

The feminine face
of Noh theatre
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Verbatim

An urban perspective

by LÉA TRICOIRE

"When you first arrive in a town, you see streets in perspective. Rows of nondescript buildings. Everything is unknown, virgin territory. A day will come when you'll have walked those streets, gone to the end of the perspectives, come to know those buildings, interacted with the people. Living in this city, you'll have walked along that street ten, twenty, one hundred times. After a while, it will belong to you because you have lived here."

This famous excerpt from *L'Auberge Espagnole* (*The Spanish Apartment*) could not better illustrate the way I felt when I took my first steps in Vancouver, a city whose streets I had traced about ten times on a map. For a whole year, I had time to picture a setting and conjure up architecture while wondering in which district I would like to live. I imagined how I would go to such and such a street to meet friends and go down another to go to work – a sort of blueprint I sketched according to the whims of my imagination.

I was living in Nantes, France, at the time, settled in a life that suited me perfectly. I had a pleasant job in an art gallery, I lived in a nice apartment and spent most of my evenings with friends. However, I had an irresistible itch to discover other things and try another kind of life.

And then, fiction became reality. My first steps in Vancouver meant feeling my way, discovering the eclecticism of Commercial Drive and the dizzying heights of downtown. Whatever I had imagined no longer existed, rows upon rows of streets created unknown perspectives without landmarks. Did I like the city at first sight? I don't know.

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Social challenges of language diversity

by YUSHENG CAI

When Andy Yan was born in Vancouver, his parents made the decision to teach him Cantonese, their heritage language, as well as English. Bilingual-ism, which wasn't common at the time, turned out to be an asset for Yan. Now a senior city planner, Yan fills the gaps between Chinese and English-speaking communities.

Few have the same luck as Yan. In 2016, the number of people across the country who re-

ported an immigrant mother tongue rose from 6.8 million in 2011 to 7.7 million, according to Statistics Canada. In Metro Vancouver, Chinese dialects, including Mandarin and Cantonese, outpaced Punjabi and became the fastest growing language, followed by Tagalog, Korean and Farsi.

In order to catch up with the broader society, however, immigrant families prioritize English or French over other languages.

"Social cohesion depends on social communication. And ob-

viously, if people are unable to communicate, that makes social cohesion much more difficult. So the extent to which people can learn English as a second language is very important," says Dan Hiebert, a UBC geography professor.

Bridging two communities

"A variety of institutes are impacted by increasing immigrant languages and this calls for more productive translation services," Hiebert says. "For example, libraries have to attempt to keep up with the populations that

they serve. You can extrapolate that eventually people that are coming from these different linguistic groups are going to need things like health care and services for the elderly. City planners who deal with social issues have to pay attention to this."

The reality is that resources aren't always readily available. Among highly-educated Iranian-Canadians, many end up jobs unrelated to their education or professional experience due to lack of language services for them.

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calypso music
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Cultural Spotlight

Underrepresented youth tell their stories

by JAKE MCGRAIL

disPLACEMENT, a media arts program run by the Access to Media Education Society (AMES), looks to give young people in marginalized communities the platform and support that they need to tell their stories.

Founded over 20 years ago, the Access to Media Education Society's goal is to provide access to media training and technology for people misrepresented or invisible in mainstream media. One of their current programs, disPLACEMENT, brings together youth who identify as indigenous, refugees or migrants and gives them the space to express themselves and tell their stories through film. A series of videos created and produced in teams of 3–5 over three consecutive weekends in October will be presented at a public screening at Robson Square on Dec. 8.

"I think that a lot of the myths and biases that hurt marginalized communities are perpetuated through mainstream media," says Deblekha Guin, the Executive Director of AMES. "This is about giving young peo-

ing aspects such as scriptwriting and visual storytelling.

"There's a lot of different things tackled in the videos," says Guin. "Some are about the process and difficulties of finding 'home' for migrants: what it's like to be a

"I am a newcomer to Canada," says Yas Pian, who moved from Iran in 2016. "I had a lot of experience with bad things in Canada. Before this, I could hardly find someone to hear my story, but now I've been

“I think that a lot of the myths and biases that hurt marginalized communities are perpetuated through mainstream media.

Deblekha Guin, Executive Director of Access to Media Education Society (AMES)

new arrival in Canada, the experience of getting here, and what people face once they get here, whether that's generalized racism or just trying to make their way in a country where they might not speak the language or have family connections."

There will also be videos from the perspective of youth with indigenous backgrounds, who after generations are still very much feeling the effects of the colonial oppression of

feeling better because I can see that there are people who care and will listen."

Pian heard about disPLACEMENT through a mentor he had worked with on a different film program, and is focused on creating the soundtrack for his group's film.

"The biggest aim of mine is showing the problems which do exist still," he says. "Many people ignore these problems, thinking that everyone has a good life here, but that's not necessarily the case for newcomers, indigenous people and others."

For Danica Denomme, another one of the youth involved in the program, disPLACEMENT is not only about sharing stories and sparking dialogue for those who watch the videos, it's also about the work that takes place within the group.

"I really feel a part of a team," says Denomme. "It's about filmmaking but it's also about building relationships and working in collaboration and producing something that we're proud of. I want everybody to succeed and I've seen that happen."

Probably the most important part of disPLACEMENT is that it gives a platform for self-expression that is not necessarily available for everyone.

"We all have brilliant stories to tell," says Denomme. "We are all artists. Creating a safe bubble where we can nourish and create art, that is very important. We all have a lot to say and everyone needs to hear stories that are diverse and different. If we don't create space for that, then that's another layer of silence."

For more information, please visit www.accesstomedia.org.



▲ DisPLACEMENT group on Galiano.

ple the tools to represent themselves and seize control over their own stories."

Their stories matter

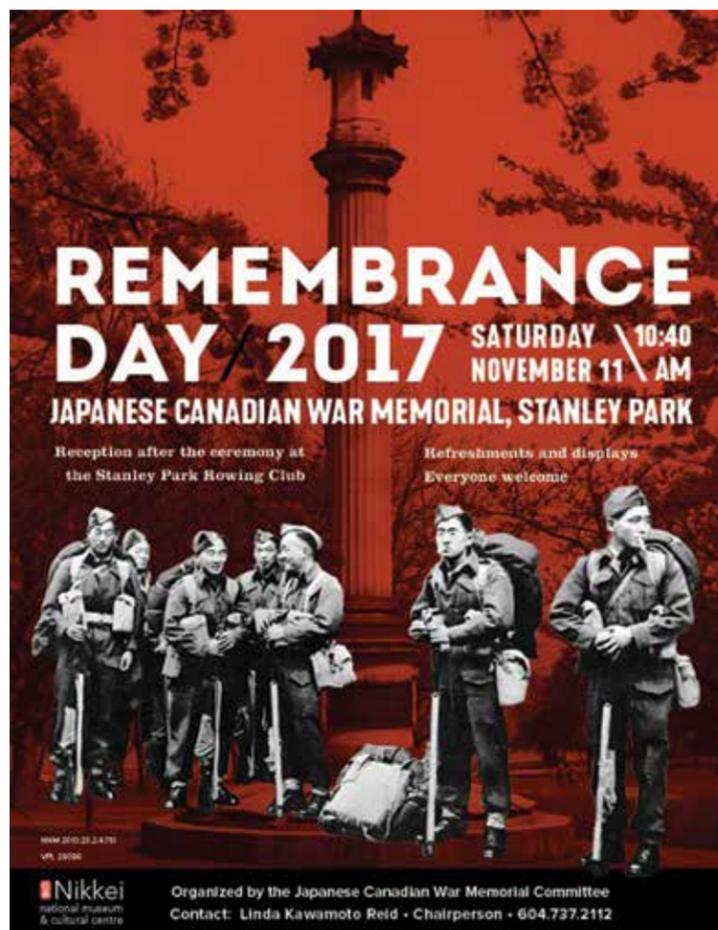
The program started in late September when the 24 young people involved in the project went on a three day trip to Galiano Island, where they shared their stories with each other and learned about some of the issues facing different communities, as well as filmmak-

their homeland. While each of the young people involved in the program brings different stories and experiences to the group, the overriding message that Guin wants this program to instill in them is the same.

"Your stories matter. Your perspectives matter. You have the capacity to convey them in a way that people are interested in seeing or listening to. I want people to walk away having more compassion and understanding for what some other communities are going through, as opposed to fighting over limited resources."

Feeling the effects

That message has resonated with the young people taking part in the program.



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“Spark”ing conversations about diversity

by COLLEEN ADDISON

Julie Ann Crommett wants to raise awareness about the lack of women and minorities both in front of and behind the camera.

Crommett tells a sad story: across the entertainment industry, women and minorities are being under-represented. Yet, she says, there's hope.

“A lot of times, we're defaulting to stereotypes or to the easiest shortcut for our brain around who's the leader or who's the most talented person,” says Crommett, a long-time employee of entertainment giants such as Google and Disney. “We need to be aware, so people can take action.”

Crommett plans to help bring this awareness to Vancouver in a talk given for SPARK Animation 2017's Business Symposium, held at VIFF Vancity Theatre on October 27. Her talk, *Unconscious Bias*, which starts at 4:30 p.m., will explore the reasons why being aware of how we think will play a crucial role in helping more women and minorities become part of the entertainment industry.

Unconscious bias

It's people's unconscious, rather than overt racism or sexism, Crommett points to as a major obstacle in the hiring of women and minority ethnic groups.

“[Unconscious bias is] the result of shortcuts that our brain takes because of the amount of data we have to process at any given moment,” Crommett clarifies.

She adds that in order to cope with the overwhelming amount of information, our brains process most of the data unconsciously.

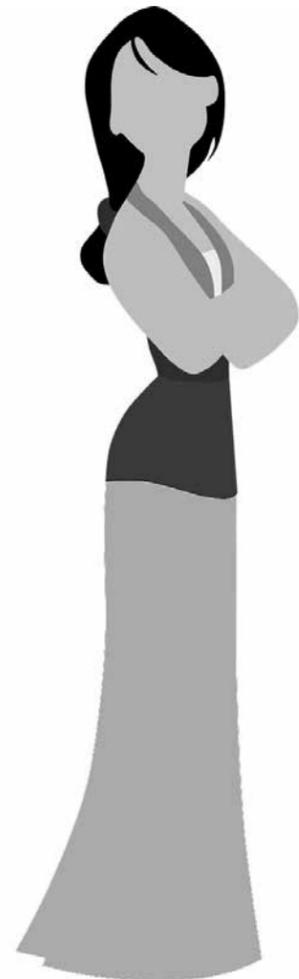


Photo courtesy of Julie Ann Crommett

▲ Spark Disney.

“Do they feel like they have a shot, first of all? I want to make sure that they feel that way, that they are welcome,” says Crommett. “And secondly, are we considering the same criteria all the way around? As we're thinking about their presence and about the work that, for me, is a great opportunity for every industry.”

Lifelong interest

This talk comes as a result of Crommett's career in the entertainment industry, in which she has continually explored the challenges faced by women and minorities.

“I'm Puerto Rican and Cuban and Latino [living] in the United States. I grew up in the American South, in Georgia, [so] I've always had experience with [being a minority]. So that's one thing. But it wasn't until I started working in the entertainment business, that I realized that this was a goal, a role you could take on in the industry,” says Crommett.

Crommett, now Disney's vice president of Multicultural Audience Engagement, previously worked for Google Entertainment where she was educator-in-chief. There, she was involved in the hiring of international writers and directors.

“I've worked with every type of content creator or every type of content,” Crommett states. “Looking at the consumer around the world – this is a multicultural consumer.”

Crommett's work led to her belief that awareness of industry hiring practices is key in helping combat prejudice.

“The great thing about this work is that you can work with people and hopefully get them jobs, and that we can supply the storytelling that is out there,” says Crommett. “That's when I realized that this is my calling: working with larger organizations and helping them to make change.”

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



Photo courtesy of Julie Ann Crommett

▲ Julie Ann Crommett works at diversifying the field of computer science.

By knowing about these biases and understanding how they influence our choices, people can create change. Crommett cites the example of Orchestra Philharmonic, which altered their audition process to make sure women were given an equal chance.

“[The Philharmonic] had the bright idea of putting carpet down on the stage. It was the sound of people's shoes that had unconsciously triggered the judges,” says Crommett. “Then it was about 50-50 hiring. And that is now the standard practice at all Philharmonic Orchestras around the world.”

Crommett emphasizes that now is a great time to combat these types of biases.

As more women are graduating from art and animation school than men, Crommett wants to ensure that these female graduates have a fair chance in the industry.

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Left Bank



Fight for the city

The real fight for beauty is the fight to take Vancouver back from big money

For weeks now Vancouver has been covered in ads urging us to “Fight for Beauty,” promoting a so-called exhibit downtown. With bus shelter ads, google ads, youtube ads, and countless full page newspaper ads, this is one of the most prominent marketing campaigns the city has seen in years. But what is really behind this supposed fight for beauty?

The ubiquitous slogan and magenta-coloured ads are a project of Westbank, a giant local and international development company run by Ian Gillespie. As the corporation behind projects like Woodward's, Vancouver House, and the just-approved 57-storey luxury tower at Burrard and Nelson, Westbank is remaking Vancouver's skyline.

Given the wall-to-wall publicity, I decided to go check out Westbank's “Fight for Beauty” myself. I dropped by on a rainy Saturday afternoon, taking my kids along after their swimming lessons. The exhibit is set up in a tent between the Shaw Tower and the opulent Pacific Rim Hotel. When we arrived, a valet was parking a Lamborghini.

Rather than anything culturally or artistically significant, what I found was a sterile and surprisingly small-scale “exhibit” that is little more than thinly-veiled PR for the developer. Most of installations are simple photographs or scale models of West Bank's developments. Each piece is accompanied by rather anodyne audio explanations, many of them narrated by Gillespie himself. Sure, there's a Shane Koyczan poem mounted high up on the wall, and a few sublime designs by the likes

THE REAL FIGHT FOR BEAUTY IS BY THE PEOPLE OF OUR CITY
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of the late Bing Thom. But the artistry, and the artists, are co-opted in this fight for corporate branding and profits – talent and beauty are subsumed by the banality of late capitalism.

The first piece is neon-lit poetry that reads as self-parody:

*When did we say yes to beauty being discarded deleted and demeaned?
 Where is the agreement that beauty is optional – Not urgent for us to thrive?
 Since when have we learned the price of everything yet know the value of nothing?*

Westbank's exhibit is not really about art or beauty; it's an exhibition of power and money, which debases the real struggle for beauty of artists and other creatives in Vancouver. West-

bank and its CEO have been significant donors to and supporters of Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson. In 2011 Robertson even held an election campaign fundraiser and press conference in the Fairmont Pacific Rim, which is also owned by Gillespie.

The whole PR offensive also erases or obscures the real damage that Westbank's development agenda has had on Vancouver neighborhoods. To help fill out the real picture, artists and other concerned residents are taking creative action. Local web developer Melody Ma has put together a parody website, The Real Fight for Beauty (therealfightforbeauty.ca):

“Through ‘Fight for Beauty’, Westbank is co-opting the arts for PR purposes, while artists are being economically and physically displaced in Vancouver due to unaffordability perpetuated by real estate development companies like Westbank.

“The Real Fight for Beauty” offers a glimpse into the world and real fights in Vancouver that ego-centric real estate developers are ignorant of. It is an attempt to express the evolution of how developers are taking over Vancouver and share the journey of regular people rising up to fight against “big brother's” agenda. The exhibition describes the enormous grassroots effort Vancouverites continue to pour into the ongoing real fight for beauty and affordability in their neighbourhoods, while Westbank astroturfs.”

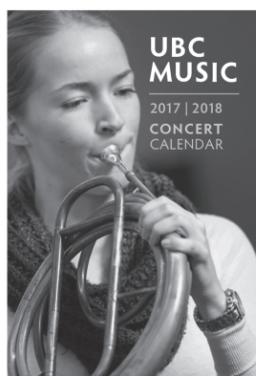
The website includes links to videos of artists decrying Westbank's hijacking of culture and to articles explaining the impact of some of the company's numerous luxury developments around the city.

As far as I've seen, Vancouver's mainstream media outlets have yet to publish a critical word about the “Fight for Beauty.” Humiliatingly, several publications have run reviews like they would any other pop-up art exhibition. This speaks to the kind of “triumph of advertising” Theodore W. Adorno warned of in both the media and cultural industries. With the city's remaining print dailies and weeklies so dependent on Westbank's advertising dollars, how likely are they to publish an expose of the hand that feeds them?

Indeed, a story published in the Vancouver Sun Oct. 19 that included criticism of Westbank's high pre-sale prices for a new condo development at Joyce Station was promptly removed from the Sun and all other Post-media websites.

The ugly truth is that big developers have far too much power over our city, and so much money to burn that their political influence extends into the realms of media, culture and the arts. We don't have to say yes to people in this city being discarded, deleted and demeaned. We can and must fight back. The real fight for beauty is the fight to take our city back from big money. ✂

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Celebrating Milestones, New Faces and Special Guests with the UBC School of Music 2017-2018 Concert Season

Vancouver - The UBC School of Music announces the 2017-2018 season of performances and special events by our ensembles, faculty, and guest artists. This year we are both celebrating past milestones and welcoming the future, including our new faculty member, distinguished clarinetist **Jose Franch-Ballester**.

80 • 70 • 50 • 20

80 Years

It's a big birthday year for UBC Music Professor Emeritus **Robert Silverman**. The School helps him mark this milestone with two performances: as concerto soloist with the **UBC Symphony Orchestra** on November 10, and as recital soloist in the **Wednesday Noon Hour** series on February 28, 2018. Looking to the future and the next generation of performers, we are delighted to announce the founding of **The Robert and Ellen Silverman Piano Concerto Competition at UBC**. The inaugural competition will be held in Roy Barnett Recital Hall on March 2, 2018.

70 Years

In 1947, the first academic courses were offered in the **new Department of Music**. In the earliest years, celebrated Canadian violinist **Harry Adaskin** (first department head at UBC) and pianist **Frances Marr Adaskin** began giving concerts at noon on Wednesdays, a tradition that has evolved into the current concert series.

50 Years

The Music Building opened in 1967. Our **Wednesday Noon Hour** series celebrates this anniversary throughout the year, starting with a special season launch concert on September 20. This concert features performances by **Terence Dawson piano, Eric Wilson, Laine Longton, and Oskar Falta cello**, accompanied by a chamber orchestra conducted by **Jonathan Girard**.

20 Years

The **Chan Centre** is celebrating its 20th anniversary with their own special season of concerts. The School of Music is pleased to salute this magnificent hall and important anniversary all season, including a celebration concert: **20 Years of Opera at the Chan Centre** with the **UBC Opera Ensemble** on April 3rd.

New Faces and Special Guests

New UBC School of Music faculty member and acclaimed Spanish-born clarinetist **Jose Franch-Ballester** will be featured as concerto soloist with **UBC Bands** on February 9, featured in the **Music on the Point** concert in a Mozart quintet with the **Borealis String Quartet** on October 20, and in a **Wednesday Noon Hour** concert with **Keith Hamel electronics** on January 31.

Special guest **UBC President Prof. Santa J. Ono** will join the **UBC Symphony Orchestra** as the narrator for Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, under the baton of conductor **Jonathan Girard** on December 2. The concert also includes works by Poulenc and Stravinsky.

On March 31, **UBC Choirs** and **UBC Symphony Orchestra** perform Bach's masterpiece *St John Passion*, conducted by **Graeme Langager** with guest **Derek Chester** as the Evangelist. This magnificent work is a fitting finale for a year that both honours the past and looks forward to the future.

A PDF of the entire season and up-to-date online event listings are available at www.music.ubc.ca.

Workplace meditation saves lives

by SUSAN HANCOCK

As a certified organizational change manager and global speaker, Wendy Quan combines workplace mindfulness meditation and change management techniques to build employee resiliency to company change.

“Mindfulness meditation is about hitting the pause button on your busy day to be present in the moment through meditation,” says Quan.

Research data provided by *HealthyFamiliesBC* suggest that 21.4 percent of the working population in Canada experience mental health issues such as fatigue, insomnia and depression, which have the greatest impact on workplace productivity. Approximately 530,500 people in B.C. are affected by mental health issues in the workplace every year. The economic cost of mental health in B.C. is at least \$6.65 billion per year.

While Quan believes that employees should take ownership of their health, she also thinks that organizations should support employees through health and wellness programs to help reduce mental health issues.

“Companies that are forward thinking – [the one’s that] really care about the well-being of their staff – recognize that they can contribute to the well-being of their employees by offering health and wellness programs,” says Quan.

Meditation improves employee engagement

In Quan’s white paper, *Meditation: A powerful change manage-*



▲ Wendy Quan, founder of the calm monkey, in the classroom.

ment tool, she shares results from the program she developed for Pacific Blue Cross while working as an organizational change manager. The program began in 2011 with 12 employees interested in meditation practices, but in 2014 when the Pacific Blue Cross transformed their business operations with the adoption of new technology, the numbers of participants jumped to 190.

“It was a Goliath project for Pacific Blue Cross, but throughout the very difficult and bumpy start, everyone was calm and committed to achieving a successful launch,” says Quan.

10 months later, the Pacific Blue Cross conducted an employee engagement survey. One of the questions asked of employees was if they would go the extra mile for the organization. Quan and her team were surprised, but excited to share that 98 percent of respon-

dents were still prepared to work hard to meet company goals.

“This statistic sent us through the roof. We’d been through a very difficult time, and 10 months later employees were still committed to the organization,” says Quan.

Progressive organizations like Google, the City of Vancouver and Vancity, to name just a few, have adopted mindfulness meditation practices through Quan’s business, the Calm Monkey.

“Giving employees the space to be in the present and think calmly helps them make better decisions,” says Quan. “When people are self-aware, they’re mindful of what they are saying, which reduces conflict and encourages people to work better together.”

Kulli Yee is an administrator for retirement registered savings accounts at Vancity. She’s also a workplace mindfulness medita-

tion facilitator for the organization. Yee is one of six employees that have been trained by Quan to create three different lunchtime groups across the organization. 15 months prior to the program, Yee only practiced in the privacy of her home. Now she enjoys integrating her passion with colleagues at work. Yee currently has 35 employees attending her weekly meditation session, but attendance does fluctuate depending on people’s work schedules.

“I never thought this was something that would happen at my workplace,” she says. “It’s very empowering. I feel much more engaged with my organization because I feel I’m able to help other people.”

Meditation builds diversity and inclusion in the workplace

There are still a few misconceptions about meditation. Some

people identify it as being religious or spiritual, while others see it as new-age therapy that encourages escapism. Quan explains how these ideas couldn’t be further from the truth. Workplace meditation is actually about being in the present and isn’t connected to religion. The amazing part of workplace meditation for Quan is that it creates shared experience, or what she describes as an unexpected sense of community in a diverse group of people.

“Workplace mindfulness meditation welcomes everyone regardless of their ethnicity, religious beliefs, culture or age,” says Quan. ✍

Quan is scheduled to speak at the Project World/ Business Analysis World Conference in Vancouver on October 31. For more information, please visit www.pmbaconferences.com.

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Tales told through Taiwanese comic books

by VINH NGUYEN

Nick Stember, a translator and historian in the field of Chinese comic books has been working closely with the Ministry of Culture in Taiwan and the Grayhawk Agency on the Books from Taiwan project. He has been translating excerpts from notable Taiwanese comics and hopes to catch a publisher’s interest.

Stember will be delivering his talk *Telling Tales: Tradition and Historiography in Taiwanese Comics* on Oct. 27 at SFU Harbor Centre.

Chinese comics

The definition of the term “comics” in the context of China is complex and rich in history. It varies from continuous art sequences to traditional ink paintings or satirical drawings.

“There’s obviously a long history of sequential art in China, with things like the Buddhist cave paintings at Dunhuang, completed during the Tang dynasty, or the many illustrated novels that have survived from the Ming,” says Stember. “Even traditional Chinese ink paintings often tell a story, to paraphrase one of my mentors, a fisherman is never just a fisherman. But more narrowly defined, comics as topical (often satirical) drawings arrived in China 150 years ago, with the opium wars,” he adds.



▲ A page from Taiwanese comics.

Comic by HuanGuang Min

According to Stember, the earliest Chinese comic strips date back to the late 1920s, when *lianhuanhua*, or “linked picture books” started to appear.

The art styles expressed in those comics changed through time, says Stember. Chinese cartoonists in the 1920s and 30s based their work on the art styles seen in magazines like *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*.

During the Mao Zedong years, comic books suffered a reversal, especially on the mainland.

“In mainland China, Jiang Qing, the wife of Mao Zedong, who spearheaded the cultural organs during the Cultural Revo-

lution (1966–1976), also famously disliked comics and animated films with talking animals, so those mostly disappear around this time too. Everything gets very mimetic, very political. In Taiwan, though, even though the country was still technically at war with the mainland, things weren’t nearly as bad with censorship, so there was tons of pulp stuff being produced. This was also true in Hong Kong, where *wuxia* comics were particularly successful,” he says.

In 1978, there was a surge of various comics in China such as *Star Wars*, *Ninja Turtles* and *The Man from Atlantis*.

“Artistically, the 1980s are a really interesting time in the PRC [People’s Republic of China], because artists were getting influenced by all kinds of things, and seem to have been more willing to experiment,” says Stember. “There was also this golden moment that happened before people could afford TVs or going to the movie theatre, which meant that they read comics instead.”

Lianhuanhua, also known as *xiaorensu*, or “kids’ books,” in the form of superhero comics or graphic novels, have adapted similar art styles seen in popular operas and novels, which reach the closest definition of modern day comics, says Stember.

The difference between Chinese art style in comics com-

pared to its Western counterpart is hard to distinguish, says Stember.

“Definitely nowadays artists borrow a lot from manga and anime, so much so that it can be hard to tell where a comic was made without knowing who drew it,” he says. “The manga style of enormous eyes and pointed chins and everything else has really taken over in Asia. But earlier political cartoons borrowed more from the West than the East.”

Local interest

There haven’t been many Taiwanese comics translated into English to date, says Stember.

“So far we’ve had some success in France, and I’m optimistic that we’ll be able to build on this success in other language markets as well. You can actually read all of the samples I’ve translated online by going to the official website for the project,” he says.

Talking about his work in Chinese comics, Stember says that the comics came first, then the Chinese language much later.

“I’ve been a comics fan since I was a kid, mostly for the art,” says Stember. “[...]I somehow ended up double majoring in computer science and Chinese, and eventually just Chinese.” ✍

For more information, please visit www.sfu.ca/davidlamcentre/events and www.booksfromtaiwan.tw.

Artist showcases Latin American women in new exhibition

by NAOMI TSE

In an effort to pay homage to her Latin American heritage, Clarissa Argueta will be showcasing her acrylic paintings titled “Women in Colour” at Place Des Arts in Coquitlam, Oct. 13–Nov. 10.

Argueta has been drawing or painting for as long as she can remember. After completing a MFA in graphic design from the University of Illinois in Chicago, she moved to Vancouver in 2002. Originally from El Salvador, her artwork centres on celebrating her ancestral heritage and the mysticism found in Latin American idiosyncrasies, popular culture and folklore, by showcasing indigenous women in portrait style paintings.

“My colours are very vibrant, there is a very cheerful feeling to the paintings,” says Argueta.



Photo courtesy of Clarissa Argueta

▲ Clarissa Argueta, artist from El Salvador

“It’s very celebratory of my culture and I showcase indigenous women as the axis of this magical universe.”

Not only is Argueta interested in painting Latin American women, she is also fascinated by the ancient textiles woven by indigenous communities and the intriguing symbolism that lie within them.

“To me, painting the women who create them [the textiles] is like a tribute to their craftsmanship and it’s a privilege to be able to participate in this heritage. This is very important to me as a Latin American,” says Argueta.

Textile symbolism

The textiles that Argueta speaks of include garments such as traditional blouses, skirts, waistbands as well as shrouds or blankets that are usually woven from natural materials such as cotton or wool. The material is also dyed with natural dyes. The craftsmanship of each garment, says Argueta, represents the honour and pride of the people who created them and each design is unique and requires pre-planning before the weaving process can begin. Each garment can take weeks to months to create.

“All symbols chosen are pre-planned and try to communicate an idea,” she says. “A young woman might create a traditional blouse, or huipil, to communicate what village she comes from, her marital status and the rank she holds in her community. The bottom line is to show the pride of the weaver and how good they are.”



Photo courtesy of Clarissa Argueta

▲ Girl with shroud.

Argueta explains that the indigenous communities try to keep their weaving traditions alive and the skills are passed on from one generation to the next, as they have been doing for thousands of years.

“It’s like a whole story when they wear these garments and you can tell who they are and where they belong, just by looking at their huipil,” she says.

The exhibition

Argueta describes her paintings as minimalistic, in an effort to focus on the beauty of the women and their garments while illustrating their resilience and efforts in keeping their traditions alive.

“Now that I live abroad, I’m not exposed to this rich and colourful visual stimuli [textiles] anymore. You could say I long for that and these and many other ancient traditions that remain very close to my heart,” says Argueta.

For her upcoming exhibition, Argueta will also be showcasing



Photo courtesy of Clarissa Argueta

▲ The nap.

some artwork with a Day of the Dead theme.

“It’s a very fascinating concept to me, and all the mysticism and symbolism behind life and death as a transition and not an ending. Therefore, the equal importance of celebrating and paying tribute to both events,” says Argueta.

Argueta, who also works as a visual artist and visual arts instructor, is eager to share her Hispanic roots with the Canadian community through her artwork. ✉

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

► “Verbatim” from page 1

Each new day was a challenge to explore new districts and go ever farther. I went to see places with names I found in a travel guide book: Stanley Park, Kitsilano Beach, Davie Village... all those areas were materializing as I walked. Little by little, the patchwork started forming a whole that was both logical and diverse. Bridges were emerging between areas that my brain was able to reconcile with reality. Markers were slowly recognized. I became able to link point A to point B.

After a few weeks, the city’s persona slowly began to take on a distinct shape. If the downtown skyscrapers left me lukewarm at first, they were

now highlighting the dichotomy of the city, between nature and metropolis. The simultaneous presence of the neighbouring forest, the mountains and the sea fascinated me. Was I beginning to like Vancouver? I think so.

The city was revealing itself to me, all the while remaining foreign. I still had to own it. There were many more streets to explore and secret places to discover. When does a foreign city begin to feel familiar? As an expatriate, I found it difficult to feel at home in this city: Vancouver was a mystery that I could not fathom. For the first time I experienced the unknown, foreignness in its most subtle form. It is easy to travel, to discover

other parts of the world and to see their culture, but here it seemed more difficult to really feel and grasp it – in a word, to experience it. Contrary to travel, expatriation demanded that I

set aside my cultural patterns, my lifestyle and my consumption habits in order to adapt to a new environment.

After the discovery phase, I then had to move on to the re-

construction phase. I had to make these streets mine. Making this foreign place my new home was not easy. However, a daily routine was established after a few months. Encounters with people increased, offering new opportunities for discoveries and also the start of new habits. After a few months, I had already crossed that street umpteen times, noticed that tiny detail on the facade of that building and started to sprinkle my memories at random across the city. I was beginning to inhabit the city and add my own colours to it. Was I starting to feel at home in Vancouver? I do think so. ✉

Translation by Louise Dawson



Photo by tiducas000

▲ Vancouver, where mountains meet metropolis.



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Photo courtesy of Brothers Dressler

▲ Lars Dressler and Jason Dressler, Brothers Dressler, Branches Chandelier, 2009, white oak.

Nordic influence through design

by KEVIN VERGEL

Curators Rachel Gotlieb and Michael Prokopow look to reveal the connection between Scandinavian and Canadian design in their upcoming exhibit, *True Nordic*, running Oct. 28, 2017–Jan. 28, 2018 at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

True Nordic considers Scandinavian social and design principles and how the aesthetics of the region influenced the development of industrial design and ar-

change, Canada's design museum in Toronto. They often question the role objects play in affirming and shaping identity, whether it be personal or national.

"The idea of the exhibition was a consequence of a conversation we had at Studio North – an installation at the Interior Design show in Toronto curated by Rachel – about a Canadian chair that looked as though it was made in Denmark. In talking about the chair and about the larger question of aesthetic influence, we decided to look more carefully into

“ We wanted to bring attention to the critical and creative work by Canadian designers and makers that demonstrated an awareness of the Scandinavian aesthetic culture.

Michael Prokopow, curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery

tisanal crafting in Canada. The exhibit will display a wide range of mediums from multiple designers including Niels Bendtsen, Bocci, Karen Bulow, Kjeld and Erica Deichmann, Thor Hansen, Andrew Jones, Janis Kravis, molo, Carl Poul Petersen, Rudolph Renzius and Marion Smith.

"What is great about the exhibition is that it is interdisciplinary, meaning visitors will get to see work by artisans trained in wood, glass, clay, metal and textiles," says Gotlieb.

Scandinavian design principles

The vast popularity of Danish Modern and Scandinavian design from the 1950s, '60s and onward turned on the ideas of simpler and more progressive modes of living. Prokopow says that while in many parts of the world Scandinavian modern design is appreciated for its style, in Canada there is a deeper appreciation for the use of materials that can be found in a similar climate and topography.

"Canadian designers who adopted and adapted Scandinavian and Nordic aesthetic influences did so because the principles inherent in objects from the Nordic – simplicity, integrity, calm and natural palettes, thoughtful use of materials – resonated given the similarities of natural conditions between Canada and the Nordic," says Prokopow.

Seat of inspiration

Gotlieb and Prokopow are long-time friends and as curators and historians in the field have both shared a passion for Canadian craft and design. Each has served as curator of the Design Ex-

the question of what role Scandinavian and Nordic design and craft culture played in Canada within the historic and contemporary frame," says Prokopow.

Canadian talent, Scandinavian design

Even though the showcase features Scandinavian design principles, *True Nordic* aims to highlight Canadian artists. The exhibition displays works by Nordic émigrés to Canada or artists who were trained in that



Photo by Toni Hoffenscheid

▲ Lotte Bostlund, Bostlund Industries Lamp, c. 1964, ceramic with paint, spun nylon.

part of the world, and also by designers who adopted the principles, stylistic emphasis and material practices of the region.

"We wanted to bring attention to the critical and creative work by Canadian designers and makers that demonstrated an awareness of the Scandinavian aesthetic culture," says Prokopow. ✎

For more information, please visit www.vanartgallery.bc.ca.



MOSAIC Settlement Services
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Francophone Community Connection (English and French)

What the Anglophone and others would like to know about the Francophone culture such as history, values, sports, food, government structure, population, economy, international cooperation, festivals and geography.

- 🕒 Fridays, November 3 & 10, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
- 📍 MOSAIC #200-7134 King George Blvd, Surrey
- ☎ Faustin 778 591 9334 ext 105 || fbilikano@mosaicbc.org

Culture Connection Conversation for Korean Speakers

- 🕒 November 2, 6 & 9, 10 am – 12 pm
- 📍 Brentwood Community Resource Centre, 2055 Rosser Ave, Burnaby
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PR Card Renewal (Korean)

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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.

A haunting Japanese story of heartbreak

Photo by Trevan Wong



by MASHA RADEMAKERS

Master practitioners of the Japanese art form Noh combine their strengths with professional opera singers in *Komachi Visited*, an East meets West performance of a heart-rending Japanese story. The Source talked with librettist and director Colleen Lanki, scholar of Asian theatre and a Noh practitioner herself, about the challenges of creating a Noh piece for a Canadian audience.

"When I first saw Noh performed in Japan, I was astounded. When a Noh actor is moving three steps, he is doing it a hundred percent. It is so strong, it's stunning," says Lanki, who decided twenty years ago that she wanted to move to Japan and learn the ancient art.

Becoming a master

Lanki trained in Noh dance and chant under Kita Noh School master Ōmura Sadamu, whose daughter is the drummer of *Komachi Visited*. "To be an expert in Noh you have to start as a child, and so I am definitely not an expert. A Noh actor has

to memorize more than hundred plays, with different costumes, music, and chants. They mostly reach a highly professional level when they are in their fifties," Lanki says. Despite this, many amateur Noh groups enter their local stages as a hobby. "These people study and perform Noh because they like the history. And a funny fact is that the chanting is a very good breathing practice as well," she says.

With stylized gestures and exhilarating chants, Noh plots typically hinge on two main characters who perform on a minimalist stage backed by a chorus, a flute player and a drummer. Noh theatre was never done with opera before, until award-winning Iranian-Canadian composer Farshid Samandari was inspired by the talents of the famous Noh player Yamai Tsunao. He asked Lanki to create a new libretto in which Tsunao would star next to a soprano, Vancouver's own Heather Pawsey.

Just like Noh, chamber opera revolves around a singing chorus, a small musical ensemble, and a few lead characters. "Both chamber opera and Noh theatre are performed by very devoted

musicians, who train all their live to become a master in their own traditional disciplines," says Lanki.

"I took pieces of poems and traditional Noh plays about Ono-no-Komachi, who is a really famous poet of 9th century Japan. She wrote passionate poetry, sometimes with herself in the main role. I chose to base the story on the heartbreaking Noh play about her in which she blatantly demands a lover to sleep for hundred days next to her

house before he can be her lover. But on the last day, the lover dies and the two could never be together," says Lanki.

Gender roles change

The Noh play starts when the ghost of the lover starts haunting the ghost of the woman. "Both of the lovers make each other miserable, a thing that sometimes also happens in normal life," says Lanki, laughing. "He won't let her go to heaven. He won't let her rest, because she

hurt him so badly." In the chamber opera, each of the two lovers will gradually switch from Japanese to English and vice versa, which is symbolic of their gradual deepening of understanding for each other.

"The composer did a wonderful job of combining the two sounds. There are times that Noh takes the lead, and times when opera takes the lead," says Lanki.

Although Noh traditionally was a male art form, in the last century women started to work as professional actors as well. "We have two professional female singers and a drummer, and it is great to see the gender divisions change over the years. All these singers are, however, from the Komparu school, because in other schools female professionals are not that accepted yet," says Lanki. ✎

Koyoi Komachi/Komachi Visited will be performed Oct. 26–28 in the Cultch Historic Theatre. www.thecultch.com.

On Oct. 19, there will be an evening discussion about *Komachi Visited*, where actor Yamai Tsunao will provide a short demonstration of Noh, info@tomoearts.org.



▲ Heather Pawsey and Yamai Tsunao in *Komachi Visited*.

► "Language Diversity" from page 1

"They were registered, for example, doctors, nurses or architects. They are very well-respected [in Iran]. Some of them come here, and they have to start from scratch. Their documents have to be approved so they go to a lot of examinations," says Nassreen Filsoof, president of Canadian Iranian Foundation. "The professional language is totally different in Iran than here. What happens is that they take

at the age of two, his parents urged him to learn English, even at the cost of their mother tongue Tagalog.

"My parents pushed me really hard to improve my English. I did lose my fluency in Tagalog. I can understand it but I find it very difficult to speak it in most circumstances," says Habacon.

He suggests immigrant families retain their heritage languages at the same time. Yan agrees and argues that instead of compelling individuals, governments should do a better job to foster social cohesion.

"Translation services are inadequate towards the need of the population in Chinatown. How the government tries to capture feedback is not there to offer people who speak Chinese or are afraid of using English

[an opportunity] to add to the conversation," Yan says.

A pull of mother tongues on immigrant families

For Yan, it's troublesome to think immigrants need to immediately learn French or English.

"That's a really big problem because it breaks away from the fact that our strength is in that diversity," he says.

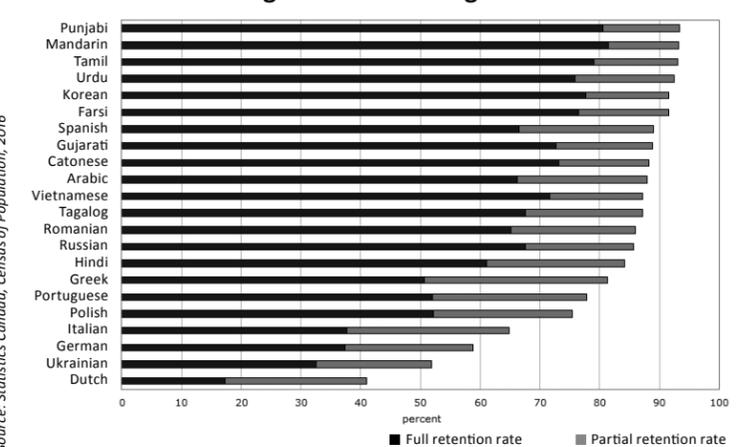
For immigrant families like Filsoof's, to maintain that strength can be painful. Filsoof has tried for decades with little luck to teach Farsi to her children, who are now grown-ups struggling to pass their heritage to the next generation.

"I tried very hard to speak Farsi at home, and I still do. But my children have difficulty expressing themselves in Farsi. They speak something in Farsi but [if] they are stuck on it, they use the English word. In what they are speaking, you may hear a lot of English words," says Filsoof.

She hopes there will be a Farsi school to keep the language alive. The same can be said about Mandarin. As Habacon points out, it's unbelievable that Vancouver only has one public school with a Mandarin immersion program.

"That doesn't make any sense in a city with so many Mandarin speakers, so many people of Chinese descent. We have such strong connection to China in so many different ways, and yet there's only one [Mandarin immersion program]," says Haba-

Retention of 22 immigrant mother tongues



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2016

con. "There's no policy in place that actually encourages more linguistic diversity, to ensure our communities are able to sustain the diversity that we have."

No one is a bad Canadian

Sherry Yu is a senior research associate for Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Media in B.C. Study. Her approach to increasing immigrant languages depends on ethnic media to facilitate dialogues between communities.

"It can be a barrier at the beginning when newcomers don't speak English at all. There's a significant limitation for those people to interact with individuals and the broader society whose official languages are English and French," says Yu. "But that doesn't mean they can't function as citizens of Canada. If ethnic media provide enough information of what's going on,

this assists their integration and settlement."

For Yu, social cohesion comes in two ways.

"It's not that immigrants are expected to integrate to the broader society, but there's also a fair share of responsibility on the broader society to pay attention to these new members of the society and be able to integrate to their cultures as well," she says.

Both Yu and Yan see language barriers as a potential opportunity.

"You may not be able to speak English, but that doesn't mean you are going to become a bad Canadian. [One's immigrant language] is something that one can use throughout one's life, and it ensures they can work in a global economy. Similarly, we have to ensure that we keep those avenues of learning English and French," says Yan. ✎



▲ Andy Yan, urban planner and director of The City Program at SFU.

[examinations] a few times and become disappointed."

Language barriers are a common concern in all immigrant communities. Alden E. Habacon is a diversity and inclusion strategist of Filipino descent. When he moved to Canada



▲ Alden E. Habacon, diversity and inclusion strategist.

Photo courtesy of Andy Yan

Photo courtesy of Alden E. Habacon

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Speaking through calypso music

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Kobo Town, Toronto-based band fronted by founder-songwriter Drew Gonsalves on ukulele and vocals, will perform its own blend of calypso, dancehall and reggae music Nov. 2, 2017 at the Evergreen Cultural Centre in Coquitlam. Originally from Trinidad, Gonsalves writes songs based on places and events specific to the Caribbean and its history, but also incorporates themes and topics he feels are universal.

Born and raised in Port Of Spain, Trinidad, Gonsalves moved to Ottawa as a teenager. His cultural and musical knowledge of calypso – a style native to Trinidad – runs deep, but he says it wasn't until he came to Canada that he really garnered an interest in this style of music.

and provable impact that reggae has had."

Gonsalves describes stylistic similarities between calypso and its Caribbean cousins, but notes a distinct wit and playfulness with the lyrical content of this Trinidadian style in particular.

"The thing that I find that marks calypso a lot is its cleverness, humour, double entendre and storytelling," says Gonsalves. "Even when calypso addresses a very serious matter, usually it does it with a sense of humour. There's a real playfulness with words, topics and subjects. It's a real hallmark of calypso."

From past to present

On his forthcoming album, *Where the Galleon Sank*, Gonsalves carries the listener through a kind of history of the Caribbean, accessing the past through different stories, places and events, both current and past. Gonsalves is well

“The thing that I find that marks calypso a lot is its cleverness, humour, double entendre and storytelling.

Drew Gonsalves, singer, songwriter and ukulele player

"I am influenced a lot by old-time calypso, and I grew up surrounded by it in Trinidad, but I wasn't really interested by it. I guess, like a lot of middle-class suburban Trinidadians, my taste was for foreign things," says Gonsalves, laughing.

A bookish, introverted teenager at the time, Gonsalves notes that it was through reading about Trinidad and the rest of the Caribbean that compelled him to discover music originating from the area.

"It was really only in Canada that I discovered old-time calypso, hunting through record stores, amassing a collection of it," says Gonsalves.

Calypso music

Gonsalves says that while reggae outside of Jamaica hit its height in popularity in the 1970s and early '80s, the dancehall genre is currently influenc-

aware of the often dark, colonial history of the Caribbean; it's one of the major themes of the album, and it's the deep impact of this history that allows Gonsalves to treat the topic through current events and places.

"It's a region of the world that has suffered deeply in the past and still bears those wounds and scars today," says Gonsalves. "A lot of the songs [on the album] take their reference points from different moments in history or places emblematic of the history of the Caribbean."

Gonsalves says that his own songwriting, and calypso more broadly, is hardly unrelatable, even if the music or the topics that he takes on might seem distant.

"I think a lot of people are maybe unfamiliar with the particular details of the history of the Caribbean, even if it's an often-visited place, but at the same time



▲ Calypso musician Drew Gonsalves.

ing chart-toppers from Drake to Ed Sheeran. He notes the calypso genre, unlike a few of its Caribbean contemporaries, has not seen the same kind of rise in popularity outside of Trinidad in quite some time.

"There have been different times that calypso has enjoyed a heyday, when it was popular beyond the Caribbean in the 1920s to 1930s, and in the early 1950s, but calypso has not the reach

I find that in writing about particular places, events and things, that they're part of a wider human experience, so they're not really beyond the reach of communities here to relate to them," he says. ✍

For more information on the event & Kobo Town, please visit www.evergreenculturalcentre.ca and www.kobotown.com.

Cultural Calendar

October 24–November 7, 2017

by SIMON YEE

"By the pricking of my thumbs," as William Shakespeare once wrote, "Something wicked this way comes!" It is Halloween once again and there are many haunted houses to visit, ghosts to see, and pumpkin-spiced lattes to drink. But if you're not into the spooky season, that's okay: there are many other cultural events to check out around town, from art exhibition openings to musical operas, film festivals, evening conversations and more. Have a safe and happy Halloween everyone!

Potter's House of Horrors

Until Oct. 31
12530 72nd Avenue, Surrey
www.pottershouseofhorrors.com

Potter's Farm & Nursery, a local garden centre in Surrey supplying plants, pottery and garden gifts, converts into the Potter's House of Horrors every October. Featuring terrifying custom haunted houses loaded with twisty turns, horrific surprises and heaps of fun, their goal is to ensure patrons have the best time possible while also hoping to provide a delightfully frightful Halloween experience. There are two versions of the haunted house, one for the family, where the scariness factor is reduced, from 7–10 p.m., and an adult version after 10 p.m. For more information, please visit their website.

Heart of the City Festival

Oct. 25–Nov. 5
Downtown Eastside, Vancouver
www.heartofthecityfestival.com

For the 14th time, the Heart of the City Festival returns to Vancouver to host over 100 events at over 50 venues throughout the Downtown Eastside until Nov. 5. The festival serves as a high impact, bridge-building force that gives voice to the Downtown Eastside and its low income residents, cultural communities and neighbourhoods. The theme of the 2017 Festival, "Honouring Women of the Downtown Eastside," pays tribute to women from all walks of life in the Downtown Eastside past and present. For a complete schedule of events, please check out their website.

Halloween at the Cannery

Oct. 28–29, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Gulf of Georgia Cannery,
Richmond
www.gulfofgeorgiacannery.org

The Gulf of Georgia Cannery is haunted by strange noises, ghosts and screams. Dare to explore the haunted house, encounter ghoulish cannery characters along the way and see what tricks you have to play to get some treats at the Cannery! For further information about the Cannery's spooktacular Halloween weekend, please visit their website.

The Limits of Whiteness: Iranian Americans and the Everyday Politics of Race

Oct. 29, 4–6 p.m.
SFU Harbour Centre, Vancouver
www.sfu.ca/humanities-institute/public-events

In this talk held at SFU Harbour Centre, University of Toronto sociologist Neda Maghboleh shares the under-theorized, and sometimes-heartbreaking, story of how Iranian-Americans move across a white/not-white colour line. By challenging underlying assumptions in the sociology of race/ethnicity and immigration, *The Limits of Whiteness* offers new evidence for how and which "white" groups might become "brown," and what such a transformation says about race in North America today. Check out the SFU website for more details.

Vancouver Jewish Film Festival

Nov. 2–12
Fifth Avenue Cinemas and
Norman Rothstein Theatre,
Vancouver
www.vjff.org

The 29th annual Vancouver Jewish Film Festival will be screening some of the latest cinematic offerings from or about the Jewish community. There will be films showcasing many subjects including an interview with David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, stories from a group of young adventurers to the Himalayas and a documentary about renowned Batsheva dancer Bobbi Jene Smith. For tickets and showtimes, check out the festival's website.



▲ Films from VJFF showcase the Jewish community.

City Opera Vancouver & Pacific Opera Victoria: Missing

Various days between
Nov. 3 and 11
The York Theatre, Vancouver
www.cityoperavancouver.com

City Opera Vancouver with Pacific Opera Victoria will present the world premiere of *Missing* at The York Theatre in Vancouver. With libretto by distinguished First Nations playwright Marie Clements, the show will address the national crisis and devastation of Canada's missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. Set between Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and B.C.'s notorious Highway of Tears, this deeply moving drama follows the fate of two young women, one Indigenous and one not, whose lives become tragically intertwined. Filled with driving percussion and stirring arias, this pivotal new opera will be performed in English and Gitksan to music by Juno award-winning composer Brian Current. For tickets and showtimes, please visit the website.

Taken at Midnight

Various days between

Nov. 3 and 26
Jericho Arts Centre, Vancouver
www.jerichoartscentre.com

Jericho Arts Centre will be putting on *Taken At Midnight*, a play examining the life of the celebrated lawyer Hans Litten, his cross-examination of Hitler in court in 1931 and his courageous mother's attempts to secure his release after his arrest by the Nazis in 1933. Litten is famed for the brilliance with which he defends opponents of the Nazi movement. When he calls Hitler as the star witness in the trial of a band of murderous Nazi paramilitaries, the politician feels the full force of Litten's intellect, wit and courage. Two years later, Hans is arrested, held without trial and tortured, leaving his indomitable mother to confront his captors at enormous personal risk. For tickets and showtimes, check out their website.

Vancouver Tea Festival

Nov. 4–5, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical
Chinese Garden, Vancouver
www.vancouverteafestival.ca

The fourth annual Vancouver Tea Festival returns to the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden and surrounding area on Nov. 4–5. Come explore the world of tea, interact with like-minded tea lovers and taste dazzling examples of one of the world's most beloved beverages. There will be a marketplace of tea purveyors, offering a vast variety of teas to suit all tastes and budgets, as well as plenty of tea tastings, presentations and workshops throughout the festival. Check out the festival's website for more information.



▲ Taste a world of teas.

The Texas Troubadours

Nov. 8, 8 p.m.
Chan Centre for the
Performing Arts, University
of British Columbia
www.chancentre.com

Sharing the stage at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts for the first time as part of the Texas Troubadours project, the musical trio of Ruthie Foster, Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Carrie Rodriguez will celebrate the proud songwriting tradition of their southern roots. Foster's powerhouse voice, Gilmore's distinctive song interpretation and Rodriguez' spirited fiddle with gorgeous vocals will come together in an unforgettable evening of music with a little bit of grit and a whole lot of heart. Check out the Chan Centre website for tickets and showtimes.

Recipe by Jen dela Luna

Semla

Semla (or semlor, if there are many) is a traditional sweet dessert commonly found throughout the Scandinavian region. Historically, it began as a bread bun soaked in a bowl of warm milk, which has since evolved into a more refined pastry. The roll is typically a brioche-style sweet yeast bread, flavoured with cardamom and filled with a pastry or an almond cream. The resulting dessert, while delicious, is incredibly heavy. Now that I'm adapting it for the upcoming holiday season, it makes more sense to have it be lighter, yet still incredibly flavourful. Bring your creation to all the holiday meals you'll be attending (or making).

With that in mind, I decided to create a semla-profiterole

touching the cream so that a skin does not form. Refrigerate the mixture to cool and thicken.

Puff Method

1. First, the craquelin! In a bowl, mix the sugar and butter until combined.
2. Add the flour and knead together to create a dough.
3. On a lightly dusted surface, roll the dough out into a sheet, then refrigerate.
4. Meanwhile, create the puffs! Whisk the flour and cardamom together.
5. In a saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the milk, water, butter and salt and bring to a boil. Once the butter melts, remove the pan from the heat, add the flour



hybrid! Using the airiness of a choux pastry but keeping the flavour profile and shape of typical semla, I've chosen to celebrate tradition with this modern twist. Enjoy!

Ingredients for Cardamom Pastry Cream

- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tbsp ground cardamom
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 3 eggs
- ¾ stick unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 vanilla bean, scraped

Ingredients for Dough

- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup water
- ¾ stick unsalted butter
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1 tsp cardamom
- 4 eggs

Ingredients for Craquelin Topping

- ½ stick unsalted butter, soft
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup all purpose flour

Pastry Cream Method

1. Whisk together sugar, cornstarch, cardamom, and salt in a saucepan.
 2. Whisk in the cream, milk, scraped vanilla bean and eggs, then bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat.
 3. Cook the cream, whisking continuously until thickened.
 4. Remove the pot from the heat and whisk the butter through.
 5. Transfer the mixture to a bowl (you may optionally pass it through a sieve for a very smooth product) and cover it with plastic wrap, ensuring that the plastic is
6. Return the pan to medium heat and continue stirring until the mixture pulls away from the sides of the pan and forms a ball. Remove from the heat and let cool for a few minutes.
 7. In a bowl, whisk one of the eggs. When the batter has cooled, add the egg and beat with the spoon until incorporated. Whisk each of the remaining eggs one at a time, then stir into the batter. After each egg is added, the mixture will separate and appear shiny but will eventually form a very smooth paste. Let this paste cool for approximately 10 minutes.
 8. Preheat the oven to 425°F. On a sheet pan fitted with parchment paper, pipe about one heaping tablespoon's worth of the paste, creating a two inch mound. Make sure to space the mounds apart as they will grow significantly.
 9. Take the cooled craquelin dough and cut it into two inch circles, then place it on top of each puff mound.
 10. Bake the puffs for 13 to 15 minutes, then reduce the heat to 375°F and continue baking until golden brown, which will take approximately another 15 minutes.
 11. Once done, leave the oven door open, keeping the puffs inside, allowing them to dry for another 15 minutes.
 12. Make sure to cool them completely before splitting them in half and piping in the cooled pastry cream filling.
 13. Return the "lid" on top of the puff and then dust with powdered sugar before serving – perfect after a meal or as a snack with coffee or tea!