

Medicinal and
culinary herbs
to savour
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The Source

forum of diversity

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Verbatim

Growing up in Vancouver's multiculturalism

by HARRY JING

If you were to see me in school, I'd most likely be surrounded by Asian friends, but even though they all look more or less alike, their roots sprawl across the entire globe. One of them is an international student from Vietnam, and another grew up in rural Japan. I think that having friends of all backgrounds is pretty cool. Once in a while you get to hear about all the things they and their family do, and it reminds you of how different people are and how fascinating others' lives are. Of course, none of our cultural practices or skin colours really affect day to day life. We still spend our time complaining about homework and making plans for the weekend. We don't talk about our background because it's just not relevant most of the time.

The thing is, I didn't realize that Vancouver was special regarding multiculturalism. I assumed that the diversity I saw in school and in the community was common the world over. I made friends of all ethnicities and ate "funny" foreign foods in school without giving it a second thought. Multiculturalism was just a lame school concept to a 10-year-old me. It wasn't until I traveled abroad that I realized Canada, and especially Vancouver, is incredibly unique in its sheer diversity. There was a massive drop in diversity even when I travelled to other major Canadian cities, not to mention the rest of the world. Take Japan, I was there this past spring break, and though it was tourist season, seeing a white or a black face amongst the crowds was like finding El Dorado.

Something I've noticed
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VIFF

Films, VR, robots and a ton of learning



Photo courtesy of VIFF

by XI CHEN

Featuring more than 300 curated films from every corner of the world and a list of legendary creators and master craftspeople, the 38th edition of the Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) will hit town between Sept. 26 to Oct. 11 with a fully packed schedule.

"The festival is certainly evolving," says Ken Tsui, lead producer and curator of VIFF, who is mainly responsible for VIFF live entertainment and Film Plus. "The festival in scope is getting

bigger, the amount of screening stays roughly the same, but the growth is coming outside of the screenings – the events, the conferences, the talks, the exhibitions. Film festival is not just about movies anymore, it is also about the dialogues, celebrations and creativities beyond the screen."

This year's festival will present a series of talks by a list of luminaries, familiar names for industry insiders and outsiders alike. Michael Moore will present a post-screening talk for his *Roger & Me* anniversary screening; legendary Canadian direc-

tor and multiple award winner Atom Egoyan will give a masterclass and have his latest film *Guest of Honour* screened at the opening gala; and Walter Murch, a three-time Oscar-winning sound designer and editor, will also share his experience at one of the creator talks – a series of sessions where leading creators share expertise.

"We also have a new program, VIFF Amp. It is a music and film conference, bringing some of the best of the best music supervisors and composers together to discuss music in film and TV," Tsui says. This is a festival for

creators, different to some other film festivals where celebrities are there to walk the carpets, here we engage them in full-length conversations about their crafts," he adds.

The rise of immersive storytelling

Tsui explains that while selected films at the festival usually reflect what is relevant to the world today, technology is increasingly becoming a bigger theme. This year's festival will showcase the second edition of VIFF Immersed which encom-

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Sorrow: film takes on
time capsule mien
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Play addresses
issues of identity
and belonging
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Cultural Spotlight

110 Years of a French Canadian community

by ASHLEY BOYKO

Looking for ways to “Flaunt your Frenchness?” Look no further than Maillardville, the local francophone community in Coquitlam who, in 2019, is celebrating the 110th anniversary of its founding.

Fraser Mills started off as a small mill hamlet in 1889 and soon became one of the biggest and most lucrative saw mill operations of the Commonwealth. By 1909, the surrounding area had developed with the addition of houses, a post office and a general store, amongst other essentials of a growing town. With this expansion, the founders of the mill, Frank Ross and James McLaren, came to realize that the mill was in need of manpower. Known for their proficiency in logging and forestry, workers from Quebec were sought after to work at the mill and, on Sept. 26, 1909, approximately 100 Quebecers arrived by train, ready to start a new job and experience life on the west coast. Over time, more and more French Canadians arrived and the community flourished and a chapel, Notre Dame de Lourdes, was built. In 1912, the Fraser Mills community was named Maillardville, in honour of visiting French priest, Father Edmond Maillard.

A milestone anniversary

Fast forward to today, the French Canadian community in Coquitlam is still thriving and prosperous. This is, in part, thanks to *La Société Francophone de Maillardville*, a non-profit organization, and the work of executive and artistic director Johanne Dumas. Madame Dumas has been in her role for 24 years. She has the responsibility of putting forth the requests of *La Société's* board members, organizing events and managing the team at their office.

“As they say in French, I’m *Le Gros Fromage*,” explains Dumas.

It has been an exciting and busy year for Mme. Dumas and Maillardville. Earlier this year in March, they had the 30th anniversary of *Le Festival du Bois*, the largest Francophone fête in Western Canada, an event that celebrates the culture and history of French Canadians. Each year, there is a lineup of Francophone musical artists, performances, activities and traditional French Canadian food of course.

“It went very well. We had over 10,000 people attend,”



▲ *Tire d'érablé* – maple syrup being poured on ice during a former *Festival du Bois*.

says Dumas about this year’s event. “For us that’s quite a milestone to have a French festival that has existed for over thirty years in a suburb of Vancouver.”

“Extravaganza of musicians, singers and performances”

La Société Francophone de Maillardville was also nominated this year for a Trille D’or award in the category of “Arts Presenter of the Year”, an accolade given to an organization for its promotion and celebration of French Canadian music. Unfortunately, *La Société* did not take home the award this year, but they still continue to actively support and endorse French

Canadian music through their events and activities.

“We’re like a folk fest. Our music is mainly around the *Festival du Bois*,” explains Dumas. “We have acts that come from BC and all over Canada. It’s a three day extravaganza of musicians, singers and performances for children.”

The next big event coming up is *La Fête de Maillardville*, a weekend celebrating the arrival of the first Quebecers and the formation of the community. From Friday, Sept. 20th to Sunday, Sept. 22nd there will be activities and events taking place, from musical performances to a commemorative mass.

“To celebrate the pioneers that first came to this neck of the woods,” says Dumas.

Aside from these annual larger events, visitors can also be present for the annual Christmas celebration, *La fête de Saint-Jean-Baptiste* in June, French classes, French summer camp for kids as well as take part in geocaching.

Madame Dumas encourages everyone to come out and check out the events they have planned.

“Everyone is welcome to take part in all our activities,” she says. “Most of the information on our website is in both official languages.”



▲ Johanne Dumas.

To learn more about what Maillardville and *La Société Francophone de Maillardville* have to offer, visit their website. www.maillardville.com

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Being Punjabi: Exhibition shares inclusive stories of struggle and success

by JASMYNE EASTMOND

A celebration of Surrey's dynamic cultural diversity and an interactive demonstration of resilience and success, *Being Punjabi: Unfolding the Surrey Story* will be on display at the Museum of Surrey from Oct. 2, 2019 to Feb. 23, 2020.

As the Museum of Surrey's first community curated exhibition, *Being Punjabi: Unfolding the Surrey Story* strives to connect people and communities through collective stories shared via various media installations. Collected and decided upon by an eight-person advisory committee comprised of local members of Surrey's Punjabi community, the exhibit's installations range from written word text-panels by notable Punjabi community leaders to audio clips showcasing the current Punjabi music scene in Surrey.

Through not only historical facts but also personal anecdotes and tales, the exhibit unveils an inclusive story of the past, present and future of Punjabis in Surrey, sharing voices and stories of some of the 100,000 Punjabis who call Surrey home. The exhibit seeks to tribute this community while initiating a conversation on ques-



Photo courtesy of Museum of Surrey

▲ A shot from *Being Punjabi: Unfolding the Surrey Story*.

tions of identity, diversity and acceptance and evoke a knowledge-seeking experience.

Being Punjabi: Unfolding the Surrey Story follows the path of the Royal BC Museum's Punjabi Canadian Legacy Project, founded by Satwinder Kaur Bains, PhD, director of the South Asian Studies Institute at the University of the Fraser Valley.

"Our hope is that *Being Punjabi: Unfolding the Surrey Story* will serve as a bridge to unite Surrey's diverse communities and encourage new visitors to participate. This is the first feature cultural exhibit of many," says Lynn Adam Saffery, Man-

ager of the Museum of Surrey, in a written text panel available to been seen at the exhibit.

A call to challenge assumptions

"The goal is to teach people something they didn't know before, to dispel stereotypes and mostly to connect people and make them feel closer together," says Colleen Sharpe, curator of exhibits at the Museum of Surrey. Sharpe worked closely with an advisory committee of community members and museum staff in the decision of which topics, themes, and overall content were included in the exhibit.

"When you hear other people's stories, you resonate with many parts of them. You may not have exactly the same story, but you may understand the key aspects," says Sharpe.

With all topics deemed culturally significant by the advisory team of local community members, the exhibit showcases a diverse assortment of text panels, audio snippets, and artworks. Text panels will be bilingually featured in both English and Punjabi, written in Gurmukhī and Shahmukhi scripts.

Community members contributed all of the 150 objects in the exhibit's collection, except four

pieces borrowed from institutions and the Museum of Surrey's collection, in an attempt to share their stories through these pieces. No objects were refused.

The exhibit's artworks, including an installation piece, sculpture pieces, photographs lent by families and paintings, highlight Surrey artists and their histories. Additionally, interviews with community members will play on four televisions throughout the exhibit, with interviewees speaking on what Surrey means to them and their lives and experiences as Punjabis in Surrey.

"We really wanted to offer people different ways to see things. We're trying to tell a comprehensive story," said Sharpe, emphasizing the diversity and variety of the exhibit's collection.

To celebrate the opening of the new exhibit, a family-friendly grand opening will take place on Oct. 6 the Museum of Surrey and a 19+ Museum After Dark event will take place on Oct. 10 where Sharpe will lead guests through a guided tour of the exhibit as they snack on Punjabi appetizers and enjoy Bhangra performances and free henna applications.

For more information on the exhibit and upcoming events, visit www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/29904.aspx.

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Vancouver International Film Festival

September 26 – October 11, 2019



The Great Green Wall
Jared P. Scott – UK, 92 min.
Proudly presented by **Source**

SUN. SEP 29	11:15 AM	INTL VILLAGE 10
WED. OCT 2	6:00 PM	INTL VILLAGE 9
WED. OCT 9	11:00 AM	INTL VILLAGE 9

Malian musician/activist Inna Modja embarks on an expedition through five African nations, gathering an ensemble of artists to celebrate the pan-African dream of realizing the Great Green Wall: an 8,000 km mosaic of fertile land that would represent the Earth's largest living structure. Backed by a dazzling array of musical diversity, Jared P. Scott's documentary is an unforgettable exploration of a modern marvel of ecological restoration and a powerful call to take action to help reshape the world.



A Dog and His Man
Siddharth Tripathy – India, 84 min.

SAT. SEP 28	9:30 PM	SFU-GCA
MON. SEP 30	3:30 PM	VANCITY

In what remains of his hometown in Chhattisgarh, Shoukie drifts aimlessly through both abandoned streets and bittersweet memories of better days. It's been his decision not to make way for the mechanics of progress. Evoking the work of VIFF mainstays Jia Zhangke and Pedro Costa while evincing a distinct sensibility of his own, Siddharth Tripathy immerses his protagonist in a dust-speckled night of the soul that speaks to the aging and dispossessed everywhere.



Castle of Dreams
Reza Mirkarimi – Iran, 86 min.

TUE. OCT 1	8:45 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS
WED. OCT 2	3:30 PM	INTL VILLAGE 8

VIFF alumnus Reza Mirkarimi (he was here with *Under the Moonlight* in 2001), director of three of Iran's nominees for the Best Foreign-Language Film Academy Award, returns with this subtle, gritty, wonderfully acted road movie that evokes memories of neo-realism. Fresh out of jail, Jalal (Hamed Behdad) reluctantly takes charge of his now-motherless two children and heads to Azerbaijan with them and his new Azeri wife. It is a trip that will change everything...



Oh Mercy
Arnaud Desplechin – France, 119 min.

FRI. OCT 4	9:00 PM	PLAYHOUSE
SAT. OCT 5	11:00 AM	SFU-GCA

Located in the north, close to the Belgian border, Roubaix is one of the poorest towns in France. It is also the hometown of VIFF fave Arnaud Desplechin (*A Christmas Tale, My Golden Days*), and he uses it to great effect as the setting for what is a radical change of pace for him: a police procedural centred on a true-life murder case. Roschdy Zem is the police captain investigating a routine arson that soon takes on a more sinister shape; Léa Seydoux and Sara Forestier play the suspects he grills.



No. 7 Cherry Lane
Yonfan – Hong Kong/China, 125 min.

TUE. OCT 8	6:00 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS
THU. OCT 10	3:00 PM	PLAYHOUSE

Master director Yonfan makes his animation debut with this sensuous, passionate story of a young man's sentimental education. Hong Kong, 1967: as leftists riot in the streets, Ziming is attending university and negotiating a tricky situation – he's got strong feelings for both young Meiling and her worldly mother Mrs. Yu. Featuring hand-drawn images that evoke ardour, lust, and bittersweet nostalgia, this is the director's love letter to his home and to cinema; as such, it's an absolute triumph.



Parasite
Bong Joon Ho – South Korea, 131 min.

FRI. SEP 27	9:00 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS
SUN. SEP 29	3:00 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS
SUN. OCT 6	9:00 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS

After the international spectacles of *Snowpiercer* and *Okja*, master filmmaker Bong Joon Ho returns to his Korean roots with this suspenseful, satirical, black comedy, which functions both as a devastating social critique and a brilliantly executed exercise in Hitchcockian pure cinema. Ki-taek (Bong regular Song Kang Ho) and his family of miscreants insinuate themselves into the rich Park family's lives – and home – with brilliantly unpredictable, ingeniously conceived, and gorgeously designed results.



The Cave
Tom Waller – Thailand, 104 min.

TUE. OCT 8	9:15 PM	PLAYHOUSE
WED. OCT 9	3:30 PM	PLAYHOUSE

In the summer of 2018, the world was gripped by the plight of a Thai boys' soccer team trapped in a flooded cave for over two weeks. Focusing on the rescue side of the story, Thai-Irish director Tom Waller's recounting throbs with real-time, nail-biting tension. Four divers (one a Vancouverite) who joined the daring rescue mission play themselves in this stirring account of how an international coalition of experts and volunteers raced against time and circumstances to pull off a moving miracle.



Young Ahmed
Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Luc Dardenne – Belgium, 84 min.

FRI. SEP 27	6:30 PM	CENTRE FOR ARTS
WED. OCT 2	4:00 PM	PLAYHOUSE

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, recipients of two Cannes Palme d'Or awards, turn to the darkest subject of their sparkling careers, fashioning a frightening and plausible (and controversial) character study of a 13-year-old boy, swayed by his radicalized imam, who decides that only one thing will complete his embrace of the jihad spirit: killing his teacher... Curly-haired newcomer Idir Ben Addi is fully committed to his difficult role, and the Dardennes yet again demonstrate their directorial mastery.

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A philosopher's unusual take: mathematical representations of diversity

by GINA HSU

Sina Fazelpour, a Ph.D. candidate of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia (UBC), spoke about his research and his unusual path to philosophy.

Before coming to UBC's Ph.D. program in Philosophy, Fazelpour studied biomedical modeling and medical biophysics. Currently a philosopher, he works on philosophy of science where his previous training in engineering has carved out niche research projects that incorporate computer simulation and theoretical modeling



▲ Sina Fazelpour.

into philosophical inquiries. By creating algorithmic-based models, Fazelpour examines qualitative ideas such as fairness, justice and discrimination that we commonly find in legal and political spheres.

Counterfactual reasoning and accountability

One of Fazelpour's interests is in counterfactual reasoning. Simply put, counterfactual reasoning entails "what if" or "if only" thoughts that we all entertain in everyday life to gauge the possibilities of how certain events can unfold, or what might have happened differently. We might think to ourselves: If only I had ordered another drink, it might have tasted better. Or we might question: What if somebody else were elected president? How could things have been handled differently?

"We use them [counterfactual reasoning] when we want to attribute responsibility," Fazelpour said. In cases of discrimination, creating a reliable framework can help us better determine what factors, or what people, are responsible for undesirable outcomes in decision making, such as gender discrimination in the hiring process. It is especially important to make sure that we understand these causal relations correctly and that we base our judgment

on good reasoning. If we are holding people accountable, our ideas should not be based on wishful thinking and random thoughts, Fazelpour commented.

One way we can apply counterfactual reasoning is to use computer simulation to test out

In a medical case, for example, a simulated model can more accurately analyze whether an outcome results from the efficacy of a treatment rather than other random factors.

As another example, supposed we want to study the

enough in the way they process information. "Adding a little bit of diversity creates tension in groups but that tension can be productive," Fazelpour said. A group of people with diverse identities can be useful because "people may be willing to share

“ Adding a little bit of diversity creates tension in groups but that tension can be productive.

Sina Fazelpour, a Ph.D. candidate of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia

how things might go differently given different parameters in a specific setting.

Diversity in statistical simulation

Statistical tools used in a designed simulation – or what Fazelpour explained as "a mathematical representation of the real world" – has the "allure of objectivity," which allows us to run experiments in a controlled environment. Unlike actual settings, controlled conditions in a computer simulation can get rid of other confounding variables (such as interpersonal relationships, different grouping classes, etc.) and is useful for the purpose of studying phenomena relevant to the questions a study sets out to answer.

effect of cognitive diversity. Fazelpour explained how we can model one group of artificial agents that have the same way of thinking and learning (homogenous setting) versus another group of agents with different approaches (heterogenous setting). In that designed simulation, which is built on one specific aspect of diversity we want to study, we can then experiment and observe how things unfold.

Is a homogenous setting or a heterogenous setting more conducive to decision making? Fazelpour observes that in homogenous groups, people tend to have normative expectations that they must agree with each other; hence, they are too trusting and are not diligent

dissenting opinions" and "listen to more novel views."

Consider the case of a jury, Fazelpour added on a similar note. "Is a homogeneous group where there is no friction and everybody listens to everybody else a good setting for coming up with good decisions in a criminal trial? Or is it better to have a diverse group? Of course from the perspective of justice and fairness, it's better to have more diverse groups." ✍

This October, Sina Fazelpour will be starting a postdoctoral position at Carnegie Mellon University, where he will work on algorithmic-based decision making and its ethical implications. To learn more about his work and upcoming events, please visit www.sinafazelpour.com.

► "VIFF" from page 1

passes both exhibitions and conferences for industry professionals and curious audiences in Virtual reality (VR)/ Augmented reality (AR)/ Mixed reality (MR) (XR) storytelling.

"Film has always given us an opportunity to feel emotions for situations and characters that don't necessarily exist; VR/AR puts us directly in that feeling and space. It gives another platform for storytelling that involve your entire surroundings, and a new opportunity to tell different stories that we couldn't tell in traditional ways," Tsui says.

He gives a great example of how new technology is being used by indigenous filmmakers to enable them to insert the audience into a traditional indigenous ceremony or space that would usually be closed to outsiders.

"We are very excited about VIFF Immersed. Vancouver is the second-largest XR ecosystem in the world, and VIFF Immersed is the celebration of that," he says. "Last year was the key starting point, we didn't know what to expect and the event was sold out almost every day. This year we are starting a competition in three categories – the best in live action, in documentary and in animation. We are also creating a VIFF Immersed international market where people can connect funding with their projects," Tsui elaborates.

He is very proud that a young 19-year-old student, Edward Madojemu from Emily Carr University, will be entering the competition this year with his *Dami and Falian* VR graphic novel, alongside many industry veterans from all around the world.



▲ Scene from *Hard-Core*.

"The project is so good that we decided to include it in the competition, and the competition is global and fierce. It shows we can stand in line with everywhere else in the world," says Tsui.

And some thought-provoking robot fun

Artificial intelligence is another trend that is gradually becoming part of our day-to-day life and conversation. This year's festival also features films and talk around the topic of the robot and human relationship.

In partnership with Vancouver Art Gallery, the festival is bringing in internationally-renowned artist Stephanie Dinkins, an African-American artist whose work focuses on AI and race. She creates AI that thinks about race based on her own personal experience and will be giving a talk with a robot on stage.

On a more light-hearted note, a dark slacker comedy *Hard-*



▲ Stephanie Dinkins.

Core by Japanese director Nobuhiro Yamashita – featuring two social outcasts and their unlikely robot friend – will also be screened at the festival. The movie is a close adaptation of a cult manga novel in Japan.

According to the director's interpretation, the robot, by coincidence, is found by the two socially marginalized men. Given where they are in life, it

starts to feel compassion and pity for them. Alluding to a bigger context, Yamashita thinks that as technology advances, "as people deal more often with it or with other dimensional worlds such as anime, certain humans may have come to possess machine-like senses" and "find it easier to deal with machines as communication with humans can be tiring as it is overloaded with information."

Regarded as the king of indie slacker comedy, Yamashita is interested in exploring "gaps" in society in his films since his debut movie *Hazy Life*. This year marks the return of the director to VIFF as he says "I am moved by the fact that my very first film *Hazy Life* was shown at VIFF in 1999 and this year, after 20 years, my 20th film *Hard-Core* will be shown at VIFF again." ✍

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

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An investigation into local herbal delights

by NAILA TOPAN

Anastasiia Dushyna, botanical pharmacology specialist talks about healing herbs at *Medicinal Plants Series: Culinary uses and knowledge* at Burnaby Public Library on Sept. 30, and *Urban Homesteading Series: Cosmetic Herbs* at North Vancouver City Library on Sept. 25.

Inspired by her endocrinologist and ethnobotanist grandmother, Dushyna cultivated a career in botanical pharmacology, drawing on her medical education and a MSc for further prowess. Learning further about phytochemistry and the therapeutic uses of herbs during medical

problem is that native plants here are rare. We care about the animals, insects and plants [and] I don't want to encourage people to take them but to grow them."

Her hope is for people to be inspired to grow their own herbs to be used medicinally in the future. "People don't realize how easy it is to make a tea out of lavender," she adds.

Growing herbs is accessible and beneficial in a multitude of ways, according to Dushyna.

"You need to understand which soil is easy, and then which herbs to choose; we have a wide range to choose from," she says. "Even just growing herbs in your garden will make



Photos courtesy of Anastasiia Dushyna

▲ Master class at Park and Tilford Gardens, 2018.

school, she comments that the herbal world "is a big one."

An everlasting love of plants

Born and raised in the Ukraine, Dushyna describes botany as being a part of her everyday life.

"I can't imagine my life without herbs," she says. "It's like tradition in Europe, doctors know herbs really well. It's part of the pharmaceutical industry there. Sometimes we forget how easy it is to grow or own herbs."

As a teenager, Dushyna visited many botanical gardens, read countless books and magazines on botany, grew house plants and made face masks and other cosmetics with various plants. Post-graduation she landed in a job in pharmaceutical marketing, becoming a product manager shortly thereafter. Promoting certain plant medicine like valerian was not uncommon for her, piquing her interest in sharing the therapeutic and medicinal properties of plants with the wider public.

Upon moving to British Columbia (B.C.), she quickly realized that it would take some time to familiarize herself with the prevalence of different herbs and the rarity of others in B.C. soil.

"I was dying to find different herbs. I found mint, chamomile, rosemary and sage, but I couldn't find some herbs which I like to use, for example, St. John's Wort," she says. "It was a challenge to find some things that I'm used to as a European."

Dushyna offers some words of caution about locating and harvesting less common plants.

"We have some major plants, which we know from indigenous people," she explains. "But the

the air healthier and you will feel the benefit of the essential oils."

Learning about herbs

In her talks, Dushyna provides participants insights into plants growing, usages and the opportunity for herbal tea testing. Likening it to a wine or cheese tasting, she explains the graduation from a lighter flavour to more intensity. "I start with chamomile for instance, and then go to something a bit stronger like oregano," she says.

Dushyna will be talking further about growing medicinal plants and the conditions for growing them. "B.C. has the best conditions for growing these plants," she adds. "[The upcoming talk] will be about beautiful and useful herbal gardens. You can play with herbs like thyme in different shapes and colours."

She hopes that people will feel inspired to grow and utilize more of their own herbs, and incorporate them into their lives on a daily basis.

"It brings me joy when people tell me they grow more in their garden now, that they know how to use organic plants and herbs," says Dushyna. "It's pretty affordable and very good for your health. It's not about treating strong conditions or injuries, it's more about prevention and health-oriented routines every day."

For more information visit: www.greatgardenspeakers.com/listing/anastasiia-dushyna.html and www.bpl.bc.ca/events/medicinal-plants-culinary-uses-and-knowledge



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Photo courtesy of Hong Kong Exile



The foreign place

by MATTHEW FRASER

In some ways the modern world has created a universal diaspora as people move and settle in new places, all the while hoping for better opportunities or more fertile beginnings for their children.

As people grow and face the conflicting natures of their homeland's culture (kept close through the efforts of parents or the individuals themselves) and the dominant culture of their new homes (ever present and potent), many will seek to recreate or import pieces of their old world into their new lives.

No Foreigners, created by Hong Kong Exile and fu-GEN Theatre, takes one of the most distinct yet clandestine efforts to bring the familial home into a new place and transforms it into both the backdrop and a character in a sprawling and deeply imagined story. The lowly shopping mall insulates the smells and lights of a foreign land from the mundane indifference of a new country; though often overlooked, when reconsidered and placed in the right hands it can tell the stories of the people it shelters and reinvigorates.

No Foreigners, created by Hong Kong Exile and fu-GEN Theatre, takes one of the most distinct yet clandestine efforts to bring the familial home into a new place and transforms it into both the backdrop and a character in a sprawling and deeply imagined story. The lowly shopping mall insulates the smells and lights of a foreign land from the mundane indifference of a new country; though often overlooked, when reconsidered and placed in the right hands it can tell the stories of the people it shelters and reinvigorates.

Strange culture finds a new home

The project was first conceived and started in May 2016, after David Yee (artistic director, fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre) walked into a luxury store and was told that he couldn't shop there because they weren't catering to foreigners. This was an experience that confused both Yee and Lim, but also be-

"For me, it instils the distance, disorientation, and desires that I personally find in relationship to these North American Chinese malls. It looks, smells, and feels like home, but I can't call it mine," he says.

One of the main goals of the project was to deeply explore the nuanced and multi-faceted relationships that the Chinese diaspora has to these cultural spaces. Lim explains that since more than half of the show is in Cantonese, it was exciting for David Yee as a playwright to expand (using surtitles and translation) on what the words could manifest, such as one-to-one translation, inner thoughts, or perspective shifting. They spent many rehearsals co-creating the ways that the projected text shapes and folds our understanding of the space, relating it back to the "code-switching" that is common for diasporic communities.

Time and space reused

In many ways, malls have a bad rap as being a place for waste: wasted time, wasted money, and opportunity wasted in mischief. However, Milton Lim sees it as much more than that.

"I like to think that it's a place to see friends, for people to find clothes and gifts for their families, and to wander around dreaming. In the show, we consider the mall as a character. [Looking] within that lens makes the mundane ethereal and plays witness to countless threads of stories, relationships, and lives across generations," he explains.

With the mall being an integral part of the story, not just as a location but also as an entity, it gave HKX and fu-GEN Theatre an opportunity to use time in a fresh manner.

"Once we began considering the mall as the character, it only made sense that time should be amorphous in this world. In this mall, you'll find that there is endless waiting and other times you're just in and out," Milton says.

As complex as the approach sounds, Lim and his team took care to ensure that each of the worlds feel both distinct, and yet part of the coherent whole.

Three days at the mall

Running from Oct. 9–12 at the Shadbolt Centre, the deeply immersive, multimedia look of *No Foreigners* coupled with the otherworldly digital renderings will introduce audiences to a world they have seen but never truly considered. ✍

For more information, please visit www.hongkongexile.com/no-foreigners

Photo courtesy of Milton Lim



▲ Milton Lim.

gan rolling the ball for the name of their burgeoning project. Though Lim is careful not to dictate how the title should be taken or approached, he is willing to explain his own interpretation and understanding behind it.



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- Facilitator: Pia Kolba

🕒 Fridays, October 11 – November 22, 2:00 – 4:00 pm (no session on Nov 15)

📍 MOSAIC Head Office, 5575 Boundary Road, Vancouver

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MOVING AHEAD PROGRAM

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- Building relationship with local police

🕒 October 4, 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

📍 MOSAIC Highgate Office, 310-7155 Kingsway, Burnaby

☎ Tedros 604 636 4712 ext 112 or 604 396 6431 || tgebregus@mosaicbc.org

Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities (Arabic)

- Housing and Accommodation– knowing your tenancy rights
- Laws related to Tenancy in BC: Beginning of Tenancy, entering into Tenancy Agreement
- Discrimination in Renting
- Moving-in Condition (Inspection)
- Landlord's responsibilities

🕒 October 4, 10 am – 12 pm

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BC Medical Care (Swahili)

- Medical Services Plan (MSP)
- What MSP covers
- MSP premium
- Premium Assistance
- Common Medical Services
- Your rights to receive Medical Services
- Healthy Kids Program
- Mammography for women

🕒 October 12, 10 am – 12 pm

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☎ Gidion 604 636 4712 ext 118 or 604 726 1741 || gbukiriro@mosaicbc.org

Parenting in Canada (English/Tigrinya)

- Parenting in this new country
- Some Important aspects of parenting
- Parenting Tips –Physical Discipline
- Parenting Tips – How to discipline your children
- Parenting Tips – Spend some quality time with your children
- Parenting Tips – Teach your children
- Parenting Tips – Foster self-esteem and independence
- Parenting Tips – Give explanations, not threats

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🕒 October 14, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

☎ 604 254 9626 || ibelong@mosaicbc.org

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.

New efforts and old memories

by VICTOR VAN DER MERWE

From Sept. 26–Oct. 11, the Vancouver International Film Festival will showcase over 320 films on screens all around town. The festival will also host 400 film industry professionals who will come and speak at events happening alongside the screenings. This makes VIFF the largest Canadian film event in the world. Festival goers will also be able to enjoy Canadian productions and co-productions distributed by the National Film Board of Canada. Two such pictures are the nature documentary *The Whale and The Raven* directed by Mirjam Leuze, that will premiere on Oct. 4 at the Simon Fraser University (SFU) Goldcorp and the animated short *The Physics of Sorrow*, directed by Theodore Ushev, premiering October 1st as part of the Permanent Records program at the International Village theatre.

The Whale and The Raven follows whale researchers Hermann Meuter and Janie Wray, who established the Cetacea Lab on the beautiful and remote Gil Island in Northern BC. The film showcases the unique marine environment that exists in this part of the world and the struggle that Wray and Meuter is facing to keep this secluded and peaceful island from becoming just another passageway for oil tankers and freight carriers. The film touches on the spiritual connection between the inhabit-

ants of the island and the whales. However, Leuze doesn't shy away from the fact, that even the people who desperately want to keep the Kitimat fjord system of Gil Island free from being clogged with large tankers are still dependant on oil and natural gas. The honest look at the dependence on gas and the desire to help preserve nature is something that was very important to the director, Leuze.

Producer Henrink Meyer says "Mirjam wanted to show exactly that. That is why there is shots of people filling up their diesel. At the same time Mirjam is not coming over here (VIFF) for the premiere or publicity, because she doesn't want to fly. If it is not absolutely crucial, she doesn't want to fly."

Meyer goes on to say that he hopes the audience sees how we can all do just a little better when it comes to taking care of the planet.

"Let's make an effort. We are used to all this luxury, but we don't have the right to destroy the planet for our conveniences". Meyer says.

The Physics of Sorrow, that just won an honourable mention for best Canadian short film at the Toronto International Film Festival, is an animated short by the Oscar nominated artist, Ushev. The short film was inspired by



Photos courtesy of National Film Board of Canada

▲ Scene from *The Whale and The Raven*.



▲ Scene from *The Physics of Sorrow*.

the book *The Physics of Sorrow* written by Georgi Gospodinov. Ushev used a hot wax painting technique known as encaustic-painting to tell a very personal story about first loves, bubble-gum wrappers, military service and circuses.

"I got the idea for the film, a film as a time capsule, and I thought, the first-ever time capsules were the Egyptians tombs. And they had those beautiful, realistic portraits on the cover of their sarcophagus. Made of melted beeswax with pigments,

they stayed absolutely intact for 20 centuries," Ushev says.

Even though the painting technique was ancient, adapting it for filming was brand new.

Ushev explains, "The problem was that no one had ever tried to make these images move before. So, I had to learn not only to paint an image, or a portrait, but also invent a way to make it to move. And after three months of errors and experiments, I just got it. And that was an exciting moment, to see how the animation can be done, moved, by melting and manipulating an image through temperature change. It was pure alchemy!"

Ushev explains "Gospodinov writes the same way as I paint. I just found it to be the perfect match for this film. A film-labyrinth. Everything melts before you reach

the point where you can get out. You try to find your path through the story, then I shut the gate and push you in another direction."

Amazing technical achievements aside, Ushev hopes that it is the story itself that will stick with audiences.

"I only hope for one thing: that they [the audience] are moved by the experience. That they forget about the technique and only remember emotions and their feelings. To go back to their childhood for a moment, to feel the smell of their rooms and playgrounds when they were kids... with the toys and objects that we all abandoned, immigrating out of our childhood."

Festival goers will have more than one chance to see either of these films. For more information. Go to:

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► "Verbatim" from page 1

since attending high school is how the word "multiculturalism" is becoming increasingly abstract. We have the occasional Multicultural Day to "celebrate diversity," but no one really attends the events. We discuss how multiculturalism affects our nation, but we never discuss how it affects us on the individual level. Gradually, I've stopped seeing the multiculturalism around me, and the word became just another academic term to discuss in socials class but not something I experience every day.

nese kids somewhere in Xi'An. We may learn about other cultures' customs and traditions, but I'd certainly never experience Diwali or Passover firsthand. How would that change me as a person? How would it affect my group of friends? Living in Vancouver has exposed me to different cuisines and festivals. But more importantly, I feel more comfortable around different people and cultures.

I didn't think much about multiculturalism before writing this article. I didn't even notice its existence. Multiculturalism is so omnipres-



▲ All equal in the classroom.

How multiculturalism has affected me is a bit harder to define. There are small things like the fact that my friend couldn't come with me to a barbecue because he follows Jainism. There are also larger consequences to my character and personality. For example, what if I never moved to Canada? Well, I'd probably be in a classroom with 29 other Chi-

ent here in Vancouver that it's woven into the very fabric of society. It's easy to spot once you start trying; I can see it everywhere from the school cafeteria selling souvlaki to singing the national anthem in both English and French. Though we can't always see or hear multiculturalism, it envelops us every waking moment in this beautiful city.

Gypsy jazz resounds on Canadian soil

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Christine Tassan et les Imposteures bring their energetic blend of Québécois song, traditional folk, and gypsy jazz to Performance Works, via the Rogue Folk Club, on Sept. 29. For this upcoming tour, the Imposteures band, which typically includes a rhythm guitarist, violinist, and bassist, led by Tassan on lead guitar, will also feature the brassy bombast of trumpet and trombone. The six-piece is set to debut their live performances of their latest album *Django Bells*, a wintry blend of different styles and genres, all influenced by the works of Django Reinhardt.

"I think it's like pretty creative. We do a lot of research. And we try to vary the rhythm, not just play swing rhythm: we play waltzes, and even a little bit of traditional Québécois music into those songs. And then, once we have the whole repertoire, and it's pretty arranged, we rehearse with the whole band, and each one adds their own ideas to what we're doing," says Tassan.

Django and jazz

For eponymous band-leader Christine Tassan, the Imposteures band has presented all sorts of unique creative opportunities. The group, like many gypsy jazz or 'manouche jazz' bands, is heavily influenced by the works of legendary Romani guitarist Django Reinhardt. But despite the lasting status of

Reinhardt, whose performances from the 1930's-1950's are posthumously celebrated to this day, Tassan says that his cultural influence and impact has stuck mostly to Europe.

For Tassan, this has allowed a great opportunity to share and celebrate this eclectic and energetic brand of jazz with not just her home of Montreal, but with Canada and the rest of the world as well.

"It's very important for us to have people discover that kind of music because it's very famous music in Europe, but in Canada it's not as well known," says Tassan. "It's nice for us to bring some sort of discovery to that music, and to explain what gypsy jazz is, who Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli are, and who the Roma people are. That's what we have in mind."

A new take on a classic style

But while Tassan and the group are deeply inspired by the works of Reinhardt, the approach of the Imposteures band has always centered around innovation and creative composition which brings other musical influences into the group's repertoire. Indeed, with the band's 16-year history as either an all-women or majority-women group, Tassan felt a natural incentive to take a novel approach: a greater focus on song conception and arrangement.

"We had to make our own path. And what we did is a bit different than men bands: instead of just thinking in terms of virtuosity and playing very



▲ Christine Tassan.

fast, which is very characteristic of gypsy jazz, we tried to focus more on the project itself, what kind of repertoire we could propose that is not the same repertoire as a lot of gypsy jazz bands," says Tassan.

For Tassan and the band, this involved taking different musical influences from various band members' own musical backgrounds.

"So we [worked in] the different influences of the musicians who are part of the band like classical, traditional folk, jazz, and Québécois song. That's what we integrated in our music, and that's what gives us a show that is totally different than what other gypsy jazz bands do," says Tassan.

All in all, the creative process of arranging and composing different songs is a rewarding endeavour. But for Tassan the end goal is, and has always been the same: an inspired and engaging live performance.

"What I like to do, and the band is the same, we want to perform. I choose a repertoire and we record albums, but the final goal is ultimately performing in front of the public," says Tassan. "The interaction with people is very important for us, so during the show there's a lot of humour, it's very dynamic, with a lot of different things in the show. So when we do a new project, we want to have some variety so that people will enjoy it in the whole show." ✍

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

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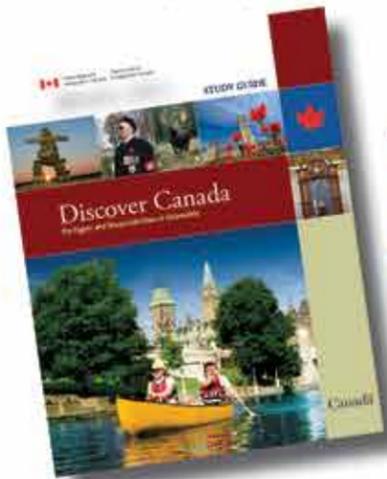
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Art limiting life: AWAY with HOME production in Vancouver

by KYLIE LUNG

Youth sharing their voices with a community is very important for Elaine Carol and Miscellaneous Productions, which showcases real issues from actual youth performers in their production *AWAY with HOME*. The original play, a collection of compelling stories from all walks of life, will be presented at the Scotiabank Dance Centre Sept. 27 and 28.

"The best way to connect is in the community – face-to-face – to speak openly and directly instead of through the flashing light boxes we seem to be addicted to," says Carol, cofounder of Miscellaneous Productions and director of *AWAY with HOME*.

Miscellaneous Productions is a self-described dance and theatre boot camp that prides itself in representing youth performers from all social and cultural backgrounds.

Connection to the community

Carol has been deeply involved with community and the youths within them for 35 years and has produced productions all over the world. Like all productions by Miscellaneous, *AWAY with HOME* doesn't shy away from the difficult issues of today including racism, mental health, and immigration. They face them head on.

This production is especially unique because the play focuses on actual stories from the youth performers, interspersed with contemporary and hip hop dance.

"What I love about working with young performers coming from less privileged backgrounds is giving them access – a chance to learn and explore their artistry," says Carol.

Carol wants her performers to shine whilst exploring their own artistic abilities, as well as encourage the audience to leave the production more community minded.

"Our goal with *AWAY with HOME* is to make the audience think in a more expansive way

B.C. He has been performing dance since the sixth grade and teaches dance at VanCity dance, which is co-owned by his brother.

Panesar performed in a previous Miscellaneous production, *Haunted House*, and is excited to share more of himself and his own story in *AWAY with HOME*.

"In *AWAY with HOME*, I am completely myself. On stage I'm not playing anyone," says Panesar. "I'm just being myself

“ In *AWAY with HOME*, I am completely myself. On stage I'm not playing anyone. I'm just being myself and speaking about stories and experiences that I've experienced.

Arjun Panesar, actor

about the issues facing young people in our community," says Carol. "Not that much has changed for youth except the common use of social media, which can be a creative tool, but in cases like Amanda Todd and other youth in our communities, a destructive and deadly force. We must be careful how we use it and how we represent ourselves through this limited and disaffecting medium."

True stories on stage

One of the performers in *AWAY with HOME* is Arjun Panesar, a 22-year-old from Surrey,

and speaking about stories and experiences that I've experienced. It's a little funny going to school for two years to learn how to act and then having a show that says 'don't act'."

Panesar's piece focuses on a sensitive topic currently impacting him and his family's life: his father's declining physical and mental health.

"For me, putting on shows and art, expressing myself on stage or on screen, I feel that's the ultimate fulfillment for what's bothering me," says Panesar. "I feel that mental health is something that's growing in terms of awareness and I feel this piece is a really big stepping stone for me and other South Asians who are dealing with anxiety and other mental illnesses to speak up and break their silence."

The play may revolve around the youth of today, but their issues are relevant to everyone. The pieces vary greatly in range so that every audience member will see a piece of themselves reflected through *AWAY with HOME*'s story-telling and dance.

"It is about a desire to make art and try something we have never tried before," says Carol. "Demographics are a limiting way to look at people and what their art is all about. Better too, as one of our graduates, Dakota Prince says, 'meet them where they are at'."

Miscellaneous was formed in 2000 and every two years they produce a new theatrical work with their youth performers from many artistic disciplines. ✎



▲ *Away With Home* is a trans-disciplinary performance work featuring local youth.

For more information, visit www.miscellaneousproductions.ca

Cultural Calendar

September 24–October 8, 2019

by SIMON YEE

Autumn, my favourite season, is here. Enjoy the crisp weather by checking out the many events and festivals happening all across Metro Vancouver. The Vancouver International Film Festival is probably among the biggest events happening right now, but why not also check out some of the other events such as Word Vancouver, Craft Beer Week and PumpkinFest?

Word Vancouver

Sept. 24–29
Vancouver Public Library,
Central Branch
www.wordvancouver.ca

Come and check out the 25th Word Vancouver, Western Canada's largest celebration of reading and literacy. The main festival takes place on Sunday at Library Square, located at the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library. Enjoy free readings, panel discussions and live performances. Activities include writing workshops as well as a variety of literacy activities. Canadian authors and book and magazine exhibitors will also gather to share a passion for the written word. An entertaining and educational experience for all ages. For a complete schedule of events and more information, please visit their website.

BECKETT 19: or some such semblance

Sept. 25–28, 7:30 p.m.
Frederic Wood Theatre at UBC,
University Endowment Lands
www.theatrefilm.ubc.ca

The 21st annual UBC Theatre Alumni Fundraising Event, supporting the Peter Loeffler Memorial Prize, which goes to an undergraduate student majoring in Theatre, BECKETT 19: or some such semblance showcases four pieces from Samuel Beckett's oeuvre that challenge, delight and inspire. Come for the theatre and stay afterwards for the cake, the bubbly and the always spirited discussion! The four pieces in the show are *Not I*, *Act Without Words Part I*, *A Film with Norman Young* and *Biddies in a Boat*.

Antony and Cleopatra

Sept. 26–Oct. 13
Studio 58 at Langara College,
Vancouver
www.langara.ca/studio-58

From Sept. 26 to Oct. 13, Langara College's Studio 58 will be performing an adaptation of William Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Antony and Cleopatra*, a story of the life of Mark Anthony, a general in the Roman Empire, and his love affair with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. This adaptation is directed by Zee Zee Theatre Company's artistic director Cameron Mackenzie. Regarding Cleopatra, Mackenzie writes, "an incredibly accomplished statesperson and intellectual, she co-ruled with her father from 14, was crowned at 18, commanded armies at 21, spoke nine languages including the common Egyptian Arabic and was the only ruler in her family's 300 years that did so. She brought 22 years of stability and prosperity to the kingdom she fought so hard to protect. Using this historical perspective, I am so excited to delve into this love story." For tickets and more information, check out Langara's website.

LiterASIAN 2019

Sept. 27–28
Chinatown House (Saturday)
and Sun Wah Centre (Sunday),
Vancouver
www.literasian.com

LiterASIAN is an annual festival of Pacific Rim Asian Canadian writing whose purpose is to promote and celebrate the works of Asian Canadian writers and artists through author readings, panel discussions and workshop events, creating important and unique networking opportunities between professional and emerging writers, students and members of the broader public to learn and discuss topics of importance to Asian Canadian writing. This year's theme is Genesis: Writing Life Into Art and the festival will feature six authors, each of whom will be bringing their own style and voice to speak to this year's theme.



▲ Good times with beer and entertainment on the North Shore.

Away With Home

Sept. 27–28, 8 p.m.
Scotiabank Dance Centre,
Vancouver
www.miscellaneousproductions.ca

Miscellaneous Productions will be presenting their project, *Away With Home*, which explores themes of home and homeland, identity and belonging on Sept. 27–28 at the Scotiabank Dance Centre. *Away With Home* is a transdisciplinary performance work featuring youth from the community, using contemporary and hip hop dance, neo-soul and hip hop music, Taiko drumming, performance art and performance poetry to examine questions that are deeply personal to them. Rehearsals began with three questions for youth: What does home mean to you? What does identity mean to you? What does belonging mean to you? From there, youth have created new works that explore issues of immigration, racism, mental health, bullying, maturation, family, victimization, identity and belonging. Check out their website for more information.

B.C. Culture Days Weekend

Sept. 27–29
Various venues around B.C.
www.culturedays.ca/bc

Culture Days is a nationwide event celebrating and showcasing local arts and culture in Canadian communities. This vibrant weekend of artistic expression will explore the intersection of creativity, the arts and well-being. Here in British

Columbia, many municipalities and cultural centres will be hosting a plethora of performances and interactive hands-on activities such as create-a-bot, sculpting virtual worlds, bark mulching, laser art design, ukulele workshops and more. Culture Days hopes to instill appreciation for the creators, artists, historians and designers who create art and enrich our cultural fabric.

Eighth Annual Mushtari Begum Festival

Sept. 28, 6:30 p.m.–10 p.m.
Massey Theatre,
New Westminster
www.masseytheatre.com

The Eighth Annual Mushtari Begum Festival of Indian Classical Music and Dance returns to the Massey Theatre! Included in this magical evening are seven musicians and dancers, performing a variety of Indian style music and dance. Such will be the passion and enchantment they create, intoxicating the soul with ancient melodies and rhythms that undoubtedly, your ears will begin to see and the eyes listen. Check out the theatre's website for tickets and a list of players.

Le Concert Spirituel: Baroque Orchestra Suites

Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m.
Christ Church Cathedral,
Vancouver
www.earlymusic.bc.ca

Early Music Vancouver (EMV) will commence its 50th Anniversary Season with *Le Concert Spi-*

rituel: Baroque Orchestral Suites on Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m. at Christ Church Cathedral. Inspired by the seminal 18th-century French concert series, 16 members of Victoria Baroque will present a lavish pairing of French Overture Suites and Italian Concerti Grossi. Treasured Canadian icon, baroque violinist and Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra Musical Director Emerita Jeanne Lamon will lead this celebration of the birth of the public concert in 18th-century Europe. Check out EMV's website for tickets and more information.

Vancouver's North Shore Craft Beer Week

Oct. 4–11
Various locations around the
North Shore
www.vancouvernorthshore.com/craftbeerweek

Vancouver's North Shore Craft Beer Week returns for its third year in early October. All hop heads can come toast the North Shore's legendary past in brewing and bright future with a week of celebrations at local breweries. Try special casks, attend fun events and learn more about North Shore beers! For a list of breweries and schedule of events, check out the North Shore's website.

Ninth Annual PumpkinFest

Oct. 6, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
West Vancouver Community
Centre
www.wvcommunitycentresociety.ca/pumpkinfest

Come and celebrate the harvest season at PumpkinFest – an old-fashioned, community-style day with family-friendly activities. On average over 5,000 people come together each year at the West Vancouver Community Centre to enjoy farm animals, old-fashioned games, an artisan market, home and harvest competition, watch police and fireman demonstrations, participate in free swimming, gymnastics and skating, enjoy local food vendors and listen to fantastic local talent. Check out the community centre's website for more information.

Under Paris Skies

La Musique d'Edith Piaf

Award winning chanteuse Edie Daponte brings Edith Piaf to life for an unforgettable evening of music and entertainment inspired by Paris!

"...wonderfully playful...DaPonte's Piaf is stunningly accurate, vibrato and all...backed by a veritable who's who of Victoria jazz musicians." – Monday Magazine

"A true talent!" – Robyn Burns, CBC Radio

September 26th 7:30 PM

Centennial Theatre
2300 Lonsdale Ave. North Vancouver
www.nvrc.ca
604-984-4484

September 27th 7:30 PM

Clarke Theatre
33700 Prentis Ave. Mission, BC
www.clarketheatre.ca
604-820-3961

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