IRCC in the province of BC. Individuals from other organizations are welcome to attend for a small fee. Registration for AMSSA members and Safe Harbour Members costs \$35 per connection and registration for organizations with no affiliation to AMSSA or Safe Harbour costs \$75 per connection.

To Register, go to [www.amssa.org](http://www.amssa.org).

Deadline to register is February 21, 2017

AMSSA and its member agencies and stakeholders organize public community events, workshops for newcomers to Canada as well as professional development training, workshops, seminars and conferences for settlement, diversity and inclusion sector employees. Contact us at [events@amssa.org](mailto:events@amssa.org) for more information.



▲ Jane Byers, author.

to that. It’s our history, and people don’t know it.”

*Acquired Community* earned Byers an opportunity to work as a Simon Fraser University (SFU) writer-in-residence for the Archives of Lesbian Oral Testimony (ALOT). Elise Chenier, Ph.D., director of ALOT, offered Byers the position after doing projects in Nelson where she was attempting to get the lesbian community there to document their stories.

“Lesbians have been excluded from the historical record, and





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY CELEBRATION  
MARCH 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
SHAKTI AWARDS 2017

Do you know a woman who deserves to be recognized as a leader, advocate, artist, visionary or a source of strength? This is your opportunity to have them celebrated by nominating them for the Shakti Award.

The *Shakti* Awards were founded in 2000 to recognize and honour women who have displayed *Shakti*-strength and energy, in their community, locally and/or globally. *Shakti* is the mother Goddess, the source of all, the universal principle of energy, power and creativity and represents the dynamic forces that are thought to move through the entire universe. Not only is Shakti responsible for creation, it is also the agent of all change. Similarly, the Shakti that resides within every woman is a force to reckon with and to celebrate on this International Women’s Day.

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

If you would like to nominate a woman that embodies Shakti, please use the information below and email your nomination to [shaktisociety2000@gmail.com](mailto:shaktisociety2000@gmail.com) no later than March 8th, 2017. Awards will be announced at the Shakti Awards Gala on March 25<sup>th</sup> at Bollywood Banquet Hall at 6:30 p.m..

Please note that nominations must be submitted via email. Submissions sent through other means, (social media, in-person or phone/text messages will not be considered).

Ensure that the description of the nominee’s accomplishments reflect the category in which she is being nominated and provide clear examples of how the nominee has excelled in the specific field and why you feel she deserves the Shakti Award in that specific category.

Categories:

- ♀ Academic Achievement Award (High School or University/College student)
- ♀ Public Service/Volunteer Award
- ♀ Business Entrepreneur Award
- ♀ Artistic Achievement Award
- ♀ Sports and Recreational Award
- ♀ Resilience Award - A woman who has overcome adversity and has used her personal journey in a way to inspire and motivate others to be positive despite challenges and setbacks. Her achievements may reflect one of the above categories or she can simply be a woman who takes care of her children, parents or herself.

Nomination Information

- Name
- Age
- Address, phone number(s) and email
- Name, phone number and email of nominator
- Brief summary of reason for nomination - how the nominee’s accomplishments relate to the stated category, the impact of their role, and why they should be chosen to receive a specific award.
- Identify how the nominee will contribute to Shakti: Empowerment of Women, Children and Families Society

# Murals for the city

BY JAKE MCGRAIL

**The next instalment in the Lulu Series: Art in the City will focus on the Vancouver Mural Festival.**

Co-founder and executive director of the Festival, David Vertesi, will be speaking on behalf of a group that strives to create connections and discussion with public art, at the Richmond City Hall on March 9.

**Murals as accessible public art**

One of the many organizations and celebrations that have spawned from the rise of public

sake of art you are able to express yourself, and it really becomes a personal piece. That’s why they’re so special – each piece is a very personal glimpse of someone because there was no guidance. It’s an honest way to present the art community.”

**A muralist’s work**

Volo began creating murals in 2012, and since then has worked on projects both locally and overseas. Seeing how art can shape a room, a building or a public area is what launched her interest in mural making, and the ability to share stories is one of the most important parts of it for her.



Photo by Nelson Mouellic

▲ Mogo mural.

art, the Vancouver Mural Festival had its inaugural event last August and is now planning for next summer. Fifty-three murals were created for the event in Mount Pleasant, Strathcona and the False Creek Flats, and the result was a huge variety of designs and images on the otherwise blank walls of the area, created by a large number of both local and international artists.

“It was a really great way to bring out artists and create public artwork that is accessible,” says Ola Volo, one of the artists who participated in the event. Volo is an artist and illustrator in Vancouver, originally from Kazakhstan. She is inspired by history, multiculturalism and folklore. “We have a beautiful city full of creative people, but the streets have bare walls. Hopefully we were able to inspire people who live here and form connections that will last a lifetime,” Volo says.

The artists who were a part of the Festival were given a wall, along with its dimensions, where it is, and suggestions for what sort of story or imagery would be best suited for it. From there they were given complete freedom for their designs, before presenting it to the city for final approval.

“I think that was the beauty of the Festival,” says Volo. “When you’re celebrating art for the

“I feel like when I put these stories on the wall, it’s creating accessible artwork that people can reflect and have an opinion on. It needs to live on the streets, in the public, because if it’s in front of you and accessible you are forced to react somehow.”

It takes around five to six days for Volo to put her artwork onto the wall itself, and usually a couple of weeks to fully design it. She doesn’t have any set design patterns, tailoring each piece to the wall and the area it’s located in.

“Each piece is individual,” says Volo. “It’s important to do artwork in that manner so that it has a purpose, and reflects on the environment around it.”

Street art has grown a lot over the last few decades, and has become more popular and welcomed in the public eye. Murals like those made for the Festival attract people from all over the world, their style and form appealing to many people from all walks of life.

“I think it’s the rawness of the process, the fact that it’s in public,” says Volo. “It’s not polished, it feels more human. I think it’s a beautiful way to bring people together.”

For more information on the Vancouver Mural Festival, visit [www.vancouvermurfestival.com](http://www.vancouvermurfestival.com). For more information on the Lulu Series talk, visit [www.richmond.ca](http://www.richmond.ca).



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# In PENUMBRA

## Mankind's quest for utopia explored through dance

by NAOMI TSE

**Greek-Canadian choreographer Paras Terezakis will be premiering his work *In PENUMBRA* as part of the 2017 Vancouver International Dance Festival March 1–4 at the Scotiabank Dance Centre.**

Terezakis immigrated to Canada from Greece in 1979 where he pursued his dance studies at York University, Toronto Dance Theatre and Simon Fraser University. From a young age, Terezakis had always been gifted in dance.

"In Greek culture, we love dancing," says Terezakis. "It's a social thing."

Terezakis initially studied acting in theatre school but after watching an inspirational ballet, he became interested in dance and pursued dance professionally instead.



▲ Choreographer and artistic director Paras Terezakis.

"I'm not that great with words and for me, dance is a beautiful thing," says Terezakis.

### The pursuit of utopia

A strong need to express himself propelled Terezakis to a dance style that he calls "physical theatre" where he works with the mind and body in a physical way. In 1986, Terezakis formed his own dance company, Kinesis Dance somatheatro. "Somatheatro," he says, means the acting of the body and the mind. His work, *In PENUMBRA*, highlights the continuous search and desire for utopia in our dystopic world and the challenges we face to get there. The word "penumbra" describes an area that is in a partial shadow. This grey area between light and darkness metaphorically depicts our best and worst traits.

Not willing to divulge too many details about the performance, Terezakis describes the abstract work as very visual with lighting contrasts created by incandescent and LED lights. There will also be a live video feed incorporated into the performance.

"The way I create work is to have some mystery and surprise," says Terezakis.

The thought-provoking performance will take the audience on their own personal journey, allowing them to take the metaphors and symbolisms presented visually and viscerally to create a story in their own minds.

"I want them to allow their minds to create questions for



▲ Dancer Arash Khakpour.

themselves without waiting for me to give them the answer," says Terezakis.

### Inspired by heritage

The inspiration behind *In PENUMBRA* came from two sources:

*The Odyssey*, an ancient Greek epic poem, and the Norwegian movie, *The Bothersome Man*. The movie portrays a man who lives in what appears to be a utopia but is essentially a dystopia.

"My ideas come usually from my heritage, Greek theatre or mythological archetypes," says Terezakis. "I enjoy working with philosophical and psychological attributes, the human condition and symbolism. I work with what I see in everyday life and it triggers me to do choreography."

Born in Athens, Terezakis' family owns a restaurant and they lived closed to a port where he saw people of different nationalities regularly. Growing up, he lived under the dictatorship of Georgios Papadopoulos, a time that he described as disturbing. He was later conscripted into the army and forced to stop his studies. Having lived through these experiences, he explains that seeing life in the best of times and the worst of times has provided him with inspiration for his pieces.

"I feel instinct and impulse create an impact in my work," say Terezakis, who attributes this to his Mediterranean heritage.

As a choreographer and artistic director, Terezakis feels that the most rewarding part of the creation process is the beginning.

"It's like putting a puzzle together and finding answers to the puzzle; if we don't find the answer we find another question and that excites me a lot," says Terezakis.

The production will feature dancers Arash Khakpour, Elissa Hanson, Hyoseung Ye, Diego Romero and René Sigouin. ✂

For more information, please visit [www.vidf.ca/tickets](http://www.vidf.ca/tickets).

► "Verbatim" from page 1 ready eaten a hot-dog earlier), and I was so tired of it that I replied, "Here." The man frowned, confused, "But... you've got an accent." I made eye contact, defying him to call me a liar. He tried a weak, "Québec?" I repeated, "No, here." The metallic double doors opened and I fled, leaving him to his confusion. Given the expression on his face, it was as if I just told him Santa Claus didn't exist. Existential crisis. It might not have been very nice of me but it felt good.

Of course, coming from somewhere else is something to celebrate. I know friends who jump at any occasion to talk about

plush only to immediately go back to Toulouse to eat cassoulet. In Vancouver, people come and people go, and it's sometimes hard to put down roots. It's even harder when you are reminded daily that you're not from here. I'm Caucasian so I have no reason to complain except for the undeniable pleasure it gives me to do so.

I'm not ashamed to be French, but I'd love to have people talk to me about something else upon meeting me. I'd like them to ask me my favorite colour (gasoline blue), my go-to desert (cheesecake) and how many cats I want when I get older (17).



▲ People are more than just an accent.

their origins, their countries, their town. I'm aware that most people just want to make small talk or wish I'd return the question. Or, maybe, in one percent of the cases, they ask because they really care. But it makes me feel as if I'm just passing through. It makes me feel as if I just arrived from the airport, en route to go buy a caribou

The multicultural aspect of Vancouver is very attractive and one should take interest in others' cultures without erasing it under a "Canadian" label. But, once, just once, I'd love to buy a hot-dog without being reminded I should be eating a cassoulet dish instead. Maybe because, deep down, I miss it terribly. ✂

## Main St. Village Vancouver & Little Mountain Neighborhood House Present...

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**When:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month 6-8pm:  
6pm-potluck & 7pm-workshop begins

\*Workshop topics vary each month and include: gardening, beekeeping, seed saving, backyard chickens, growing local, bikes & bike maintenance, renewable energy, recycling & composting, sewing, and more!

#### Information or to Register:

Jason Meritz:  
[Jason@villagevancouver.ca](mailto:Jason@villagevancouver.ca)  
or

Jennifer Wesman:  
[jennifer\\_wesman@lmnhs.bc.ca](mailto:jennifer_wesman@lmnhs.bc.ca)  
604-879-7104, ext. 315



Presented by Main St. Village Vancouver ([www.villagevancouver.ca](http://www.villagevancouver.ca)) and Little Mountain Neighborhood House ([www.lmnhs.bc.ca](http://www.lmnhs.bc.ca))



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▲ Hand, by Gu Xiong, photo inkjet 24" x 33", 2016.

# An artist's prickly journey

by WENJIE SHEN

Language is not only important for survival but is crucial to communication. Gu Xiong, a tenured professor at UBC (Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory), showcases in R Space his solo exhibition of new works, *Pins* (Feb.11–March 31).

"If you couldn't express your ideas, you might lose your position in mainstream culture. Immigrants should have their own voices, so [they] should learn how to speak English," says Xiong.

The language barrier wasn't the only problem. None of his achievements in China mattered once in Canada.

### "A little pin, a little pain"

Inside the R Space, several works have been hung on the wall. One of them shows a pin, placed in the middle of a tongue. The mouth is wide-open.

The pin, says Xiong, represents the pain new immigrants suffer daily because of insufficient language skills and a lack of knowledge of the new culture.

"The pin is to symbolize that we (as immigrants) live between two cultures. When you know something very well, but you couldn't fully express your ideas well in English, which would make you feel painful and uncomfortable," says Xiong.

Like many immigrants, the multimedia artist and former

instructor at the department of visual arts at Sichuan Institute of Fine Arts had lost his status.

Xiong's turning point came in 1990 when Xiong worked as a busboy at a cafeteria on the UBC campus.

"Working as a busboy at the cafeteria actually helped me to understand more about the society I reside in," says Xiong, "I started struggling to rise from the bottom of the society. I decided to rebuild my cultural identity. My work is closely associated with garbage, but in my eyes, they are not garbage, instead, they are the fuel of my life."



▲ Light, by Gu Xiong, photo inkjet print 36" x 49", 2016

After students finished drinking soda and left empty cans, he crushed them under his feet.

"My past has been crushed just like the cans, but my new identity was formed. It's impossible to find two crushed cans [that] look exactly the same, I needed to be myself and rebuild my cultural identity," says Xiong. "Common objects made alike come to life when they are killed."

One day while crushing the cans as usual, the sound suddenly awoke in him the feeling that a new identity was in the making.

"When I crushed the cans, the process is as similar as giving life and meaning to an object, but the process might be really painful."

The inspiration that came from crushing cans turned into an exhibition, *Gu's World*, that was exhibited at Diane Farris Gallery in 1991.

Another challenge was to make a living in an unfamiliar country working up to four different part-time jobs at times.

Among them, one required to get ready before dawn.

"I woke up at 5 a.m. and went to massage training schools to wash bed sheets. Then around 11 a.m., I rushed to car wash places to wash cars, later from 6 p.m. until 12 p.m., I went to pizza restaurants on Robson Street to make pizzas. Those working experiences took me closer to the community I live in," says Xiong.

### Life in China

Born in Chongqing, China, at the age of five Xiong began showing interests in drawing. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Xiong was sent to live and work in the countryside where he made up his mind to pursue arts as a career.

"During that time, I couldn't see any hope in my life," says Xiong, "I have no idea if I even have got a future or not, maybe I have to work as a farmer for the rest of my life."

### Aside

*A little pin  
A little pain  
It always follows me  
Wherever I go  
...  
When I cannot  
pronounce a word  
My tongue feels pain  
When I cannot understand  
what people say to me  
My ears feel pain  
When I do not understand  
the world around me  
My heart feels pain.  
by Gu Xiong*

He started using sketchbooks as a way to record his daily life, recalling the most meaningful thing he did before sketching the scenes.

"Drawing is a tool to figure out the connection between the land I live in and me. Back [then], I decided to keep drawing and doing art for my lifetime," says Xiong.

Xiong, who exhibits internationally, feels lucky to be able to turn the past into art to share it with everyone. Looking forward the artist stays true to his path.

"My future is my present, I want to keep doing the art I love," he says.

For more information, please visit [www.facebook.com/r.space.vancouver](http://www.facebook.com/r.space.vancouver) or [www.guxiong.ca](http://www.guxiong.ca).



▲ Gu Xiong, artist.



# Dairakudakan – a quest for paradise

by GORDON GAMLIN

**Japan's longest-standing butoh company will be taking audiences on a visually spectacular quest for paradise in all its absurdly elusive forms.**

Internationally acclaimed butoh dance company Dairakudakan returns to this year's Vancouver International Dance Festival (VIDF) with its latest work, *Paradise*, March 10–11 at the Vancouver Playhouse.

"Choreographer and director Akaji Maro set his sights on utopia," says VIDF's co-producer Barbara Bourget.

The work took form when Maro discovered that if hell was well represented in literature and various cultures, he couldn't find a common definition of the concept of paradise.

"This ignited a process of creation and exploration that culminated in this surreal, spectacular and bizarrely beautiful work," says Bourget.

**Paradise as inner ability**

"When I was thinking about this new work, these words came to my mind: paradise, paratyphoid, paranoia... It sounded like a disease," Maro explains in his artist statement.

ogy of the word paradise, says Maro, is from old Persian. It describes an enclosed garden.

"That must have been paradise in a hot desert. I think there was an idea that the real world is tough as hell. To contrast that, the idea of paradise must have been created," says Maro.

The contrast also highlights adversity. Maro goes on to explain that all around us are threatening conditions such as severe cold weather and typhoons.

"Under those circumstances, animals will hibernate and remain still. When humans face impossible suffering, we try to work it out. For example, our brain produces endorphins and transforms pain to pleasure. In other words, it is paradise within our body. Paradise can be called a product of perseverance," he says.

Such a paradise within is an entirely subjective experience. One person's paradise can be another one's hell.

"How you work around it and how to seek pleasure can be limitless. People won't feel [like] fighting in a war when they are having a good time in an opium den. If outsiders see this situation, it may look very miserable, but it can be their paradise," says Maro.



▲ From surreal to ghoulish – one man's hell can be another's paradise.



▲ Choreographer Akaji Maro pulls out all the stops in his search for paradise.

For him, hell seems to have been well explored.

"When you think about hell, there are a lot of ideas. For example, there is Divine Comedy by Dante. In Buddhism, there are eight forms of hell. In our real life, hell is killing each other in the battlefield. But I don't know much about paradise. We can imagine as much as we want, but I wanted to pursue something more realistic," he says.

*Paradise* gradually emerged as a study in contrast. The etymol-

ogy of the word paradise, says Maro, is from old Persian. It describes an enclosed garden.

Book and Lyrics by  
Steven Sater / Music  
by Duncan Sheik  
Based on the play by  
Frank Wedekind

March 8, 8 pm  
March 10, 8 pm  
March 11, 2 and 8 pm

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www.kitshouse.org



February 2–March 7, 2017

by SIMON YEE

Leave our snowy weather behind as March is fast approaching and spring is right around the corner! There's no time to waste: there are plenty of film festivals, theatre plays, musical performances, informative lectures, roundtables and panels to check out around town. Whether you're looking for something festive and light or intellectual and profound, Vancouver's got something for everyone.

\*\*\*

**Talking Stick Festival**

Feb. 16–26  
Various locations  
[www.talkingstickfest.ca](http://www.talkingstickfest.ca)

The Talking Stick Festival returns for the 16th time to showcase the work, art and culture of the First Nations peoples. Watch short films, catch a choreographed dance performance, settle in for contemporary Indigenous music and attend workshops hosted by some of the country's emerging and established Aboriginal artists. For further information and event locations, visit their website.

\*\*\*

**Dr. Seuss' *The Cat in the Hat***

Feb. 25–Mar. 26  
The Waterfront Theatre at Granville Island, Vancouver  
[www.carouseltheatre.ca](http://www.carouseltheatre.ca)

Bring your young children to the Waterfront Theatre to see the National Theatre of Great Britain's adaptation of Dr. Seuss' classic tale *The Cat in the Hat*, playing until late March. The titular character, The Cat and his Hat, brings fun, magic and mischief to the lives of The Boy, Sally and the Fish. Also offered are "relaxed" performances designed for children who benefit from calmer theatre, such as those with autism or sensory and communication disorders. Please visit the Carousel Theatre for Young People's website for specific showtimes.

\*\*\*



Photo by Tim Matheson.

▲ *The company of Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat (2013).*

**Vancouver Badass Film Festival**

Feb. 26, 2 p.m.  
Rio Theatre, Vancouver  
[www.vbaff.com](http://www.vbaff.com)

The Rio Theatre on Broadway will host the Third Annual Vancouver Badass Film Festival, which features the best in new extreme genre film from around the world. Starting at 2 p.m., over 23 short films and four feature films will screen, showcasing a variety of international and Canadian horror, neo noir, wild action, and avant-garde films. Festivities include interactive sessions with visionary filmmakers and cast, an awards gala and unforgettable spectacle and parties. Please visit the website, for tickets and showtimes.

\*\*\*

**Sounds Global in Surrey**

Feb. 26, 2:30 p.m.  
Surrey Arts Centre  
[www.vi-co.org](http://www.vi-co.org)

Since 2000, the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra has acted as a forum for the creation of a new musical art form, fusing, combining and transcending the cultural traditions of all of Canada's resident cultures. The Sounds Global concert will feature up-and-coming Canadian composers performing chamber music with a colourful fusion twist: a quintet

composed of Persian kamancheh and tombak, Chinese erhu, cello and voice, performing a repertoire that weaves together many different world music traditions. For tickets, please visit the Vi-Co website.

\*\*\*

**Ley Lines**

Feb. 27, 7 p.m.  
The Cinematheque, Vancouver  
[www.thecinematheque.ca](http://www.thecinematheque.ca)

The Cinematheque will screen Vancouver filmmaker Patricia Gruben's classic 1993 documentary essay, *Ley Lines* on Feb. 27. In her film, Gruben uses the mystical geographical concept of "ley lines" as a guiding metaphor to uncover her family history and explore the process of uncovering one's roots. The filmmaker will be in attendance. Preceding *Ley Lines* will be an experimental short film by Emily Carr University student Eva Pekarova. This meditative piece uses images of an immigrant family living in B.C. used to explore nature, tradition, and the displacement of peoples. Please visit the Cinematheque website for further information.

\*\*\*

**Coastal First Nations Dance Festival**

Feb. 28–Mar. 5  
Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia  
[www.damelahamid.ca](http://www.damelahamid.ca)

The Dancers of Damelahamid will put on the tenth anniversary of the Coastal First Nations Dance Festival at the Museum of Anthropology from Feb. 28 to Mar. 5. The festival is a celebration of the stories, songs and dances of the Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Coast of North America. The rich artistic practices of these artists will demonstrate that Indigenous practices are still vibrant and relevant today. The Special Festival Opening Event will take place on Mar. 2, 5–9 p.m. Please visit their website for tickets and detailed program schedules.

\*\*\*

**Robert Reich – The Rise of the Anti-Establishment: Where do we go from here?**

Mar. 1, 6:30–8:30 p.m.  
Old Auditorium, University of British Columbia  
[www.liu.arts.ubc.ca](http://www.liu.arts.ubc.ca)

The Liu Institute will host an evening with UC Berkeley Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy, Robert Reich, as he delivers his talk, *The Rise of the Anti-Establishment: Where do we go from here?* This talk is a part of the Lind Initiative in U.S. Studies examining the impact of President Trump's policies in America and around the world. Reich examines how economic fear and insecurity and a simmering resentment triggered a huge anti-establishment wave based on racism and xenophobia. For more information, check out their website.

\*\*\*

**Top Hat and Tales**

Mar. 2–12  
Presentation House Theatre, North Vancouver  
[www.phtheatre.org](http://www.phtheatre.org)

In March, the Presentation House Theatre will present *Top Hat and Tales*, a dazzling musical romance that follows a show business love relationship through time. Through song, poetic dance, novelty numbers, slapstick, intricate tap routines, and the support of a nostalgic soundtrack, the play tells the tale of the love between American entertainer Dik and Canadian waitress Mitzi as they take the audience with them on a comic journey from past, present and future. For tickets and further information, please visit their website.

\*\*\*

**Lost Souls of Gastown**

Beginning Mar. 3  
Cathedral Square, Vancouver  
[www.forbiddenvancouver.ca](http://www.forbiddenvancouver.ca)

Forbidden Vancouver will be hosting *The Lost Souls of Gastown*, a Gothic Theatre Adventure based on Vancouver's earliest and darkest history, beginning

in March, recurring Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Created by Vancouver storyteller Will Woods, a professional actor will guide you on this unconventional walking tour and interactive theatrical experience as you discover the early Gastown histories of the Great Fire, smallpox outbreaks and the unsolved gruesome murder of John Bray. Check out the Forbidden Vancouver website for tickets and detailed tour information.

\*\*\*

**A Little Night Music Orchestra: 45th Anniversary Concert**

Mar. 6, 7–10 p.m.  
Magee Theatre at Magee Secondary School, Vancouver  
[www.alnm.ca](http://www.alnm.ca)

A Little Night Music Orchestra is a community-based orchestra featuring emerging and amateur musicians. Now in its 45th year, this free concert will feature music by Ludwig van Beethoven, Gustav Holst, Carl Maria von Weber and Johann Nepomuk Hummel. Donations are welcome and proceeds will go to support music education. For further information, please visit their website.

\*\*\*

**The Middle East and the Refugee Crisis: An Evening with Robert Fisk**

Mar. 7, 7–9 p.m.  
Vancouver Playhouse  
[www.sfu.ca/publicsquare](http://www.sfu.ca/publicsquare)

Robert Fisk, the multi-award winning Middle East correspondent of the British newspaper *The Independent*, will be at the Vancouver Playhouse on Mar. 7 to provide audiences with a unique perspective of events happening in the Middle East and the origins of the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. Fisk will be joined by filmmaker Nelofer Pazira and the Greek representative to the United Nations Catherine Boura, to examine this complex crisis with far ranging implications for Canada and the world. Please visit the website for tickets and further information.

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# Cabot Yerxa, Renaissance Man of the Wild West (1883–1965)

On a recent visit to Desert Hot Springs (DHS), CA, in the Coachella Valley, not far from the well-known Palm Springs, we discovered Cabot Yerxa’s Pueblo Museum. It’s a museum that also functioned as Yerxa’s home. It was built in the Hopi-Pueblo style to honour Indian people. You can see the Hopi Kachina designs portrayed on the outside wall. Mainly self-built by Yerxa over a period of 24 years, the pueblo was still a work in progress up to his death. It opened as Cabot’s Old Indian Pueblo in 1945. Housing a lifetime collection of Yerxa’s American Indian and Alaska Native artifacts, we can also find objects of early desert homesteaders. There is an array of photographs and journals in which Yerxa documented his adventurous life, and there are examples of his own artwork.

Yerxa’s pueblo is a four-storey, 5,000 square foot structure. It has 160 windows, 65 doors, 30 rooflines and 35 rooms. It was

built from recycled wood and metal found in the desert area, and was adapted to the desert climate in several ways. Built into the side of a hill on his property, it is insulated against the extremes of cold and heat. The structure is on an east-west axis to take advantage of the rising and setting sun. Most of the windows face west for optimum airflow. Numerous small windows optimize airflow inside the house, and the design of the structure allows hot air to flow up and out of the building. Yerxa was a passionate desert naturalist, and could be described as an early environmentalist. Today, the museum’s electric power is supplied by 24 solar panels located on a nearby hillside.

He homesteaded his property in 1913 and discovered or rediscovered two aquifers apparently using a divining rod, one of the reasons he named his property Miracle Hill. The aquifers were in all probability discovered and used by the Indians who lived in the area for over 5,000 years.

One of the aquifers was a natural hot spring which has given rise to the many spas and resorts in the area and helped develop the city of DHS. The other was a cold aquifer, which to this day provides quality fresh water to DHS of which Yerxa was one of three co-founders.

Yerxa came from a family of entrepreneurs who had a pattern of making and losing fortunes. At the age of 14, he was managing a department in his father’s Minnesota wholesale and retail grocery store where he supervised 20 people. In 1899, at 16, Yerxa went to Alaska with a friend in the heady days of the Klondike Gold Rush. He purchased 50,000 cigars and related paraphernalia from money he had saved working at his father’s business and began selling them from a makeshift tent in Nome, Alaska. But he was also curious about Native Alaskans, and spent enough time with the local Inupiat people to learn and record their language. He later sold his recorded tran-

scripts to the Smithsonian Institute. The cigar story doesn’t end here. He went with his family to Cuba in 1902 where his entrepreneurial father became involved with real estate after the Spanish American War. Here he developed a mail order business for Cuban cigars.

Yerxa’s interest in native culture perhaps began with his birth on a Lakota Sioux reservation near the Canadian border in 1883 where his father ran a trading post. In 1903, he attended a unique gathering of Sioux, Arapahoe, Pawnee, Shoshone and Omaha Indians in the Black Hills of South Dakota. According to Yerxa, it was one of the last and greatest Sioux ceremonies. His Pueblo museum contains evidence of his human rights activism on behalf of Native Americans. It houses a folk art carving of the two-faced white man, and petitions to abolish the Bureau of Indian Affairs in their misguided attempts to “reeducate” Native Americans. As well, he gave lectures at the

pueblo on the way native people were treated.

Yerxa was also somewhat of an accomplished painter and spent a year studying art in Paris. He wrote prolifically and, in the local DHS newspaper alone, published 280 articles on desert homesteading which are the centerpiece of his book, *On the Desert Since 1913*.

He was civic minded as well, establishing in DHS: the Improvement Association, the library, and a chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Together with his second wife, Portia, he was deeply interested in spiritualism and was a founder of the Theosophical Society Lodge in DHS.

What will always be inspiring about Yerxa is his indomitable pioneering and inquisitive spirit.

For more photos, please visit [www.thelasource.com](http://www.thelasource.com)

DON RICHARDSON

Recipe by Selma van Halder



## Dutch Boerenkool

After over two years of recipes, it’s time for me to say goodbye to you. It’s been a pleasure writing for *The Source*, sharing my stories and learning about new cultures alongside of you. Over the past year I’ve been building my own business, in kitchen literacy coaching and training. The time has come to focus all my attention on my endeavour. If you could use an extra hand in moving away from prepackaged food and bought lunches, you can send them my way at Fare Kitchen Literacy. We can help with cooking skills, meal planning, optimizing your kitchen set up, reducing your food waste, etc.

I will leave you with one last recipe, taken from my own culture. The Dutch are known for their hearty winter fare. We have a tendency to mix any and all veg-

etables with mashed potatoes, so today I’ll share with you what can be called our national dish: boerenkool. This dish, whose name translates to farmer’s cabbage, is what I turn to when I want a taste of home. It basically consists of mashed potatoes and kale. Yes, we ate kale way before it was cool. Serve with all the fixin’s and some nice smoked sausage. Thank you for reading, and eet smakelijk!

**Ingredients**

- 2 small bunches of mature curly kale, shredded
- 3 large russet potatoes
- around 3 tbsp butter
- around 1/3 cup of milk
- salt and pepper

**Method**

1. Peel and quarter the potatoes and place on the bottom of a

- large pot. Add cold water to just cover potatoes. Salt the water.
2. Add the shredded kale on top and cover with a lid. Bring to a boil, and boil/steam for about 20 minutes or until potatoes are cooked through.
3. Drain the water from the pot and put back on the stove (no heat) without a lid to let the steam evaporate for a couple minutes.
4. Use a coiled potato masher to mash the potatoes and kale together, adding milk and butter to reach a nice consistency, and adding seasoning to taste.
5. Serve with sides of pickles, mustard, and some nice smoked pork sausage (like kielbasa).