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'air' in film
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The Source

forum of diversity

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Verbatim

Vancouver, a journey at the heart of diversity

by SARAH METZGER

French by birth and daughter of immigrants, I have known many different cultures and traveled to a great many countries during my lifetime – Switzerland, Belgium, Israel, Italy, Malaysia. I have experienced a lot of different cultures and met a lot of fascinating people. Each country had its own identity, traditions and conventions.

Being accustomed to such diversity, I have always been keen to discover new cultures and narratives. Five years ago, I decided to add one more country and a new culture to my list: Western Canada and Vancouver. However, to limit Vancouver to a single culture is like saying that the French only eat cheese (and to those who wonder, it makes little sense).

Like many North American cities, Vancouver was built by immigrants, and today, in addition to the First Nations culture, a wealth of other cultures make up its history. I expected to meet on a daily basis those famous Canadians whose kindness I had heard so much about.

I must say that, instead, I have come across very few, because the city overflows with so many other nationalities. On the street one can hear all languages, and the restaurants offer a multitude of ethnic cuisine for all tastes. The characteristic North American smell of the hot dog permeates Granville Street, whereas the whiffs of dumplings from the Chinese district gently fade away into the gentle aroma of curry on West 4th Avenue. Clearly, I can choose a new taste every day, depending on my mood.

All those diverse cultures are not necessarily grouped

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The Source turns 20

Two decades of local community reporting

by SIMON YEE

Two decades ago, founding publisher and editor-in-chief Mamadou Gangué announced the publication of *The Source's* first stories in a brief editorial, outlining its mission and raison d'être as a bilingual Anglo-French community newspaper.

"This paper is first and foremost your newspaper," Gangué wrote in June 1999. "We will never for-

get that your ideas are the driving forces behind *The Source*."

Through feature stories, news articles, opinion columns and the cultural calendar, *The Source* realizes its role as a community newspaper reporting stories by, for and about the people of the many communities and cultures that live, work and play in Vancouver, British Columbia and its surrounds.

The first feature the paper launched – which still persists to this day – is the Verbatim

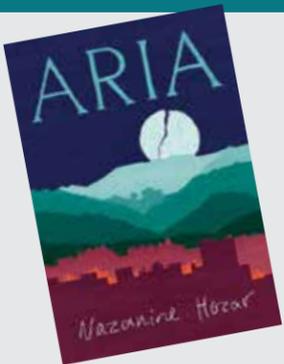
column, a forum for community members, new and old, to share their impressions of life in a multicultural cosmopolitan city like Vancouver. Over the years, the Verbatim has touched on a wide variety of topics such as culture shock, ethnic identity and belonging, learning a new language, moving to Canada and celebrating differences. As a regular and well-loved part of *The Source*, the paper remains committed to continuing the column to shine a light on local subjects,

thoughts and ideas that shape the city and its residents.

Much has changed in the world of journalism the last 20 years. The decline of print journalism and the rise of social media created seismic shifts in the world of local news reporting and small-market newspapers around the country. We, the staff of *The Source*, wondered whether there is still a place for a small, local, multicultural community newspaper in a time

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explore overcoming
and healing
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Cultural Spotlight



Photo courtesy of Ante Pocrnic

Celebrating Croatian culture in Vancouver

by NAOMI TSE

The Croatian Cultural Centre will be holding their fourth annual Croatia Days Festival this year. According to Ante Pocrnic, Vice President of the United Croats of Canada, over 3000 people attended the festival in previous years and he expects the turnout to increase yet again. This year the three-day event is being held from June 14–16.

Pocrnic says that the first festival was held in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the United Croats of Canada. The non-profit organization runs the Croatian Cultural Centre, which was established in 1986 by Croatian immigrants.

“We thought it would be a great opportunity to showcase our culture,” says Pocrnic.

Pocrnic, a first generation Croatian born and raised in Vancouver, says that many Croats immigrated to Vancouver in the 1960s and 1970s due to political and economic reasons. These immigrants wanted to continue their Croatian cultural traditions in Vancouver and thus the Croatian Cultural Centre was founded in 1986.

“We want people to learn what Croatia is about,” says Pocrnic.

Food and folk dancing

The festivities include 3v3 futsal or soccer tournaments for adults and kids, a marketplace,

Croatian art displays, Croatian music and folk dancing. Vendors in the marketplace will be selling a variety of Croatian goods ranging from food to souvenirs. In addition, there will be an outdoor beer garden.

In terms of food, the festival will feature a few dishes such as *sarma*, a traditional Croatian style cabbage roll, and *brudet*, a typical Croatian style fish stew, as well as a variety of Croatian sweets such as traditional dry pastries called *kifle* cookies.

There will also be traditional Croatian folklore dancing by the centre’s Croatian Knights



Photo courtesy of Ante Pocrnic

▲ Ante Pocrnic, vice-president of the United Croats of Canada.

Folklore Ensemble as well as other troupes. The ensemble has over 100 dancers ranging from as young as 5 years old up to 50 years old. The ensemble’s president, Katarina Lulic, says that their choreographers are either from Croatia or have trained extensively there.

“It’s important to preserve the dance as much as possible and to

keep it accurate,” says Lulic.

Lulic says that most Croatian dances are formed in a circle called a *kolo*, which involves a lot of partner work. The dancers may form lines or break off into groups but the main shape is a circle. Most dances are based on a story and the choreography varies from region to region. In the interior regions, dances are performed to the beat of the dancers’ feet, vocals and stomping are used in lieu of musical instruments. In the southern regions, the dances are much more upbeat and may feature lively music from a *tamburica*, an instrument similar to a banjo. The costumes also vary depending on how wealthy the region is. For example, wealthier regions may use silk for the costumes and their dancers will be adorned with more jewelry.

Born and raised in Vancouver to a Canadian mother and Croatian father, Lulic’s parents put her in Croatian dance classes when she was in kindergarten.

“The friendships I made kept me involved,” says Lulic. “It’s a way to immerse yourself in the culture and I make friends who are Croatian and speak the language.”

Like Lulic, Pocrnic sees the value in continuing to build up Croatian culture in Vancouver. Pocrnic has high hopes for the festival.

“Year one was an extreme success,” says Pocrnic. “We want to continue building it in the community as a great brand where people can come and have a drink and really enjoy a day in Croatia.”

For more information, please visit www.croatiancentre.com.

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The Source turns 20

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Cultural intelligence – A necessary life skill

by SUSAN HANCOCK

Progressive organizations across Canada engage employees through diversity and inclusion programs.

“The business community is motivated to develop intercultural competency (IC),” says Taslim Damji, an intercultural practitioner and facilitator for MOSAIC, Multilingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities.

Understanding cultural diversity and learning to empathize and embrace different behaviours is key to building strong relationships in a community. Progressive organizations are taking a leadership role in building cultural intelligence that has the capacity to filter into every aspect of that employee’s life.

“Some people live in very hierarchical societies, while others live in very egalitarian societies. These types of societies can make a difference in how a person participates at work,” says Damji.

When Catherine Gordon, former director of human resources (2012-2018) at David Suzuki Foundation, organized IC training for 30 employees through MOSAIC. She thought the course effectively taught staff how to respect cultural differences, even in situations when it’s difficult to align both viewpoints.

“I think employees are now more willing to approach cultur-



▲ Intercultural interaction picnic.

ally difference with more curiosity, rather than presume their own perspective is true,” says Gordon. “Now they are more curious why that conversation happened... And, employees are able to learn from one another rather than getting defensive or jumping to conclusions that may not be correct.”

Cultural intelligence, similar to emotional intelligence, is about gaining self-awareness to successfully negotiate interactions with other people. Specifically, cultural intelligence is a desire to learn about different cultures, creating an awareness of cultural differences and similarities, and having the ability to build empathy around cultural

interactions with other people. “When people do things differently, we don’t need to react strongly...,” says Damji. “[Cultural intelligence] is about wanting to learn more rather than differences being an inconvenience... It’s a desire to work effectively across cultures.”

Intercultural competency training at MOSAIC

Since 2013 over 1000 people have participated in MOSAIC’s Intercultural Competency (IC) Training.

“The course creates a space to explore and address cultural differences through a variety of activities, says Damji. “ Par-

ticipants are encouraged to use their IC skills to process intercultural challenges in a safe space.”

MOSAIC’s IC training is geared to both newcomers and Canadians who are interested in building strong and healthy communities.

“People who participate in IC training have a desire to invite other people to be part of their community,” says Damji.

Damji explains that the training appeals to newcomers, which includes both immigrants and refugees, who are curious about their new environment.

“I believe that newcomers are very aware of the cultural differ-

ences when they move to Canada. They are keen to learn how to function successfully in their new community,” says Damji.

For many Canadians, the program offers an opportunity to learn about diverse cultures. Sometimes this means coming to terms with their own position of power and privilege.

“It can be difficult for people in a place of power and privilege to acknowledge and share their power,” says Damji. “They often want things to remain the same because they are comfortable with how they are positioned in society.”

Building a healthy economy and society

Gordon explains that IC training is part of David Suzuki Foundation’s overall commitment to diversity and inclusion. As a non-profit organization, the staff work with volunteers and donors in communities across Canada. The ability of their staff to respect and appreciate cultural differences is key to identifying not just one solution, but many unique ways to be innovative, resourceful and forward-thinking.

“The benefits of diversity and inclusion is that it allow us to learn about different perspectives; a fresh way of thinking; a way to approach a community in a different way,” says Gordon.

To learn more, please contact mosaicworks@mosaicbc.org.

Photo courtesy of MOSAIC

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Issues and Ideas

The housing market's war on culture and community

World's best city to live in", and "World's most reputable city" were the accolades thrown around by just about anyone who learned about my imminent departure to Vancouver. To my mind, the city has an immediate appeal and aura that these various reports and surveys seem to have tapped into: it's pleasant, safe and in a rather impressive location. The sobering truth is that Vancouver now wears neither of those two crowns, and it may very well have something to do with the fact that Vancouver has the second most expensive real estate market in the world relative to average annual earnings.

First impressions

Something I began noticing after it was brought to my attention on a causal evening stroll downtown is the substantial number of condominiums in this city that appear vacant. UBC adjunct urban planning professor Andrew Yan suggests that nearly a quarter of condos in Coal Harbour are either empty or occupied by non-residents, according to data from the 2011 census. The sight of the condos in this area in particular can provide an ominous and alienating experience to those walking the southeast end of the Stanley Park seawall. The walkways that con-

tour the modern-looking development projects are mainly occupied by fitness-obsessed joggers and photo-taking tourists. It is the ideal place to take in the elements from a safe distance, but certainly not the right place if your aim is to get a feel of the Vancouver vibe. This sort of development project ultimately brings to mind a question regarding the general outlook for Vancouver: what sort of a community are we aiming to foster in these high-rise neighborhoods that are swiftly emerging?

The investment that neighborhoods like Coal Harbour, Yaletown and Gastown are seeing, whether it be foreign or domestic, seems to have created a class of residents who are not part of the active population of Vancouver. I admit that the latter two neighborhoods, much like the areas near Denman and Davie, do boast a large number of well-frequented shops and restaurants, which account for a substantial portion of the city's cultural output. But on the other hand, the many shops and restaurants in Coal Harbour give a false impression of the level of activity in this neighborhood. Aside from the fact that most coffee shops and restaurants in this area are of the chain brand variety, they tend to close not long after the regular daytime work hours are over, and are no busier on



Photo by Tim Niu

▲ New residential buildings in Downtown Vancouver – but what type of community are they creating?

weekends than they are on weekdays.

The road ahead

A highly anticipated TED conference took place only a stone's throw away from Coal Harbour, and the response seemed rather underwhelming. Not even the 747-foot sky sculpture that soared over the event space (half the span of the Brooklyn Bridge), could entice residents to congregate around Canada Place. To my mind, the take-home message is that city planners should carefully reflect on recent and future changes made to Vancouver's skyline.

Simon Fraser University's Vancouver campus is sometimes regarded as the intellectual hub of the downtown core. Yet the university has also been at the forefront of the gentrification process of the historical East Side, a continuing process that threatens the livelihood of several iconic establishments on Hastings that define the city's raw-and-real entertainment culture. It would come with great remorse to see the Hasting area be irreparably altered by the sort of housing developments found in Coal Harbour: a neighborhood created ex nihilo, with a transient community that can't seem to make a meaningful mark on the cultural fabric of this city. ✍

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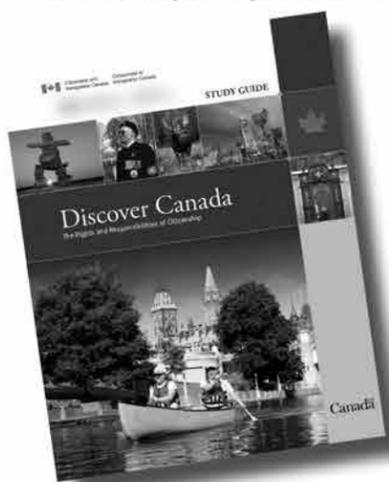
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Photo by Colin J McMechan

Education with a touch of empathy and compassion

by WENJIE SHEN

In Dar es Salaam, the largest city in Tanzania, Alim Fakirani met with a local teacher during his work at the Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development. Although from different cultural backgrounds, a sense of understanding gradually sparked between them.

“Even though we came from different contexts, we were still able to relate to one another’s profession,” says Fakirani, an international education consultant.

After seven years teaching, researching and developing programs, Fakirani sees education as playing a fundamental role in bettering society.

“I believe education has a huge role in improving our society. Without a strong, robust system,



Photo by Arzina Zaver

▲ Alim Fakirani, education consultant.

teachers in a society don’t function as well,” he says.

Delivering Canadian values through education

Fakirani attaches a lot of value to expressing empathy, compassion and love, which he says are also

education from a completely different perspective,” says Fakirani, who established himself in Vancouver in 2015.

An accidental career

Born and raised in Montreal, Quebec, Fakirani was doing his

“Without a strong, robust system, teachers in a society don’t function as well.”

Alim Fakirani, Aga Khan University-Institute for Educational Development

core Canadian values. Teaching Canadian values, he says, shouldn’t be restricted to school projects. Empathy and compassion could be taught in a math class, a history class or a science class. Schools and educators have the chance to help students better understand the world around them.

“I think education has a very fundamental role in making us better aware of one another, who you are, what our needs are, what our interests are, what our values are,” Fakirani says, “I think education also has the potential to foster empathy, a sense of understanding and a sense of compassion with one another.”

While working in Tanzania, where the Aga Khan University offers a Master’s program in education, Fakirani witnessed local individuals not just become great teachers and excellent administrators, but also remarkable leaders.

“I have met so many wonderful people [there, that] speaking of their wonderful experience crossed my mind. It’s just a wonderful opportunity for teachers from Canada to understand edu-

undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree with a double-major in world religions and political science at McGill University. He never thought he would choose to become a teacher.

After completing three years of undergraduate study, Fakirani started a Secondary Teacher Education Program. One of the components of the program’s requirement was to teach in class, which became the turning point in Fakirani’s life.

“When I was teaching, I thought ‘this is for me,’ this is something I actually am very passionate about. I was teaching in Montreal, then I also taught in London. Those two combined experiences helped me get to know students better,” he says.

Fakirani has high expectations for students. From his perspective, the future of the planet lies in their hands.

“The reality is they are going to become the leaders of tomorrow, and for me, to become someone who could potentially have an influence on their life, was an opportunity I didn’t want to miss out on,” says Fakirani. ✉



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Generating 'Air' in film

by NAILA TOPAN

Chinese aesthetics, Daoism and the concept of incorporating 'air' in film will be deconstructed in the talk *How to Generate Air in a Film: Lessons from Fei Mu's Chinese Aesthetics* by Siying Duan, a Ph.D. in Art Theory.

Generating "air" is a unique concept developed by one of China's greatest film Directors, Fei Mu, which Duan will summarize and demonstrate by showing scenes from the film *Spring in a Small Town*. The talk will be held at VIVO Media Arts Centre on June 11, 2019.

From Peking opera to new media

"The Western idea of film or film technology was still very new and fresh in China at the time [that Fei Mu (1906–1951) began producing films]. China had its own way of entertainment until then, which was Peking opera," says Duan.

She emphasizes that Fei Mu, as a director and film theorist, faced the emergent challenge of combining these two ways of entertainment.

"In film, everything is concrete and clearly showcased to make an audience feel it's real," says Duan. "Peking opera just has one or two people on the stage, allowing the audience to imagine a world based on their movement, gestures, and voice. Fei Mu was mostly concerned about how to

transfer these older Chinese aesthetics to a new platform."

Few directors at the time were engaged in that particular process.

While some directors chose to adopt the Western film genre, Fei Mu opted for something different. "Fei Mu, instead, used a more poetic way of expression in his film, opposing dramatic conflict and away from political propaganda intentions," says Duan.

Duan relays that Fei Mu started his film career in the early stages of Chinese film, directing the very first colour film in China: *A Wedding in the Dream* in 1948, which featured an infamous Peking opera figure of the time.

"It was a very subtle time for the film industry and a sensitive time

politically," she says. "*A Wedding in the Dream* was made one year before the founding of the Republic of China, and Fei Mu was criticized for not addressing too many political things – to him, the actual objects of his film were more important."

Daoism and 'air'

Fei Mu proposed four methods of how to generate air in film by using shooting style, sound, optics and visual effects, explains Duan. The name for air in Chinese is Kōngqì, and that Qì (chi), is a very important concept in Chinese philosophy, especially in Daoism.

"Daoist monks say that Qì is the thing that generates everything in the cosmos – it's the principal

element of everything," she says. "Kōngqì– is a specific term that relates back to chi, encompassing all ideas like weather, air, atmosphere, or the nature of a person."

When directors incorporate chi in film, the characters in the film are connected to the audience, explains Duan.

By showing scenes from *Spring in a Small Town*, Duan will engage the audience with the visual and emotional effects of incorporating this idea of oneness within film.

"Fei Mu did a great job of showing a combination of what's real and what's virtual, between the invisible and visible in this film," she says, providing an example from the beginning scene where the camera slowly pans in on the main character walking very slowly. "It's a very typical combination of Chinese Daoism and new film expression. It shows the whole background, highlighting the combination of human and environment. The camera movement unfolds the whole scene like the unfolding of a traditional Chinese painting scroll – slowly and horizontally." She discusses how even in this brief shot, the positioning portrays the melancholy tone and the story of the protagonist.

Chinese aesthetics

In reference to Hollywood films, Duan notes how the cuts move rapidly. In contrast, *Spring in a Small Town* is slower paced and

simple. "If you don't see the movement of the camera or how the character is positioned it would seem boring," says Duan. "All the subtle emotions of the characters are very visible to the audience because of the way it is filmed."

The concept of chi itself, because it's so fundamental and ever present in every aspect of Chinese culture is what draws her to Fei Mu's approach.

"My own interest is in bringing the perspective of Chinese aesthetics to contemporary media art, it's very important to my research. I am very sensitive to the existence of it in all different types of artworks," she says.

The talk is an addition to the workshop she recently co-facilitated on "Cross Cultural Roots for Media Practice," further enabling art creators and scholars to draw on non-Western cultures for inspiration.

For those who do not practice new media but would like to attend the talk, Duan welcomes their interest. "I hope they would be interested in watching a different type of film or will be able to identify a unique aesthetic that they haven't seen or noticed before," says Duan. ✉

For more information, visit www.eventbrite.ca/e/how-to-generate-air-in-a-film-lessons-from-fei-mus-chinese-aesthetics-tickets-61589815797 and www.substantialmotion.org/profile/siying-duan



Photo courtesy of Siying Duan

▲ Siying Duan, Ph. D in Art Theory.

► "Retrospective" from page 1 of profound change. What reasons would draw future writers, editors and reporters to a local newspaper like *The Source*?

To help answer that question, *The Source* reached out to some of its past contributors to gain some insight. Our contributors come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Some are born and raised Vancouverites, others are Canadian immigrants and newcomers. Some are casual writers, others are professional authors. Some continue to work in journalism and others have gone on to pursue other interests. We were thrilled to reconnect with the reporters and editors who have contributed to the success of the paper in its two decades in existence and find out what they have been doing since their time at the paper.

One of the main reasons contributors come to *The Source* is to try their hand with journalistic writing. The community newspaper provides a great way for people new to journalism to gain valuable experience with

the journalistic process, getting all the way from an idea to a published article.

Coming with a passion for writing fiction stories, former reporter and editor-in-chief Olga Livshin joined *The Source* – her first writing gig – in 2007. As an immigrant speaking with an accent, she felt immensely grateful for the opportunity to work at the paper, which had helped increase her confidence with speaking and communicating with people and refine her writing abilities. Currently, she writes for the Jewish Independent paper and continues writing short stories and speculative fiction, but she'll always cherish her experiences with our paper.

"I learned so much while working for *The Source*, I don't think any official writing school could've compared," says Livshin. "I learned writing with precision. I learned interviewing skills. I encountered many amazing people. And I learned a lot about myself. It changed me as a person, showed me how to be 'more.'"

Similarly, former reporter Phoebe Yu came to *The Source* in 2010. During her time at the paper, she developed her time management and feature writing skills. She eventually earned her Masters in Journalism and although she currently writes as a content and social media writer in business, she credits the newspaper for opening writing as a viable career path.

"When I started writing for *The Source*, it was the first time I thought that writing wasn't just a hobby," Yu says. "Writing every article was always rewarding because I always learned something from it – especially after getting feedback from the team. Practice makes perfect, right?"

Other writers come to *The Source* to promote civic engagement, eager for the opportunity to interview and tell the stories of the social changemakers and cultural innovators living and working in Vancouver. Former reporter Florence Hwang, who contributed from 2013 to 2018 and currently works for CBC Saskatchewan, appreciated learning about the vari-

ous stories and topics she reported on. For her, being curious and building connections help discover good stories in ethnic communities that wouldn't normally be covered in mainstream media.

"The article I'm most proud of is the one about World Autism Day. I learned so much about this topic and I met some very friendly and helpful people who were willing to educate me about not only the condition, their experience, but also the complications in lobbying for change in legislation (to gain more funding for families)," says Hwang.

Perhaps the most important reason readers contribute to *The Source* is the strong sense of community it creates for newcomers to Canada and Vancouver. Former editors Andrew King and Samuel Ramos, who contributed from 2005 to 2007 and 2008 to 2013 respectively, attest to the notion that community journalism's lasting legacy is the influence it has on a city, giving voice and belonging to those who may otherwise feel marginalized.

"*The Source* newspaper gives you a strong sense of belong-

ing in a city that suffers from perceptions of alienation and a lack of sociability amongst its citizens," Ramos says. "It always served as a meeting point, something to look forward to where you can make long standing friendships with people from across the world, share in the love of writing, diversity and interculturalism."

"Volunteer-run local papers are the lifeblood of community engagement and bring to life the cultural identity that too often lies below the surface," King says. "*The Source* was so unique because it brought together such a diverse group of people. I'm so happy to see it continuing to thrive years after I was involved."

Indeed, these reasons are why we will continue to write and report on the cultural happenings of the people of our multicultural city. It's already been 20 years, but, at the same time, it's only been 20 years. Thank you to all our readers and contributors; here's to the third decade of *The Source*! ✉



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Aria: A universal story from a not-so-far-away land

by KYLIE LUNG

A sweeping tale of perseverance and the strength of the human, especially female, spirit is the journey readers experience as Nazanine Hozar tells a story about her homeland of Iran in her debut novel *Aria*.

Hozar, a UBC Alum, has been published in *The Vancouver Observer* and *Prairie Fire* magazine; and June 25, at the Central Library, Hozar will be in conversation about her book with Hal Wake, former artistic director of Vancouver Writers Fest.

"I don't think [*Aria*] has to be an Iranian thing," says Hozar, "and I think it's going to shed some light on the country and how people survive, as well as a means of understanding why people do what they do when met with powers beyond their control."

Tehran to Canada

Hozar was born in Tehran, Iran, and moved to Canada in 1985. She says her parents were concerned about raising a daughter in the totalitarian country and

the subsequent lack of opportunities that life may afford her.

The delicate political nature of Iran during Hozar's childhood is reflected well in her own heroine's upbringing.

“I decided early on in my life that I had to speak for all of this. Give voice to the voiceless.”

Nazanine Hozar, author of *Aria*

"I had to make the choice between writing this book and being able to go back to Iran regularly," says Hozar, "and I made my decision."



▲ Nazanine Hozar, author of *Aria*.

Hozar has never traveled back to Iran since leaving as a child.

Aria's historical journey

For historical background, in 1953 the democratically elected

is surrounded by spiritually powerful women in the novel who come to act as her pseudo-mothers.

"The toughness of the women," says Hozar, "is always in retaliation to the severe misogyny that exists."

A misunderstood nation

Aria's story may take place in Iran, but that does not mean it ceases to be relatable to every human experience.

Hozar links the story to current events.

"I think you can apply [this story] to America, especially right now, and so many other places around the world," says Hozar.

Hozar hopes to change some of the negative perceptions of her homeland through this universal tale.

"Iranians are profoundly spiritual and open," she says. "It's

not this closed land that wants others to let them be – it's an extremely rich and forward thinking society."

It is only the beginning for this BC author. She hopes to write more novels based in the land she left so many years ago. Hozar, as a child of war, has many images to draw from her time in Iran during the Khomeini regime.

"I saw people hurt. We heard about executions and imprisonments, and with my own eyes I saw the terrible treatment of people," says Hozar.

Hozar feels these experiences have led her to a purpose as an author and as a human being.

"I decided early on in my life that I had to speak for all of this. Give voice to the voiceless," she says. "It's not only with this one novel, but hopefully with a series in the future. I'm hoping this is just the start. We'll see what the world thinks." ✍

Aria is set to be released on June 11 by Penguin Random House Canada. For more information, please visit www.vpl.bibliocommons.com/events/5cb8ce40d1b7123400b70c1a

► "Verbatim" from page 1

around communities (except for the culture of the charming Chinese district), and this is what makes Vancouver's diversity so rich and unique.

No matter where I am in the city, I come across people from everywhere, discovering their cultures and their traditions. Every day I experience diversity on the bus, in the cafes, but especially in my job. I work in customer service in downtown Vancouver. Of all the employees, Canadians can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The majority of employees are Irish, Mexican, French, Taiwanese, Chinese, and Australian. Lunchtime is a true cultural cacophony where everyone shares accents and cultures.

at how quickly I can leave the urban center and find myself in the middle of nature whenever I feel like it. In the same afternoon, I can go see a new movie, have coffee with friends and go rest by the waves on Kitsilano beach. I don't know many other cities that can offer such extraordinary sunsets that transform buildings, tree tops, slow moving waves and the mountains beyond.

This diversity is also reflected in the activities available in Vancouver. In the winter, the ski lifts run to the mountain tops, just a few kilometers from Vancouver. In the summer, kayakers and paddle pros crowd lakes and oceans, and hikers take over mountain trails. And if you do not like fresh air, sum-



▲ Vancouver: a meeting of communities.

But Vancouver's diversity does not reside solely with its multicultural people. The city's appearance changes with the rhythm of the seasons: in turn flamboyant in the autumn, colourful in spring, sunny in summer and cold and grey in winter.

In addition, Vancouver beautifully blends cityscapes with natural spaces. I have been pleasantly surprised when walking along the city streets

mer brings lots of festivals, open air theaters, concerts, etc.

Make no mistake, Vancouver truly offers plenty of cultures and a variety of landscapes. Diversity is the very culture that defines the city. For that reason, each person will find their home here. I, from very early on, know that no matter what I wish for, Vancouver will offer it to me. ✍

Translation by Lin Weaver

SUNSET PICNIC AT VANIER PARK MULTICULTURALISM DAY: JUNE 27, 2019, 6-9PM

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Paradise Has Many Gates

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Would your organization/community/youth/dancers/artist and friends be open to participating and sharing a part of their cultural craft? Contact info@vancouverbiennale.com/ 604-682-1289 if you would like to participate.

This event will take place on unceded x'məθkwə'yəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Sə'íl-wə-təʔ/Sə'íl-wit'ulh (Tsleil-Waututh) territory.

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Laila Biali – the new jazz queen in town

by XI CHEN

According to many reviews, a beautiful voice, dynamic melodies and a high energy seem to capture pianist, lyricist and singer Laila Biali's music and spirit well.

The multi-talented Vancouver native just won this year's JUNO award for Vocal Jazz Album of the year, marking a new milestone in her music career. As part of the program for the upcoming TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival, she will be performing at Pyatt Hall on June 22.

The spirit of jazz

"I live in Toronto now, but I came from Vancouver. I was living in NYC for eight and a half years.

the Sesame Street theme song she heard from television on the family's piano and her mother realized she had a musical ear and subsequently enrolled her in piano.

In her teenage years, Biali nearly went on to pursue science on a University of British Columbia (UBC) scholarship, but in the end decided to follow her love for music to study jazz at Humber College, also on a scholarship.

After releasing her first album in 2005 and opening for Diana Krall the same year, Biali became a music force of her own might. She collaborated with Sting over the years after being chosen to sing with his band in 2009. Garnering multiple awards, she has performed live at prestigious jazz venues all



Photo by Edith Maybin

▲ Laila Biali.

The album that I won the JUNO for – a lot of was written and produced in New York; a lot was inspired by New York," says Biali.

The self-titled album, released in 2018, is a collection of Biali's favourites. With a diverse taste in music ranging from classical to pop, Biali's own style is contemporary and fresh and could encompass both the intricacy of classical music and the energy of pop.

"We go out on Monday night/It doesn't matter if the mood ain't right/Got my shoes and Hot Tools hair/Feelin' like we could go anywhere/So let's go... paint the town bright red," read the lyrics in *We Go*, capturing the vibe of a night out in New York but with her own jazzy spin.

"I think it is the spirit of jazz; there is an element of spontaneity and improvisation and freshness. It comes from the band, with the song that hopefully would lead to creativity, experimentation and play. I love the collective spirit of it," she says, regarding Jazz as a genre "Sometimes things go in a different direction... [jazz] is an adventurous form of music; I am fundamentally an adventurous kind of person. It is almost like I get to travel with the songs – it is hugely gratifying to me."

The musician's journey

Biali's musical adventure started early, despite the fact that neither of her parents were trained musicians. According to her anecdote, at three and a half years old, she tried to play

over the world, as well delivering a memorable performance at the TED conference in 2016.

Balancing life and art

Biali is the host of a weekly radio show, Saturday Night Jazz on CBC Music, on top of being the mother of a nine-year-old.

Trying her best to maintain a good work-life balance, Biali is still creating, currently working on her next album, with singles expected to be rolled out in the fall and the album launched early next year.

"I will go to Banff Centre, where they have huts for musicians with pianos. I was there in January for six days and I wrote most of the new album. At home with all the demands of daily life, it is difficult to carve out the time and mental space to work on the songs; I grab these little tidbits and threads of ideas and I sew them together when I am on a writing retreat," she says.

Biali says the next album will be a highly personal one, exploring the theme of healing and overcoming hardships.

"I am dedicating the album to Wendy, who passed away last summer. She succumbed to kidney cancer – she was one of my best friends, always supported me. She is such an inspiring person. I felt a great loss and [now have] a big hole in my life. The songs will still have energy, but they all explore the concept of healing and overcoming challenges in our lives," she says. ✍️

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

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Cultural Calendar

June 11–25, 2019

by SIMON YEE

The summer solstice begins on June 21 in Vancouver, signifying the beginning of summer. From checking out community theatre to viewing the latest art opening to trying new foods at the many festivals happening around town, there's something for everyone both indoors and out. June 16 is Father's Day, so why not bring your dad to see and enjoy some of these events together!

The Melville Boys

June 6–29
Bernie Legge Theatre,
New Westminster
www.vagabondplayers.ca

The Vagabond Players community theatre is presenting a production of Canadian playwright Norm Foster's *The Melville Boys* at the Bernie Legge Theatre in New Westminster this month. A relaxing weekend trip full of fishing, football and beer is on the agenda for the Melville brothers. So is confronting eldest brother Lee's terminal illness. But their trip is thrown for a loop when the boys meet two attractive sisters who inadvertently change more than their weekend plans. In this modern Canadian classic, Foster offers a tender comedy full of vigour about brotherhood and the unexpected. Check out the player's website for tickets.

88th BC Highland Games & Scottish Festival

June 15, 7 a.m.–9 p.m.
Lafarge Lake Park, Coquitlam
www.bchighlandgames.com

Celebrate Scotland, the northernmost constituent country of the United Kingdom, now at a new location this year at Lafarge Lake Park in Coquitlam on June 15. There will be caber tossing, highland dancing and bagpipe competitions as well as plenty of Scottish delicacies to try, like haggis and Irn Bru. There will also be a beer garden for the adult crowd. Opening ceremonies, Celtic music, Scottish/Serbian dance col-



▲ Preparing for Caber Toss.

laborations, Scottish country dancing, vendors, kids' activities and the massed pipe bands will blow your socks off. Please check out the Highland Games website for more information.

Croatia Days Festival 2019

June 15, 10 a.m.–midnight
(main day)
Croatian Cultural Centre,
Vancouver
www.croatiancentre.com

The Croatian Cultural Centre on Commercial Drive will be hosting the Croatia Days Festival in mid-June. This annual event takes a moment to celebrate one of the most vibrant communities in the Lower Mainland! As a part of this year's festivities, guests will enjoy free admission as well as live entertainment, folk dancing, music, choir performances, a children's play area, futsal, video entertainment, a variety of fresh food and a beer garden. The main event is on June 15, but there will be a soccer tournament on Friday night and a Father's Day picnic on Sunday. Check out the centre's website for the event schedule.

Langara College Community Day

June 15, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.
Langara College, Vancouver
www.beyond49.langara.ca/community-day

Langara College is celebrating its 49th anniversary on 49th Avenue and they would like to invite the

community to partake in the festivities. There will be food trucks, a kids' zone, prizes, live music from 54-40 and other musical guests and much more. For a complete schedule of events, please check out the Beyond 49 Langara website.

Breakout Festival 2019

June 15–16
Pacific National Exhibition,
Vancouver
www.pne.ca/event/breakout-festival-2019

After two successful inaugural events in 2018, the Breakout Festival returns for its second outdoor festival and will feature some of the hottest artists in hip-hop alongside some of Vancouver's most promising rising acts. The 2019 festival will bring a one-of-a-kind experience to festival goers of all ages. Taking place this summer over two days at Vancouver's historic PNE Amphitheatre, festival tickets will include access to the concert area and Playland with over 35 rides. Additional festival attractions include a VIP section, a food truck area, 19+ bars, an alcohol-free zone, a merch area and more.

Sasquatch Days

June 15–16
Harrison Hot Springs,
British Columbia
www.tourismharrison.com/sasquatch-days

Planning on heading out on a mini vacation close to Vancouver?

Want to take your dad out on a day trip for Father's Day? Why not check out Sasquatch Days, which is held on June 15 and 16 in the village of Harrison Hot Springs, just north of Chilliwack? Since 1938, this intercultural celebration includes canoe races, a traditional salmon barbeque and medicine walks. This two-day event begins with a short procession to Harrison Lake Plaza where a welcoming ceremony will be held at 9:30 a.m. Each day will feature medicine walks and opportunities for intercultural sharing. For more information, check out the Harrison tourism website.

Queer Arts Festival

June 17–28
Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre, Vancouver
www.queerartsfestival.com

The Queer Arts Festival (QAF) is an annual professional artist-run multidisciplinary arts festival, which produces, presents and exhibits with a curatorial vision favouring challenging, thought-provoking work that pushes boundaries and initiates dialogue. The festival ties together a curated visual art exhibition, performing arts series, workshops, artist talks, panels and media art screenings. This year's theme is rEvolution, gathers together artists who push and transgress; art as the evolution of the revolution. For a complete list of events, please check out the festival's website.

Don Giovanni

June 20–22, 7:30 p.m.,
June 23, 2 p.m.
Old Auditorium at UBC,
University Endowment Lands
www.music.ubc.ca/ubc-opera-presents-don-giovanni

A powerful tale of lust and retribution combined with thrilling music will be playing mid-June at UBC Music's Old Auditorium. This operatic classic from Salzburgian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart tells the tale of the legend-

ary Don Juan, opera's most notorious bad boy. The suave, confident and rather chauvinistic Don Juan (known in Italian as Don Giovanni) roams Europe pursuing women wherever he goes. In this opera his habits catch up to him when old and new flames alike unite to see him punished. Check out UBC Music's website for tickets and more information.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

June 21, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Trout Lake, Vancouver
www.bcnationalindigenousday.com

Bring the family to celebrate National Indigenous Day at Trout Lake with a community-based, full day of events set to showcase and celebrate the diversity of Indigenous people across Canada. First Nations, Métis and Inuit people gather to share their spirit, experiences, stories, songs, art and dance with each other and the general community – with a whole day of entertainment, activities and fun planned for the whole family. Please visit the website for a detailed list of events, performers and more information.

Live at the Bolt: Persistence

June 21–22, 8 p.m.
Shadbolt Centre for the Arts,
Burnaby
www.shadboltcentre.com

Join Maiko Yamamoto of Theatre Replacement and Cory Phillee of the Shadbolt Centre as they curate an evening of multi-disciplinary women artists. All the work will stem from the infamous, and now inspiring, words of Senator Mitch McConnell describing the determination of his colleague Senator Elizabeth Warren who continued to speak on the floor of the Senate despite his directive to sit down and be quiet. The artists will all "voice" their own response to his directive and create an evening that is sure to be anything but quiet. For tickets and more information, please check out the Shadbolt Centre's website.

Street Photography by Denis Bouvier

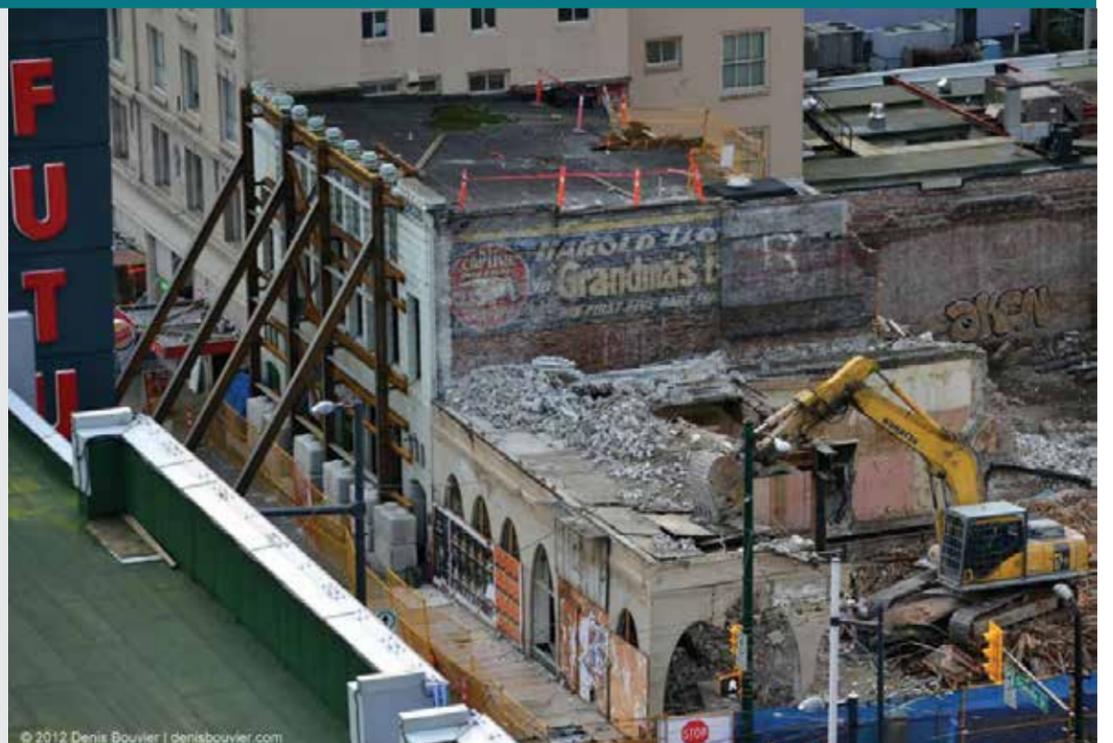
Backing into the future

The demolition of the Farmer Building (foreground of picture) at the corner of Robson and Granville has uncovered the past while making way for the future. Exposed on the Power Block Building beside it is a rare painted movie sign advertising the 1922 Harold Lloyd comedy *Grandma's Boy*. We can see a finger in a red circle pointing to the movie's location across the street where the original Capitol Theatre was located from 1921 until the mid-1970s. This 90 year old sign, only recently uncovered, was hidden away after the Farmer Building was constructed in 1922, the same year as the film. It will have another brief exposure until the Power Block Building is completely demolished except for its facade.

As we can read on the building's heritage plaque, the Power Block was origi-

nally constructed as a saloon in 1888 for Captain William Power, "the mayor" of North Vancouver's Moodyville (the oldest settlement on Burrard Inlet). It was first expanded and renovated in 1911. In 1929, the same architects of Vancouver City Hall, Townley & Matheson, added the rare art deco facade which features colourful terra cotta with Egyptian overtones.

Next to the Power Block is the home of the Source Newspaper, the art deco/art moderne Medical Arts Building (1922–23) by Maurice Helyer. He also built the historic Dominion Trust Building (1908–10) located on Victory Square with his father J.S. Helyer. The Medical Arts Building features one of the few remaining brass and copper panelled elevators in Canada. It also has the area's first geothermal heating system with 72 underground wells funnelling water into the building.



For now, the home of the Source Newspaper is safe but it will be sad to see the loss of another historic building like the Power Block, except

for its wonderful facade. Both the Power Block and Farmer Building will be replaced by a 5-storey retail and office building.

DON RICHARDSON

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