

Explore chocolate
under all its forms
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The Source

forum of diversity

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Vol 19 No 3 | July 10–August 28, 2018

www.thelasource.com



Photo courtesy of Boteco Brasil

Verbatim

Strength in diversity

by MAX ADSHEAD

I cannot guarantee the experience anyone else will have in Vancouver. The collection of events in my experience here have been utterly unexpected and unique and formed with the privilege of being bilingual, white and male. There is an endless variety of people gathered together in this city, interacting and communicating in almost random patterns, which makes it impossible to summarize one multicultural experience.

“ Cherish the events that include everyone.

The first thing that must be acknowledged is the stolen land that we all share, the unceded territory of the Coast Salish people. In order to properly celebrate multiculturalism here we must recognize the implicit attempt colonizers had in removing the original culture of this area. Any movement forward will have to begin in decolonization. Listen, respect and empower Indigenous voices. It is only from here that we can move on.

Every day as individuals in every action we take adds to a greater collaborative culture here and now, which brings with it an essential responsibility to always listen, give voice to each other and to celebrate the uniqueness of what we all share.

I first moved here five years ago the summer after graduating from high school. Since then I have had the privilege of working in an almost concerning number of different jobs. From scrubbing greasy dishes

See "Verbatim" page 6

A taste of local South American flavours

by FERNANDA FRIEDRICH

According to local restaurateurs, there is much more to Latin American food than tacos, even in Vancouver. Two Vancouver chefs elaborate on the flavours of Brazilian and Peruvian food.

Eliane Trovo, owner of Boteco Brasil, a Brazilian restaurant in Vancouver, says that Brazilian food is exceedingly undervalued on the international food scene.

"A lot of people know nothing about our food, and once they try it, they really enjoy it," says Trovo.

According to Trovo, people are surprised how dishes based on regular ingredients carry unusual flavors:

"They enjoy simple things such as the way we make our rice."

Trovo says Brazilian rice is usually fried with garlic, adding a twist to the regular flavor of the grain. She says Brazilian cuisine is all about getting the most of the main ingredient, such as only using spices to elevate the components.

"We use a lot of garlic, onions, salt, and pepper," she says.

Although some might think that Brazilian food is as spicy as

the food of other Latin American countries, Trovo says Brazilian food is not about the heat.

"I would say the main difference from other cuisines are the types of spices we use. Mexican food is definitely spicier. Brazilian food, in general, is not very hot. However, the food from northeast Brazil is definitely hotter," she says.

According to Trovo, the influence from Africa in the northwest region of Brazil brings the heat to a higher level, but not even close to the other Latin cuisines.

"Brazilian food is a very complex cuisine. It is a very large

country," adds Trovo, indicating that it can be difficult to describe typical Brazilian food.

From the southern region comes the traditional Brazilian barbecue. Trovo says the meat is cut in an entirely different way, resulting in a rich mouthful of startling flavors.

"People enjoy the way we do our meat, our picanha, a cut close to the sirloin. The only spice we use is pure salt. Because of the cut of picanha, there is a lot of fat around, and the way we grill it we make it so the fat gets on the meat along with the salt. It tastes very good," she says.

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Cultural Spotlight



▲ The BCA-BC pose for a picture with New Westminster Mayor Jonathan Cote during Family day at the Anvil Centre.

Celebrating with the Brazilian community

by ALEX BOGDAN

The Brazilian community in the Greater Vancouver Area is getting more attention this year with their CarnaWest event, bringing Brazilian music, food, and Capoeira to New Westminster on August 4th.

The Brazilian Community Association of British Columbia (BCA-BC) was created in 1996 to help Brazilians integrate into B.C. and promote their culture. Since then, they have had success with events such as Carnaval, which had over one thousand people attend last February in Vancouver.

Live music, food, and more

Luiz Antunes, president of the BCA-BC, explains that CarnaWest is about bringing people together and celebrating their culture. The event welcomes everyone. “We receive many Canadians. Most of the people were Brazilian, but many Canadians, also Mexicans, Colombians,” says Antunes.

When asked about the origin of this event, Antunes explains the association used to do a festival named Brazilfest.

“We decided to change the name to CarnaWest - that reminds us that it is in New Westminster and also because we are on the West Coast ... I believe many people who like Brazilian culture will join us,” says Antunes.

The event is going to host a variety of food vendors and local Brazilian cuisine, along with live music and a form of dancing called Capoeira.

“It is a mix of martial arts and dancing. It is very famous in Brazil, coming from African heritage,” says Antunes.

The CarnaWest will be a different take on the Carnaval done in February.

“We are going to have not only a Carnaval party, but an entirely Brazilian festival,” he says.

Passion for the community

Antunes, who immigrated to Canada two years ago, mentioned that celebrating his culture and sharing these ex-

periences has always been important to him.

“Since we got here, even informally, we are always thinking of doing things like Carnaval,” he says.

When asked about the motivation for celebrating these events, he sums it up with a single word: passion. Fabio Bahia, another member of the community and treasurer of the BCA-BC, points out that this is a great opportu-

nity for the entire community to get involved. “It feeds a lot of culture... it’s about songs, customs, about preparing the city for that moment. Many aspects of [Brazilian] culture revolve around Carnaval,” says Bahia.

The BCA-BC board members say it can be hard to balance the time and effort to put on these events, but are thankful for the results.

“We feel really good after the Carnaval we did. The success makes us feel good, and when we look back at all that effort, it was great, and we have fun working, too,” says Antunes.

“We are definitely a growing community, and our dream is to have a space where we can meet, where we can promote Brazilian culture, have kids’ classes, dance lessons and many other activities.”

Aside from the celebrations, the BCA-BC is also in support of professional development and networking among the community.

“The goal is to network, to help Brazilian newcomers just arriving, and to provide Brazilians with more experience to help others and exchange experience,” says Antunes.

The Brazilian Professionals meeting is going to take place sometime this August. ✉

For more information, please visit www.bca-bc.ca.



▲ Luiz Antunes, president of the BCA-BC.

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Photo credits for front cover
Page 5 (top): Courtesy of Chocolate with Geoseph
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Vancouver stood across my walking
What bones of feet had trod here, invisible now
Bones ground in. Vanished tracks
Who could see the city in me?
How did it manifest itself?
I pulled its hood over my head. Ghost pueblo
This was where home yearned for me
Searched for me in the misty rain, called and called my name
Past the weathered faces that turned to pavement
Here I paced going nowhere, bone sliding on bone
Buried here the mockery of days

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Youth initiatives for a diverse society

by BETTY SHEA

Every five years, Statistics Canada produces the Canadian Survey on Disability, a national survey of Canadians aged 15 and older whose everyday activities are limited as a result of a long-term health condition or health-related problems.

While the number of Canadians with developmental disabilities is less than 1%, the latest survey also shows that 13.7% of Canadians, nearly one in seven, live with a disability. Equality issues notwithstanding, it is vital for Canada's economy to ensure that people with disabilities have the social support necessary to thrive in their communities.

A youthful organization

The Social Diversity for Children (SDC) Foundation is a registered charity dedicated to eliminating the stigma of disabilities. Joanna Zhao, an undergraduate student at The University of British Columbia, serves as the foundation's executive director.

"I joined the organization because I loved their emphasis on empowering youth to empower

also mentors high school students who are new volunteers of SDC. Zhao encourages other youth to volunteer at SDC.

"Youth that take on leadership roles develop professionally and become confident risk-takers who will have an incredibly positive impact [on the youth] of the future," says Zhao. "Not only do we train youth to empower children with disabilities, SDC youth volunteers empower the next generation to continue our work maybe even better than we do today."

Diversity and training programs

Founded in 2010 in Richmond, SDC offers a range of programs for children with disabilities that include music therapy and art therapy. The music therapy program will recommence around September or October at two locations: the Renfrew Community Centre in Vancouver

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▲ Joanna Zhao speaking at the 2017 SDC Summer Gala.



▲ Volunteer and participant at an SDC event.

children with disabilities," says Zhao. She started as a volunteer in the Youth Team with SDC four years ago as a chief sponsorship officer. Working with others in her Youth Team, Zhao applied for grants for events and contacted local businesses for in-kind contributions. Since then, she has progressed to the role of youth director and then to executive director.

SDC is 95% run by youth volunteers. This reflects the organization's goals of nurturing young leaders and promoting interaction and connection between children of all abilities.

"This is probably the reason that attracted me the most to [the Foundation] and why I continue to be so passionate about this organization," says Zhao. "SDC truly believes that every youth has huge potential to create real change in this world, and [the organization is] prepared to provide the necessary toolboxes to do so."

Youth volunteers are given leadership opportunities and responsibilities beyond what most of their peers are exposed to. Zhao manages staff members, spearheads the recruitment process and oversees all the charity's day-to-day operations. She

and the City Centre Community Centre in Richmond. The Foundation also hosts birthday parties for registered participants at their schools.

"Each day, our volunteers strive to learn more about the disabled community," says Zhao. "We educate ourselves and the rest of the community on how we, as human beings, can learn to treat everyone with respect regardless of differences in abilities."

SDC is also active internationally. The Foundation operates in other cities such as Seattle and Dubai. Every year, it organizes a trip for volunteers, called a Global Impact Delegation (GID), where it partners with overseas government bodies and organizations to improve social welfare policies affecting children with disabilities.

A provincial objective

One of the 10 B.C. government initiatives is entitled "Building a Better B.C. for People with Disabilities." The aim is to work with disability and business communities to make B.C. a truly inclusive province by 2024. An identified area of need is to have a more inclusive government so that people with disabilities have a direct say in government policies. With training for young leaders across all abilities, there is hope that this need will be met sooner rather than later.

For more information on The Social Diversity for Children Foundation, visit www.socialdiversity.org.

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Women's history conference

The meeting of genders, cultures, and nations

by KATY THOMPSON

The International Federation for Research on Women's History/La Federation Internationale Pour la Recherche en Histoire des Femmes (IFRWH/FIRHF) will hold its 12th conference at Simon Fraser University from Aug. 9–12.

This year's theme, *Transnationalisms, Transgressions, Translations: Conversations and Controversies*, will explore frameworks, narratives, interactions and power relations across time and space at local, national and global levels.

"Our goal is to really foster the study and research of gender history and transnational approaches," says Eileen Boris, President of IFRWH/FIRHF.

The conference

Between 225 and 250 scholars are expected to attend the conference, which will comprise panels, individual papers, roundtables, conversations, workshops, and non-traditional forms of presentation.

The conference kicks off on Aug. 9 with a three-hour workshop on Archives of Lesbian Oral Testimony (ALOT), during which participants will learn about planning oral history projects, with particular reference to issues of sexual identity. There will also be a 'Women and Gender, Theory and Practice' roundtable, as well as a screening of 'We Have No Fear,' a 2017 Italian film about two women arrested in front of the Ducati Motor factory as they were handing out mimosa flowers, the symbol of female emancipation in post-war Italy.

The first plenary, entitled 'Indigenous Feminisms in Settler Colonial Societies,' will be held on Aug. 10. Other sessions that



Photo courtesy of Eileen Boris

▲ Eileen Boris, president of IFRWH/FIRHF.

day include topics such as 'Disobedient Intimacies: Women's Urban Histories of Home, Conflict, and Survival,' 'Modern Legal Responses to Rape in Transnational Perspective' and 'Struggles for Marriage: Race and Identity.'

'Migrants and Movements' is the title of the second plenary to be held on Aug. 11 while other topics that day include 'Abortion, Contraception, Surrogacy, and the State,' 'Histories of Gender Violence' and 'Family, Sexuality, and National Identity in Modern Korea.'

In each session, scholars put their papers together in conversation to find commonalities across cultures and nations.

"It's really about bringing people together from different intellectual traditions and countries. Even the concept of gender has different meanings that travel different ways," Boris says.

According to Boris, the topics covered at the conference are particularly relevant in today's social climate.

"We've seen in the last year a global uprising of women against oppressive regimes and a fake populism that would take away women's rights to bodily integrity," she says.

Boris cites #MeToo and Time's Up as examples of global movements in which women have been at the forefront of social justice. Not only women from Hollywood but also women who are office workers, domestic workers, home health aides, university employees and students are participating.

"Anytime we can come together with some shared interest and expertise and exchange across the lines of language and nationality, it's a home run for the world," says Boris.

In addition to workshops, there will be a banquet with the Canadian Indigenous women singing and storytelling group M'Girl, as well as historical walking tours of different subgroups in Vancouver, including queer, colonial indigenous and women's movement walks.

Boris states that an international exchange amongst scholars helps understand the past of women's lives and how women have been over different times at different places.

"We are better equipped to act in solidarity and in sisterhood where we can in these perilous days ahead," says Boris.

A change of plans

The conference was originally planned to be held at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where Boris serves as Professor of History, Black Studies and Global Studies.

But things changed when the United States gave the executive order for its first travel ban.

"We'd be putting scholars under the threat of denied entry to the US or being hassled arbitrarily under the Trump administration. We'd already be excluding people from applying. I think it was unconscionable to ask people to come to this country under those circumstances," says Boris.

In light of the country's political climate, the Federation decided to find a conference venue outside the US.

"I started calling the people I knew in Canada," Boris recalls.

Jennifer Spear, Associate Professor and Department Chair of History at Simon Fraser University, then agreed to take over the local arrangements and host the conference at SFU's Downtown Vancouver campus.

"I was happy to help Eileen in ensuring that scholars from all around the world could attend the conference. Given the Supreme Court's recent decision to uphold the travel ban, Eileen was right to make the move," says Spear. ✍

For more information about the conference, visit www.csn-rec.ca.



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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.

Chocolate tasting workshops

by GÜLCE IPCI

Chocolatier and sommelier Geoseph Domenichiello will be hosting workshops on chocolate tasting July 29 and Aug. 20 in order to offer Vancouverites a new perspective on chocolate.

Domenichiello has worked as a sommelier since 2007, trying to bridge the gap between good quality chocolate and consumer. While developing his styles as a sommelier, he noticed much more information out there that is not known to consumers.

“So much great research is out there, but they don’t reach the consumer. Sometimes people read articles but many times there are no facts. They don’t know why chocolate is good for their heart,” says Domenichiello.

Domenichiello wants everyone knows what the good chocolate really is.

“I focused so much on tasting because so much chocolate and chocolate stores are out there... People don’t know what the best quality chocolate is,” says Domenichiello.

As a chocolate sommelier, Domenichiello wants to offer workshops as a way for people to understand and appreciate the real taste of chocolate.

“These workshops allow people to taste and use tools so they can make own judgments on chocolates. And also, they can push chocolate makers to make better chocolate,” says Domenichiello.

A lesson in chocolate

Domenichiello’s workshops are open to everyone with any interest in chocolate or history.

“People have a chance to interact and ask questions when we are doing the actual tasting and describing the flavors... Everyone who takes all three workshops will get a certificate at the

correspond to how the Mayans and Aztecs drink or how the European drank in the 17th century. We end the workshop with chocolate (as we know it today) – the fine chocolate compared with

participating in the chocolate club, people start to learn more about chocolate and think fairly for both parties.

“Knowing more information gives you more motivation to

“ These workshops allow people to taste and use tools so they can make own judgments on chocolates.

Geoseph Domenichiello, chocolatier and sommelier

end that help them to feel more confident,” says Domenichiello.

In the workshops, participants taste different chocolate samples while they are learning the history of chocolate.

“I bring in chocolate that is made locally or other parts of Canada or in the States or overseas. I make some drinks that

how it changed over time,” says Domenichiello.

Domenichiello also plans to open a club with a yearly subscription for all chocolate lovers. He hopes to have this up and running in a couple months if the interest is there.

“I’m actually in the process of starting a chocolate club. So, there’ll be the yearly subscription, once-a-month get-togethers and try at least 3 product samples,” says Domenichiello.

Controversial chocolate

Domenichiello wants to create awareness about chocolate for everyone involved: growers, producers and consumers.

“A lot of cacao growers choose cacao beans specifically to get the flavour, but most of the chocolates that we eat out there are watered down. That’s kind of sad,” says Domenichiello.

He wants to create consumer awareness, which will in turn encourage makers and chocolatiers to be skillful and do a better job, not only for consumers but also for farmers.

According to Domenichiello, attending these workshops and

do something and it removes the chance for misconceptions,” says Domenichiello.

In addition to hosting his own chocolate tasting workshops, Do-



Photo courtesy of Chocolate with Geoseph

▲ *Geoseph Domenichiello will be hosting workshops on chocolate tasting July 29 and Aug. 20.*

michiello continues to work at a pastry shop in Burnaby, Mon Paris, as a chocolatier. ✉

For more information and to register for the workshops, please visit www.geoseph.com.



Photo courtesy of Chocolate with Geoseph

▲ *A workshop with Geoseph Domenichiello.*

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A matter of solidarity: the Chingari platform

by SUSAN HANCOCK

Mahwish Yousaf has guided, counselled and mentored female immigrants in need for over two decades. She believes that more women could be supported through community-based partnerships and volunteerism.

“I’m only one person,” says Yousaf. “To help more women, I knew I would have to build a network of resources to reach them all.”

With a strong commitment in helping women change their lives and find independence, Yousaf founded the Chingari Women’s Support Group earlier this year.

“Chingari is a Hindi or Urdu word that means spark,” says Yousaf. “I wanted to use another language with an ethnic feeling that would trigger hope in my clients.”

Finding her feet

The Chingari platform connects and empowers women through education. The platform focuses on the legal rights of women, mental, physical and emotional health, community resources, crisis management and creating business opportunities for self-sufficiency.

Yousaf, known by family and friends as Mona, left Pakistan to start a new life with her hus-



Photo courtesy of Mahwish Yousaf

▲ *Mahwish Yousaf, founder of Chingari Women’s Support Group.*

band in the United States when she was 19 years old. She then immigrated to Canada in 2006 with her husband and child.

As a Pakistani woman and newcomer to Canada, Yousaf found it difficult to connect with community groups because of her language and cultural differences. When she felt the need to leave her husband, she had no prior knowledge of her legal rights, nor did she have the know-how to access the information she needed to start a new life.

“I didn’t know my legal rights in the divorce process, nor my custody rights,” says Yousaf. “As a result, I went through a lot of injustices by others.”

25 years later, Yousaf is now an established business woman.

She’s managed or owned a range of businesses from mobile phone retail stores, a catering company, and a day care. Most recently, she works as a consultant in project management in quality assurance services while running what she describes as a judicial marketing agency that offers business development and social media services.

“With all these skills, I feel I’ve got a lot to give back,” says Yousaf.

We’re a helpline, a resource and a place for women to connect

The business model for Chingari Women’s Support Group consists of Yousaf’s strong network of 30 business partners that includes lawyers, counsellors, social workers, community agencies and approximately 15 volunteers that help organize workshops in professional development and assertiveness training.

Carolina Barrocas volunteers at Chingari providing expertise in social media. Back in Brazil, she’s a university professor in human rights. Barrocas understands the power of education and how it can change lives.

“If you don’t know your rights and you don’t know where to find help or what to do, you are totally disarmed,” says Barrocas. “You don’t even know that you are able to do something to change your situation.”

Through local support and resources, Yousaf was able to assist a woman and her four-year-old daughter who had immigrated to Canada only to find themselves homeless in an unfamiliar country two months later. Yousaf and her team of volunteers were able to reach out to the community and find three options for more stable housing.

“We’re a helpline, a resource, and a place for women to connect,” says Yousaf. “Often these women are abused or depressed and can get easily discouraged when they don’t find what they need.”

The Chingari Women’s Support Group, which will meet at the City Centre Library in Surrey from July to September, offers women a safe place to ask questions and access resources that will help them start on their path to independence. Some women prefer networking sessions where they can share their challenges and brainstorm ideas to resolved issues. Others are looking for ways to upgrade their skills or develop a home business.

“I want to give back as much as I can each day. So, if I can help one person or at least put a smile on their face, I feel as though I’ve accomplished something,” says Yousaf. ✉

To learn more, visit www.chingari.org.

Food forest – a Japanese approach to permaculture

by JAKE MCGRAIL

In 1975, Japanese farmer and philosopher Masanobu Fukuoka wrote *The One-Straw Revolution*, a bestselling book that shared his views on agriculture and the natural world. Among other things, it has had a lasting influence on the development of the permaculture philosophy.

On July 15 the Kerrisdale Community Centre will host Fukuoka's Food Forest, a workshop that will share both Fukuoka's ideas and how they can be used here in B.C.

Helping both nature and the community

The event will be organized and led by the Vancouver Arts Colloquium Society (VACS), with the aim to introduce and spread the teachings of Fukuoka and permaculture philosophy. Keiko Honda, the founder and executive director of VACS, is a supporter of permaculture and what it can bring to local communities.

"It's an agriculture technique," says Honda, "but it's also a philosophy of life, in line with the mindset of many Indigenous peoples of the world in regard to their relationship with na-

human beings, bringing a holistic approach to growing local food. It's not about just eating healthy, it's related back to us and how we can take care of each other."

Gabriel Pliska, a local farmer and founder of Frisch Farms Vancouver, will also speak at the event, and will be a link between nature, food production and the community that Honda sees as essential to our society.

"We are all interdependent and interconnected," she says. "The forest, trees, the natural world – they all have their functions, a role to play. Even if one thing is missing, it changes the harmony. It's the same thing for the human world: everyone has skills that can benefit others."

Opportunity to create and grow

The event will be held at the Kerrisdale Community Centre, and is open to all ages and all experience levels pertaining to food production, home gardening and knowledge of the natural world.

"We will show some short films and images, and go a little in-depth into [Fukuoka's] book," says Honda. "We're hoping anyone interested attends, not just gardeners."

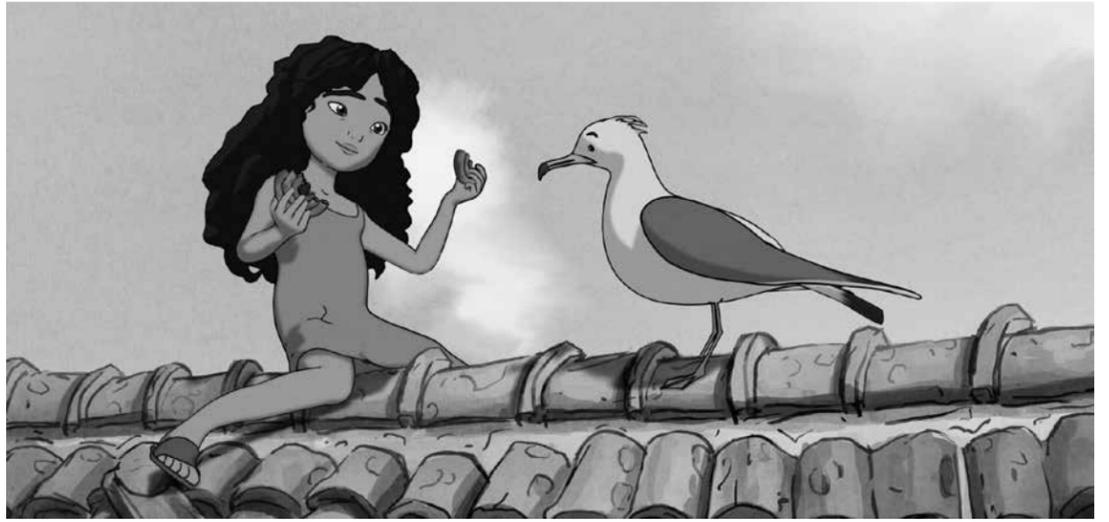
For those who attend, there will be a second part to the workshop on July 22, where there will be the option to do real implementation of the techniques and ideas discussed on July 15. This is a part of VACS' mission to provide resources – whether through space, tools, planning, etc. – to communities in order to help their occupants grow and improve their area.

"We are all artists," says Honda. "What that means is that we are all creators, as long as we have the resources available. Everything in life is art, and every space we use and occupy is a continuation of who we are. We are all interconnected, which is why it's important to observe and make our spaces beneficial."

That desire to improve communities and the environment in peaceful, mutually beneficial ways is reflected in Fukuoka's philosophy, and it is what Honda hopes those attending the workshop will be filled with.

"These are such beautiful, important ideas. Today we can be distant and disconnected, so this type of education and understanding of how the natural world works is about finding your best self that you can share with the world." ✍

For more information, visit www.myvacs.org.



Substance on screen: A different youth oriented film festival

by VICTOR VAN DER MERWE

Reel 2 Real International Film Festival for Youth is celebrating its 20th anniversary by holding its first ever free outdoor screening at sunset (July 13). The film they have chosen for this event is the animated feature, Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet* co-produced with Bardel Entertainment.

Written and directed by Roger Allers (*The Lion King*), the film intersperses Gibran's poetry within animated sequences by award winning filmmakers such as Tom Moore (*The Secret of Kells*) and Nina Paley (*Sita Sings the Blues*); and with music by Damien Rice, Glen Hansard and Yo-Yo Ma.

Set in a Mediterranean seaside village, Kamila (Salma Hayek) is a house cleaner for exiled artist and poet Mustafa (Liam Neeson). She also has to take care of her daughter, Almitra (Quvenzhané Wallis), who's free spirit makes it hard to stay out of trouble. The three set out on a journey for Mustafa's home all while evading the authorities who fear that the truth in his words will incite rebellion.

Ambitious beginnings

Reel 2 Real is proud to have been part of the Vancouver Film Festival community for the last 20 years and this outdoor screening is very much keeping with the spirit that inspired founder Venay Felton to come Vancouver and establish this organization.

"I worked in New York City, in a place called Media Center for Children. We went around to schools with heavy 16mm films and we would screen these films to children and get their feedback," says Felton. "We would then write film reviews for a magazine that was distributed to librarians, who purchased films, based on their feedback. I thought there must be a better

way to expose children to films from all over the world."

In 1993, she went to the Chicago Children's film festival where she met the director of the event and the director of the Halifax Film Festival. With them as her advisory board, Reel 2 Real was born.

"Vancouver seemed like the best place to start a children's film festival because there was not one at the time. There were efforts made in the past, but none had succeeded," says Felton.

With a twenty year tenure in the city there is much to celebrate but still plenty to accomplish. Felton and her team work hard every year to meet these challenges.

"We are very successful at getting school groups to attend the festival. It is harder to draw the public. In part because of so much to do in Vancouver," Felton says.

which someone is reading the subtitles and just the children can hear it. It is like having a storyteller read the film to you."

Not just passive viewing

At 5 p.m., preceding the screening of the film, there will be free animation workshops and also NFB VR productions (*Tidal Traces*, *Cardboard Crash*, *Blind Vaysha*) for the families to come see. This is in keeping with the philosophy of Reel 2 Real, who sees their screenings as not just passive entertainment.

"Reel 2 Real is about going from film reel to real life. That means with every screening we have a workshop or a discussion," says Felton.

The team wants to make sure that good alternative films make it to their intended audience of young people and their families.

"There is a lot of criticism of some of the mainstream films



▲ A still from the animated film *The Prophet*.

She goes on to talk about parents not being sure about films with subtitles, but the Reel 2 Real team has come up with a great solution.

"We used to turn the sound of the film down and read the subtitles out loud. The adults did not like that but the children did not mind it," says Felton. "Now we can give children headsets in

being violent or not appropriate for children. We find films that are box office hits in their own country, and no [one] is aware of these great films. Our real dream is also to see more of these films produced in Canada," says Felton. ✍

For more information, please visit www.r2rfestival.org.



Photo by Noriko Nasu-Tidball

▲ Keiko Honda, founder and executive director of VACS.

ture. It's about training ourselves to become stewards of the land."

Land stewardship is at the core of Fukuoka's Food Forest, but the goal of the workshop is not to just engage with nature, but with each other as well. Honda sees Fukuoka's studies and techniques as both good for the environment as well as enriching for the community.

"We will touch on food production," she says, "but we will also explore what this means to our community and our lives. It's a workshop, but the ultimate goal is cultivation of

thing unique. In fact, from what I gather, most of my coworkers do not have time to even practice their own cultures at home. This can become toxic. So much time is devoted to their job that the culture of work has replaced the heritage they call their own.

It is in opportunities outside of work that I have been able to share in the amazing multicultural experiences Vancouver likes to boast about. Latin rhythms filling up cafes and restaurants with music so contagious you have to dance. The sacred and community-oriented experiences of Indige-

nous ceremonies. The generosity of families and the spectacle of the parades on Chinese New Year. These are the things I cherish most. These are the events that make living here as beautiful as it can be.

Take a moment. Devote time to participating in things that bring people together. Cherish the events that include everyone. If I had to give one piece of advice it would be to try and attend anything and everything you are invited to. If you are not invited to anything, go and find it! There is an endless amount of

things happening in this city all the time.

I want to challenge the readers: devote added time to the communities we share, help celebrate other cultures and be proud of your own. Don't let your work distract you from what is most important. If you employ someone, give them the support to take time off. If you work constantly, take what time you can to give back. There is strength in diversity. The more perspectives we share, the more solutions we know. Everyone plays a role. Do not underestimate yours. ✍

► "Verbatim" from page 1

at the famed White Spot to helping light Hollywood actors. These jobs have given me the chance to meet an incredible array of different people. People from all walks of life and from across the world. All brought together here and participating in the western culture of work.

Sometimes grabbing a beer after our shift, we have been able to share stories of our cultures and backgrounds. Although rarely do we get to actually practice our cultures with each other and create some-



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A festival of Russian friendship

by COLLEEN ADDISON

Alik Schastlivenko wants to tell Canadians about his country. He wants to hear about Canada too and about other countries, about the food, music, dancing, and culture that make all people who they are.

“When we open our eyes and ears and try to be a little bit flexible,” says Schastlivenko, “we can understand each other. But to understand we need to know about the culture.”

Schastlivenko, a board member of the Multicultural Russian Speaking Association of BC, hopes to foster this understanding at the annual Friendship without Borders Festival, held

nal to the community that she is married. Last year we had a representative from Uzbekistan. They have many, many braids,” he laughs.

Food, too, shows some cultural distinctions. The Festival, catered by New Westminster’s Russian Spoon Bakery, provides food from all parts of the former Soviet Union.

“We have piroshky, special dough that we fill up with meat or with cheese, vegetable or potato mash. The kitchen is very similar to the Slavic kitchen. People in Poland have borscht. The name is the same, but the flavour, the consistency, is totally different. If you take Russian borscht, it will be different from Ukrainian borscht.”

“When we open our eyes and ears, and try to be a little bit flexible. We can understand each other. But to understand we need to know about the culture.”

Schastlivenko, a board member of the Multicultural Russian Speaking Association of BC

this year on August 25 at the Serbian Centre in Burnaby. All ethnicities are welcome.

Braids and borscht

Schastlivenko and his organization are already building bridges between nations. At the Festival, there will be representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Tatarstan, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, and Estonia, who come to share their culture with each other and with Canadians.

“We try to invite as many people as we can,” Schastlivenko says. “We show what we know, what we can do, what we eat, how we dance, how we spend time together, and how we cherish our friends. It’s a mosaic.”

Having different parts of the mosaic present is important, says Schastlivenko. There can be misunderstandings, even within the former Soviet Union countries that may appear the same from the outside. As one exam-

Having a better understanding of customs is helpful for Canadians, says Schastlivenko. “In the former Soviet Union, we put the wedding ring on the right [hand], but in Canada, it is on the left. If you didn’t know the cultural difference, you’d think oh, this is probably a divorced woman. It’s these small differences which you never hear [about]. You can learn during this festival.”

A good country

Schastlivenko, who was born in Odessa, Ukraine, came to Canada eighteen years ago as a 30-year-old married father of two. “My children now have better English than me!” he laughs. “But I can speak four languages, and they can speak only two. You have an advantage when you move [from] country to country.”

Schastlivenko is happy he chose Canada as a place to live. His children’s first Halloween was an example of a time where he was made to feel welcome when he didn’t know how to participate in the local custom. One



▲ Alik Schastlivenko, with a representative from Azerbaijan and Tatarstan, stands at a booth in last year’s friendship festival.

ple, people’s appearances can illustrate culture. “You can see traditional Russian costumes [at the festival], which you can’t see on the street in Vancouver, such as serafan dresses and kokoshnik. Kokoshnik is a Russian tiara. Sometimes people use coral [for the tiara], not ocean, but river coral.”

But there are dissimilarities between the former Soviet nations. “If the girl has two braids,” he explains, “it means that this girl is not married. If the girl has only one braid, it sends a sig-

of his children’s teachers came to his house and invited them to join in celebrating on the main street.

“Today,” he adds, “it’s important to talk with people, to show them our culture, to show them different sides from what they see on TV, what they are reading. We are people who are living here, who are supporting Canada. We are happy and proud to be here.”

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

Photo courtesy of Alik Schastlivenko



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Photo by LPatrick Li

The Sakura choir sings the essence of Japanese culture

by CURTIS SEUFERT

The Sakura Singers Society will be performing at the 42nd annual Powell Street Festival on Aug. 5. The Sakura Singers' repertoire covers more than 250 Japanese songs, focusing on folk songs and choral suites, and the choir is always looking for new members to join, seeking to share Japanese culture with those who wish to listen.

"The Sakura Singers dedicated its services to communities with numerous performances, with its mission to promote the enjoyment of Japanese songs and a better understanding and appreciation by all Canadians pertaining to Japanese Canadian culture," says Joyce Kamikura, the choir's executive director.

Kamikura notes that the choice to name the choir after the sakura, or cherry blossom, was intentional, with the flower acting as a symbol for its cultural and artistic roots.

"People have been picnicking under the blooming trees since 700 A.D., a tradition that continues today," says Kamikura. "Our choral name reflects that we are a group deeply rooted in Japanese culture."

Finding culture and community

"There are certain things very common with our choir members. They love to sing in Western classic style, but in Japanese. Most members do not like to perform solo, rather sing in harmony with others. Most members are first generation Japanese who prefer to speak in Japanese, while a small number of members are non-Japanese but can speak Japanese," says Kamikura.

Kamikura says many longstanding members have found a sense of community while singing together with others who have ties to both Canada and Japan.

"I think many Japanese speakers find comfort in joining The Sakura Singers for sharing a common cultural background, learning to sing in Japanese, under the [musical] directorship of Ruth Suzuki who speaks perfect English, Japanese and Chinese," says Kamikura.

Sakura lost and found

While noting the sakura's synonymy with Japanese culture, Kamikura says her own connection with Japan had been at a distance for some time, not only geographically, but also culturally. She was born in Richmond but moved to Japan at a young age, and then moved back to Canada at age 9. After 30 years of speaking only English in Canada, Kamikura says she had forgotten the Japanese language. That is, until she found the Sakura Singers.

Upon attempting to learn piano as an adult, and initially believing instrument quality to be the problem, Kamikura eventually figured

that despite her great talent and success in painting, pursuing music as an artistic avenue just might not be for her. Kamikura puts it bluntly:

"I found that I have absolutely no musical talent. I got a grand piano but found that it's not the piano's fault, but it is my lack of music skill which prevented me from advancing in this field," says Kamikura.

And yet, Kamikura says that she wanted to sing in a group with others, and found the Sakura Singers Society to be much easier to keep up with than others, despite not having spoken the choir's language in close to 30 years. Kamikura doesn't seem to be the only one who finds more than just musical excitement from the choir.

Kamikura is also an accomplished visual artist and a member of the Federation of Canadian Artists. Many of her acrylic works present natural scenes, often warm and lush, and yet despite her many portraits of flowers – peonies and poppies, lilies, tulips, hibiscus and daffodils – the Canadian-born Japan-raised executive director of the Sakura Singers Society choir doesn't have any works boasting the popular Japanese flower: cherry blossoms.



▲ Ruth Suzuki, musical director of the Sakura Choir.

While absent in Kamikura's oeuvre, she discusses the significance, history and ubiquity of the sakura in Japanese art and culture, both classical and contemporary.

"In a spiritual sense, the sakura represents life which is short and beautiful, just like the cherry blossom that falls from the tree after just a few days. This is tied to the Buddhist roots of Japan. It's the most commonly used symbol of mortality in all types of art. The cherry blossom became so popular in the Heian era of Japan's history that the word for flower became synonymous with sakura."

For Kamikura, and many others in the choir, it's about making the most of life, doing so by sharing in celebration of a rich culture and tradition, through language and song. ✍

For more information on the Sakura Singers Society and the Powell Street Festival, please visit www.thesakurasingers.org and www.powellstreetfestival.com.

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The Fish Eyes Trilogy: a coming-of-age solo show

by RAMAN KANG

The *Fish Eyes Trilogy*, a theatre show with a focus on dance written and performed by actor, dancer and playwright Anita Majumdar, is coming to the Surrey Arts Centre Aug. 18.

“Anita brings a really fierce determination to explore how dance gets in your body and how dance expresses a character’s life, interests and their way of being,” says Brian Quirt, Artistic Director of Nightswimming. “I think [Majumdar] wrote *Fish Eyes* with Meena as the central character because she wanted to bring home that character’s perspective and point of view: how does this teenage girl understand her landscape?”

The high school experience

“[Majumdar] wanted to explore how the character was experiencing high school, the challenges of being compelled to be a South Asian classical dancer, the tension between her family, her teacher, her dance coach and her attraction to one of the boys in school,” says Quirt.

The solo show features choreography from Majumdar that includes varying types of dance



▲ Anita Majumdar will transform from character to character in *The Fish Eyes Trilogy*.

such as Bollywood, hip hop and what Quirt deems a hybrid of both those styles.

“[Majumdar] is not only a fantastic actor – not only on stage but in film and TV, – she’s also an extremely skilled classical Indian dancer, so each of these characters is a dancer of varying types,” says Quirt.

The *Fish Eyes Trilogy* is a three-part play, which includes *Boys with Cars*, *Let me Borrow that Top* and *Fish Eyes*. Quirt says each part is the same event but shown from

different perspectives. In the play Majumdar plays three teenagers, Naz, Candice and Meena, all of whom attend the same high school in Port Moody, B.C. Each part of the play focuses on one of the three teenagers.

“At a school assembly, two of the characters dance to Beyoncé’s *Survivor* and something happens that I won’t reveal in that dance that affects all three teenagers,” says Quirt.

Quirt says Majumdar opted to do a solo show as she felt it would

allow for a more powerful way to bring life to her character.

“Watching [Majumdar] transform from character to character to character, it really is beautiful and astonishing to see what she is able to achieve over the course of these three stories,” says Quirt.

A creative company

Quirt’s company Nightswimming is a creative company that commissions new plays, dance pieces and music from various artists.

“We develop them over how many years it takes to ensure they get on stage and in front of audiences,” says Quirt.

Quirt says the company provides the necessary tools to help artists create and refine their works, which includes resources such as an office space, a studio to work in, a workshop with actors to hear the play aloud and whatever else they may need.

“If we decide to collaborate with an artist, we often do so for years with multiple projects, we believe in what they say and how they say it and we do as much as possible to amplify their voices,” says Quirt. “In [Majumdar’s] case I also ended up directing this production of *The Fish Eyes Trilogy*.”

He says part of the attraction to *The Fish Eyes Trilogy* was the powerful writing.

“The play goes into what it’s like to be South Asian in a high school that is mostly white – what it means to be a dancer and to try and balance being a dancer with all the other things teenagers have to balance,” says Quirt. ✍

For more information on the play and to get tickets, please visit www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/24164.aspx

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► “Flavours” from page 1

The southeastern part of Brazil has a soul food type of cuisine, says Trovo, with lots of deep fried dishes and a hearty flavor that reminds everyone of home, even if you are not even from Brazil. Pão de queijo, a bun made of cheese, is a popular Brazilian snack from this part of the country.

“People love cheese buns because they are tasty and gluten-free,” Trovo points out. “Even though people are usually concerned about eating deep fried food, a lot of customers come to our restaurant and make an exception for a coxinha. It is a favourite in Vancouver – people love it!”

Coxinha is a mashed potato dough filled with shredded chicken and spices, then breaded and deep fried. Trovo says another crowd-pleaser is feijoada, one of the delicacies Brazilians from all over the country are most proud of. It is a black bean

brigadeiro,” says Trovo of the mini truffles made of condensed milk and either coconut or chocolate powder, respectively.

On to Peru

Peru might not be as big as Brazil, but Shelome Bouvette, co-owner and chef at Chicha Restaurant, says its culinary traditions certainly are.

“Peruvian cuisine reflects local practices and ingredients including influences from the indigenous population such as the Inca. It also includes cuisine brought in by immigrants from Asia, Europe, and West Africa,” explains Bouvette.

She says even traditional dishes like ceviche are a result of Peruvian fusion.

“Ceviche comes from the Japanese immigrants and chifa comes from the Chinese. Peruvian food is a pioneer because over 500 years of fusion has taken place for our cuisine to become what it is today,” adds Bouvette.

In fact, Bouvette says that many think Peruvian cuisine actually originated fusion food. Under the influence of Indigenous people, foreign settlers and the rich culture brought by African slaves, Peru has been mixing tendencies for centuries, infusing flavors from the world into local dishes. In the 19th century a large number of Asian immigrants arrived in Peru, taking the fusion concept to another level.

According to Bouvette, Peruvian food is trending nowadays after ‘superfoods’ became a thing.

“Most of the foods coming out of Peru are called superfoods, which includes quinoa, maca, camu camu and purple corn,” she says.

Bouvette says that Peruvian cuisine fits perfectly with Vancouverites who prefer healthy foods. ✍

For more info on these local restaurants, please visit their websites: www.boteco.ca www.chicharestaurant.com



Photo courtesy of Boteco Brasil

▲ Feijoada.

pork stew cooked in a pressure cooker for several hours, served with rice and kale. Farofa, a dish made of cassava flour, toasted with butter and bacon, tags along with the other garnishes.

Trovo says decadent desserts also get plenty of attention from both regular customers and new ones trying them for the first time. Condensed milk is the base of most creamy desserts such as pudim, brigadeiro and beijinho. “People love our beijinho and

Cultural Calendar

July 10–August 28, 2018

by SIMON YEE

The sunny days are here once again! Get some travelling done, take a dive in a swimming hole and bask in the amazing sunshine with a variety of events and festivals happening around town. Have an awesome summer everyone, and I'll see you all in September!

Wild Things: The Power of Nature in Our Lives

Now until Sept. 2019
Museum of Vancouver
www.museumofvancouver.ca

Nature Vancouver will be presenting *Wild Things: The Power of Nature in Our Lives*, an exhibition on display at the Museum of Vancouver until September 2019. This exhibition delves into the life stories of local animals and plants – how they relate to each other and how they connect people to nature in the city. Scenic design, videos, taxidermy, crowd-sourcing technologies and the display of natural specimens breathe life into these tales of cohabitation. The immersive nature of the exhibition, including hands-on activities, encourages visitors to examine their relationship with nature, think about momentarily disconnecting from their devices and find equilibrium with the natural world around them.

Vancouver Folk Music Festival

July 13–15
Jericho Beach Park, Vancouver
www.thefestival.bc.ca

The Vancouver Folk Music Festival returns to the city for the 41st time to let festival-goers experience the music and culture of more than 40 international, national and local acts. Listen to diverse styles of music, from Cajun tunes and soul jazz-funk to Cree/

Irish trip-hop and Arabic musical ensembles, at this internationally renowned festival. Be sure to check out the artisan market and folk bazaar, enjoy the many food vendors set up around the beachfront and have fun at the Little Folks Village for children 12 years and younger. Check out their website for a complete list of performers.

SFU Summer Festival

July 14, 1–8 p.m.
Convocation Mall, Burnaby
www.sfumsummerfestival.com

Returning for the fifth year, the Summer Festival is an annual event held in the Convocation Mall at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby. The festival gives anime fans a chance to check out artist booths, food vendors, games and stage events all in the style of the "matsuri" summer festivals. There will be a cosplay contest, Yakata show, dance groups, melon smashing and more! For more information, please visit their website.

Summer Sounds

July 20, 31, Aug. 7, 21, 5:30–9 p.m.
šx'Áexən Xwtl'a7shn (formerly Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza), Vancouver
www.vancouvercivictheatres.com

This four concert series will take place in the heart of Downtown Vancouver at šx'Áexən Xwtl'a7shn (formerly the Queen Elizabeth Theatre Plaza) and will feature top music headliners, delicious food and the always popular patio bar. Headliners for the pop-up series will remain top secret leading up to the event so you'll have to follow along on social media and listen to The Peak radio for clues before the official announcement two weeks prior to each show. For more information, please check out the website.

Vancouver Thai Festival

July 21–22
Vancouver Art Gallery, North Plaza
www.globaleat.net/event/5th-thai-festival/

Gear up for a weekend of food, fun and live entertainment at the fifth annual Thai Festival – Western Canada's largest Thai event is taking place this July 21 and 22 at the Vancouver Art Gallery, North Plaza. The annual cultural festival showcases Thailand's rich and vibrant cultural heritage through its tasty gastronomy, performing arts and crafts. The free family-friendly festival also features traditional and contemporary fashions, digital technology, Thai boxing, Thai massage and spa services plus plenty of prize draws. Please check out their website for more information.

A Generous Spirit

July 25–Sept. 1
West Vancouver Museum
westvancouvermuseum.ca

Thanks to generous patrons, artists and donors, the West Vancouver Museum houses over 300 works by local artists and their associates from across the country. The Museum's Permanent Collection ensures that the community's legacy of great art and design is preserved and celebrated. *A Generous Spirit* presents a selection of these exceptional works, highlighting works by women artists in particular, such as Emily Carr and Jane Billaux. There will be an opening reception on July 24, and a talk and tour on August 18.

Harmony Arts Festival

Aug. 3–12
1564 Argyle Avenue,
West Vancouver
www.harmonyarts.ca

For 28 years, the Harmony Arts Festival has been one of the North Shore's most popular cultural events. The free festival draws crowds from all over the city to celebrate a harmonious balance of visual, culinary and performing arts on the spectacular West Vancouver waterfront. The festival will feature world-class musical performances, inspiring art exhibitions and demonstrations, mouth-watering culinary events, Indigenous showcases, outdoor movies and more!

Powell Street Festival

Aug. 4–5
Powell Street, Vancouver
www.powellstreetfestival.com

This long running community celebration returns to Vancouver for the 42nd time to celebrate the art and culture of the Japanese Canadian people. This year's extravaganza includes works from acclaimed visual artists Chiharu Mizukawa and Nao Uda, virtuoso percussionist Tatsuya Nakatani and the Nakatani Gong Orchestra (a 14-person gong ensemble) and a presentation on Asian fetishism by writer and performance artist Sophia Akiko Stephens. For a complete schedule of events, please visit their website.

Maple Ridge Caribbean Festival

Aug. 4–5
Albion Fairgrounds, Maple Ridge
www.caribbeanfest.ca

This musical festival returns to the Albion Fairgrounds in Maple Ridge to showcase the music and culture of the islands of the Caribbean. This great free family event will have arts & crafts vendors, a kid zone and a variety of authentic Caribbean food as well as over 100 entertainers performing music spanning a variety of

styles such as Reggae, Calypso, Salsa and Soca music and much more. For more information, please visit the festival's website.

Queer Film Festival

Aug. 9–19
Various cinemas and venues in Vancouver
www.queerfilmfestival.ca

Celebrating the best in independent queer cinema, the Vancouver Queer Film Festival returns to the city for the 30th time to proudly showcase films that illuminate the transformative moments in the lives of queer people – telling stories of the journeys we have taken to find ourselves, each other and our place in the world and creating social change through film, education and dialogue. More than just film, the festival also hosts performances, workshops, panel discussions, parties and more, creating a unique community space for eleven days each August. For showtimes and a list of films, please visit the festival website.

New West Cultural Crawl

Aug. 10–12
Various locations in New Westminster
www.newwestculturalcrawl.com

The New West Cultural Crawl is an annual arts and culture festival that celebrates and exhibits the vast creative talents across New Westminster. Artist studios and venues open their doors to welcome thousands of visitors from across Metro Vancouver. There will be a sneak peek opening night on Aug. 10 at the Anvil Centre, followed by two days of music, entertainment, food and, of course, plenty of art, around the Royal City. For a complete list of locations, please check out their website.

Recipe by Jen dela Luna

Arroz con Leche

Having grown up in the Philippines, rice-based desserts are very familiar to me and, when done right, can be some of my favourite desserts! With the right balance of sweetness and richness, arroz con leche – Colombian rice pudding – is a fantastic finish to a meal. I enjoy

rice pudding warm or cold, and I personally prefer it a bit on the runnier side (though I know many who like it thicker and drier, like risotto or some even drier than that, like thick, sticky Korean rice). This dish is incredibly easy to make, and once you start, you'll never think about getting storebought pudding again!

Ingredients

- 250 g long grain rice
- 500 mL water
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 500 mL milk
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp vanilla extract
- 150 g sugar
- 500 mL milk
- 1 can (12 oz) condensed milk

Method

1. In a small pot, steep the cinnamon sticks in the water, bringing it to a boil and allowing it to simmer for approximately 10 minutes, infusing the water.
2. Transfer the water to a larger pot with the rice and cook over medium heat for five minutes.

3. Thoroughly stir in the milk, butter, vanilla and sugar and continue cooking the rice, stirring occasionally, for another 12–14 minutes, uncovered.
4. Stir in the rest of the milk as well as the condensed milk and reduce the heat to medium-low. Mix the rice, making sure all the ingredients are thoroughly combined, for 50–60 minutes. The mixture will thicken so keep an eye to see when it reaches your desired consistency and thickness.
5. Take the mixture off the heat and allow it to cool.
6. Though it is atypical, I don't mind serving the rice pudding warm! Alternatively, refrigerate the pudding for several hours or overnight (it will thicken even more!) before serving. This is ideal to make ahead for parties as it can be done the day before.
7. Serve alone, with a dusting of cinnamon, or drizzled with arequipe (Colombian dulce de leche). Enjoy!



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