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A time for celebration and contemplation

by XI CHEN

This year marks a special occasion for the Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) as it turns 40 years old. VIFF's 2021 edition will run from Oct 1 to 11 in a hybrid format showcasing a diverse selection of more than 110 feature films, 77 shorts and 20 events online and offline.

With theatres reopened since June, things are finally gradually going back to normal where film festivals can try to be what they used to be again – a gathering place for movie aficionados and

a great occasion to celebrate art and culture.

The festival will open with an inventive biopic *The Electrical Life of Louis Wain*, from Japanese English director Will Sharpe. Starring Benedict Cumberbatch, it tells a remarkable story of the Victorian illustrator about his love for drawing cute cats. It will close with *Petite Maman*, the latest film by French director Céline Sciamma, a poetic film about the mysterious bond between mother and daughter.

To celebrate the fortieth anniversary, the festival has launched a new initiative – VIFF Leading Lights. The special

event will pair an established filmmaker with a long legacy with the festival, Kore-eda Hirokazu, with an emerging filmmaker of his choosing, Bora Kim, whose latest film *House of Hummingbird* has won multiple awards since its debut in 2018.

“The two will talk about their work and the creative process. It represents that we are at this crucial junction for the festival, and we are not using this to rest on our laurels,” says Curtis Woloschuk, associate director of programming at VIFF. “We will use this occasion to honour what came before and look to see what is coming next.”

He also points out certain themes that run through this year’s festival in the aftermath of the pandemic.

“There are a lot of films that structurally play with time and temporal shifts. In these structurally adventurous films, there are stories about people reconnecting with their communities, heritage and families, that resonate with a lot of people right now, how they are connecting with the world,” he says, “There are also films about the creation of art and music and the value of creativity. They are a potent reminder of the value of art, how it can alter how we see and engage

with the world and with each other.”

He adds that it has been a tough spell for art and culture organizations, these are films that remind us of how arts contribute to our lives.

VIFF’s 2021 lineup also offers rare access to some thought-provoking documentaries that use cinema’s power to educate the audience and engender positive change.

My Childhood, My country: 20 years in Afghanistan

This documentary, following the life trajectory of an Af-

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Cultural Spotlight

Sovereign Elevations: artful engineering

by ELAHA AMANI

With bold strokes of colour, a touch of perspective and her expertise of visualization, Vancouver-based artist, author and engineer Kiranjot Kaur is redefining artistic mediums and celebrating Sikh culture through her *Sovereign Elevations* art exhibit.

“Creating art is like communicating in my own personal language, but one that others can experience through their visual interpretation,” says Kaur.

The exhibit, hosted by Place des Arts, will take place Sept. 3 to Oct. 30, 2021 in person at the Leonore Peyton Salon in Heritage Square, Coquitlam, and is also available virtually on their website. Regardless, spectators will be able to view Kaur’s artwork, a thoughtful and unlike-any-other collection of acrylic portraits.

Folding fabrics and tradition

Growing up in her family fabric store, Kaur saw many *dastaars* and she was always enamoured with them, specifically with their many styles, colours and unique qualities that varied with each wearer. *Dastaars*, also known as turbans, were once only worn by kings and upper-classmen, and this resulted in a movement that fought for equality. Sikh gurus and followers began to don the *dastaars* to show that they too could wear them and be sovereigns, despite their social rank.

Dastaars are often seen as accessories or hats, but not to Kaur. She feels they are a part of the wearer, a visual and key representation of their identity and character. She believes *dastaars*



▲ For Kiranjot Kaur, turbans reflect the personality of the wearer.

are a celebration of heritage and lineage that shows conviction to stand out and that they are a symbol of equality and rights for all. *Dastaars* are not mere headdresses worn on special occasions: they tell a story of Sikh culture and the wearer themselves. This is what Kaur invites people to consider and reflect upon when viewing her portraits. She also invites people to come feel a sense of community through her portraits, to perhaps learn something new and gain a deeper understanding of Sikh traditions.

Kaur also stresses the importance of incorporating culture into art.

“I think that representations of culture through the use of art are needed to document our histories, traditions and beliefs. Art can convey aspects of culture that may otherwise be intangible and give a voice to the vibration of a community,” Kaur reflects.

Artful engineering

In Kaur’s portraits, the illusion of a person wearing the *dastar* is shown despite there being no actual wearer. Similar to elevation drawings, a simplified drawing style used by civil engineers as a tool for visualization, her portraits take advantage of how easily recognizable and unique *dastaars* are and present them with a variety of perspectives. Kaur hopes that by draw-

ing her portraits this way, the idea of how *dastaars* are a key component to one’s identity will be as blatant to the viewer as it is to her.

“Because they are so recognizable and unique to the wearer, I really feel that these representations are portraits of the wearer in themselves,” she says.

While creating the exhibit, Kaur felt proud to be able to represent an aspect of not only her heritage, but also of Canadians’, seeing how Sikhs have a rich and long history in Canada. To her, it felt like a celebration of her community and one that she was excited to make.

Kaur is proud of all the pieces in her collection, but if she had to choose a favourite it would be *Ful 1*. She adores the vibrant floral design and the bold, unapologetic attitude of the wearer.

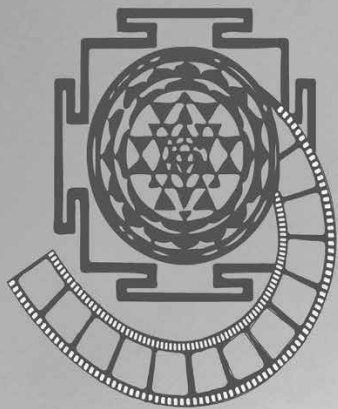
To this day, Kaur has created a handful of stunning collections, written her second book, spoken at numerous events and has built quite a beautiful and impressive portfolio. With her *Sovereign Elevations* art exhibit, Kaur will present something entirely unique to the community and she looks forward to creating more exhibitions in the future. ✍️

For more information, please visit the following sites:
www.kiranjotart.com
www.placedesarts.ca/events/kiranjot-kaur-sovereign-elevations



▲ *Dastaars* are not merely headdresses.

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Changed behaviour needed for reconciliation

by GEOFF RUSS

“Canada, by existence, is racist in that it exists because it was able to frame Indigenous peoples as primitive, non-political subjects incapable of owning land,” says Eva Jewell associate professor of Sociology and research director at the Yellowhead Institute, a policy think tank located at ‘X University,’ formerly Ryerson University, in Toronto. “This is used as a justification to dispossess Indigenous Nations of their countries.”

Jewell believes that without behavioural change and awareness of structural racism, there will only be apathy and inaction.

“Canada might define reconciliation as moving on from a past contaminated by ‘cultural’ geno-

cide,” she says. “The issue is they don’t know how to embody it or make it actionable since much of the system that oppresses Indigenous peoples is still intact.”

Jewell is Anishinaabe from Ontario with Haudenosaunee heritage and holds a Doctorate of Social Sciences from Royal Roads University in Victoria, B.C. She will be speaking at Simon Fraser University on Oct. 6, at a talk titled, *Taking Action! From Structural Racism to Personal Practices*. Her talk will be centered around the idea of Canada as a state where racism is not an incidental flaw, but a state intentionally designed to be racist.

Canada, racist by design

“Canada is a settler colonial state that requires the erasure of Indigenous Nations to exist,” says Jewell. “This is the primary logic of the Indian Act, which was used to control, manage, and assimilate First Nations, and which enabled the removal of Indigenous peoples from their territories.”

Enacted in 1876, the Indian Act introduced residential schools, created reserves and legally renamed Indigenous people with European names. Among many other tenets, the Act forbade First Nations peoples from being politically organized and prohibited them from speaking Indigenous languages or observing Indigenous religious practices.

According to Jewell, the original racist designs of Canada have been modified since the country’s

founding in 1867 and continue to the current day.

“The experience of Inuit throughout the 1950s and through to today – they experienced the violence of Canadian colonialism a bit later than many of us in the south,” says Jewell. “It was just as

Taking Action! will teach its participants about steps that can be taken to practice anti-oppression in their daily behaviour. Jewell says there are many oppressive behaviours practiced every day that perpetuate structural racism.

reconciliation. There are dozens of Indigenous Nations that all have their unique worldviews and specific relationships with settlers.”

Jewell says that by now, reconciliation requires more than simply paying attention to Indigenous voices.

“It takes understanding how we embody these harmful attitudes everyday – competition, scarcity mentality, convenience and consumption, complacency in a harmful system of capitalism.

Eva Jewell associate professor of Sociology and research director at the Yellowhead Institute

brutal, and it happened all in living memory and persists to the present. They now face systemic racism through the lack of housing and the effects of climate change in their homelands.”

Altered behaviour and reconciliation

Jewell says that people in Canada have developed personal stakes in the settler colonial system, even if it harms Indigenous peoples and other racialized groups. She says that the original white beneficiaries of the colonial system have grown, and different groups have joined over the years, including Indigenous people.

“There are certainly Indigenous individuals who have deep personal stakes in settler colonial systems,” says Jewell. “Settler colonialism subsumes and co-opts to maintain its power.”

“It takes understanding how we embody these harmful attitudes everyday – competition, scarcity mentality, convenience and consumption, complacency in a harmful system of capitalism,” says Jewell. “It will harm everyone eventually since we are entering a climate crisis. The roots of this crisis are in capitalism, settler colonialism, and an anthropocentric society.”

The purpose of Jewell’s upcoming presentation at SFU will be to prepare people for reconciliation. According to Jewell, reconciliation is a diverse concept with no exact definition for all Indigenous Nations in Canada.

“I conceptualize reconciliation to be many different things depending on who is talking about it,” she says. “It’s important to remember that there will absolutely be variation in the idea of rec-

“When asked about it, many leaders will say that they need to listen to Indigenous peoples, but with over 1,000 recommendations from several inquiries in the last 30 years,” says Jewell. “I think we are beyond a listening exercise.”

“I think Canadians need to challenge their apathy that their governments and economic powers rely on,” she says. “This requires bravery to examine the privileges and benefits of being a Canadian, and what cost this has to the original inhabitants of this land.”

For more information on *Taking Action! From Structural Racism to Personal Practices*, visit www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html#!view/event/event_id/24597 For more information on Eva Jewell, visit www.ryerson.ca/sociology/people/faculty/eva-jewell



Photo courtesy of Eva Jewell

▲ Eva Jewell

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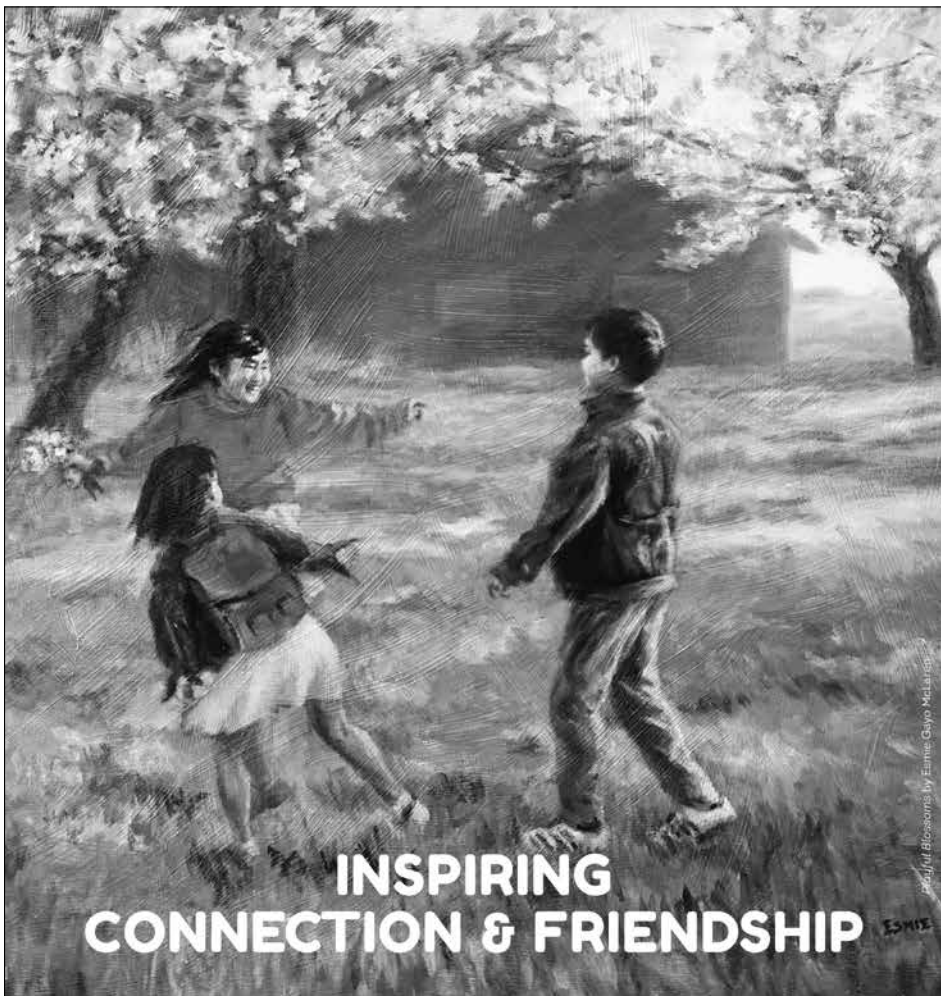
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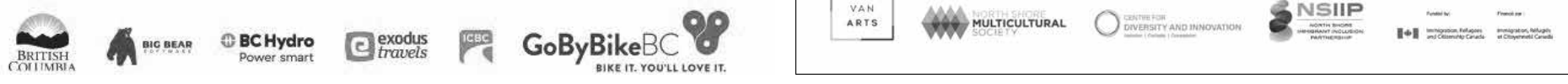


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Photo courtesy of Culture Days

Alyssa Amarshi: Her Tribal Roots

by ISHA OHRI

An Ambassador for the 2021 B.C. Culture Days, Alyssa Amarshi is an artist, creative director and activist for inclusivity in the arts. Through her collective, *Her Tribal Roots*, Amarshi is championing diversity and the importance of creating opportunities for artists from all walks of life, allowing them to express themselves without any barriers or discrimination.

Her Tribal Roots, a collective that was created organically with her friends and colleagues through their shared passion of art, is one of Amarshi's biggest accomplishments to date.

"It has been through many beautiful iterations and transitions, but the current list of co-creators and artistic collaborators are myself, Tawahum Bige, Ariane Custodio, Marisa Gold, Orin T McRey, Natasha Gayle, Jean David (JD) Muco, Katie (Kt) Karjala) and Chelsea (Franz the Poet) Franz. We try to embody and champion empathy, emergence, symbiosis and commu-

nity care through our artistry," she says.

Artistic intuition

Amarshi recalls that she always had an innate desire to move and express herself through art. She created dances and shows for her family members despite not being trained or enrolled in any dance classes. She was more concerned with the feeling associated with moving instead of the technique or people's perception.

Dance provided a safe haven for Amarshi from a young age.



Photo courtesy of Culture Days

▲ *Change, says Alyssa Amarshi, is the only constant.*

Amarshi grew up during the time of GeoCities and she had pressured her cousins to create a webpage on it for her dance performances. Amarshi was only ten years old and hadn't even stepped into the dance studio yet.

However, Amarshi notes there was a period of time where this passion for dance was lost in favor of academic pursuits. She decided it was not possible to pursue this passion as a career; for the majority of her young adulthood Amarshi thought that her dance and self-expression would be confined to a hobby and nothing more. Yet her passion never truly faded, it simply blended with other goals. Dance was always her safe haven, but her perception of it evolved.

When she started learning Bollywood and other dance forms, she realized that the cultural component of the dance is the most important part of any form. Without understanding the relationship between cultural beliefs and dance moves, a dancer she says can never appreciate the full extent of the dance step.

Amarshi noted that possessing different roles in the arts industry has allowed her to see how multi-faceted the industry

really is, including unforeseen challenges.

"I wish I could spend less time on administration, marketing and all the other logistics, and instead spend more time engaged in the process of art, and dance and play in community."

Yet she remains anchored to her personal haven, movement and art.

"[I wish] to spend more time embodied in movement and art over everything else," she states with simplicity.

Engrained discrimination

When discussing the topic of discrimination, Amarshi notes that systems or institutions have been designed to discriminate against people who belong to certain groups—engrained discrimination as Amarshi describes it.

"I think my biggest challenge is simply feeling worthy in my artistry," she shares. "I have often felt simultaneously too much and not enough, especially when it comes to my ethnic identity. I have felt both tokenized and looked over."

Amarshi feels many people can sympathize with her struggle to feel confident and safe in her industry.

"I have felt the pressure to exploit my trauma and identity in my work to gain opportunities, and there have been times when I felt like I missed out on opportunities because I did not market myself as 'marginalized' enough or 'traumatized' enough," she says.

Amarshi says COVID-19 has allowed her to rethink her priorities and reconnect with nature. Her collective met outside during the lockdown due to health orders, thus she was able to learn a lot more about symbiosis and interconnectivity. With mental health a major concern of the pandemic, her collective thought it was important to value wellbeing before productivity.

"[I] realized how important and necessary and sacred rest really is," she says.

Amarshi sums up her two pieces of advice to aspiring artists and to her younger self:

"Remember that you are so worthy of expression and your expression is so worthy of being witnessed... Breathe. And also remember change is the only constant." ✍

To catch Alyssa Amarshi at B.C. Culture Days, please visit www.culturedays.ca/en/bc/2021bcambassadors

► "VIFF" from page 1

ghan boy Mir, as he navigates through life's difficulties in the backdrop of the turmoil of his country, is perhaps the best story there is for a foreign audience to both understand and care about what has been happening in Afghanistan. It has a contemporary context now that the Taliban recently returned to power in Afghanistan after its fall 20 years ago.

"Focusing on a child will make you think about the future of Afghanistan and what is his future. You also don't know where he is going to go next," says Grabsky, "It is a story about a young boy growing up and it is also about Afghanistan. What did we do right and what did we do wrong? There were 40 countries involved, men and women have died and a lot of money has been spent, it astounds that people don't want to understand what has happened."

The documentary is an extension of the award-winning director Phil Grabsky's previous works on Mir's life – *The boy who Plays on the Buddhas of Bamiyan* and *10 years in Afghanistan*.

Eager to find out for himself what has happened to the coun-

try, Grabsky was the first filmmaker to fly into Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban. He met Mir by chance on his first tape around the Buddhas of Bamiyan, an ancient Buddhist religious site, which the Taliban blew up in 2001.

A passionate and inspiring filmmaker, Grabsky has already made 250 documentaries in his 30-year career. His other major project, *Exhibition on Screen*, started about a decade ago, brings major art exhibitions and artist biopics to cinema screens around the world and already plays in 61 countries.

Among all his documentaries, Grabsky believes this one on Afghanistan is his best. "I don't think it is worth making films unless there is a purpose. It has been very hard, I almost stopped twice, it is gratifying now that we are getting recognition. I just wish the ending was slightly happier for Mir and the country," he says.

"What we do as filmmakers is we try to inform; I try to ask the right questions to the right people. If you hear someone say it is a complete failure, it is also not true. Women have become educated, and they don't lose that

knowledge. You have a civil society that you didn't have 20 years ago. 20 years ago, they didn't have mobile phones and now you see they are all plugged in."

The film also shows the resilient spirit of the Afghan people even when they are at arm's length to death. One sees Mir's innocent and bright smile as a child, and he remains optimistic at the end about his life and his country even as the Taliban return.

Coextinction

Another critical documentary about the present state of the world hits much closer to home. *Coextinction*, made by first time female filmmakers Gloria Pancrazi and Elena Jean, is a story about the survival of Southern Resident Killer Whales in B.C. and the complicated web of interconnected issues behind it.

There are only 74 Southern Resident Orcas left currently and they are facing extinction threat. Pancrazi, who works on the ground monitoring these orcas, decided to find out why and let the world know.

"It started with a love for the orcas, and a big need that they would survive and thrive. Then

it grew into protecting more than the orcas," she says.

There are many issues that negatively impact the orcas such as noise disturbances and water pollution. But as Pancrazi unravels the complicated puzzle, she also discovers that local chinook salmon is also going extinct, which is the main food source for orcas.

"The salmon are starving to death and that is connected to the fish farms, to the dams, to the pipeline. In addition, they are all happening on unceded lands of indigenous people, so it is also connected with indigenous injustice. They are also im-



Photo courtesy of Coextinction

▲ *Still from Coextinction.*

pacted as salmon is a major part of their culture and diet."

As the orca goes, so go we. Pancrazi adds that coextinction is not just about the orcas and the salmon, it is also about us being connected to the climate crisis and how we are impacted by it.

An emotional film as it documents the species' extinction threats as well as indigenous injustice, Pancrazi is hopeful things can change if people start to take action.

"There is hope, I can't accept they will go extinct, they are such a special group of species, they swim together through grief and celebration," she says. "The orcas are incredibly resilient and intelligent. Salmon is also a very resilient species; if we do something, they will come back." ✍

For more information on VIFF, please go to viff.org

To learn more about Phip Grabsky's works and Mir's life, please go to www.seventh-art.com

To learn more about the Orca situation, please go to www.coextinctionfilm.com

A mix of history and intercultural compositions

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Released on September 10 by Moshe Denburg's band, Tzimmes, *The Road Never Travelled* is their first album to come about in more than 25 years. Comprised of music recorded by the band over the past three decades, *The Road Never Travelled* is not just a mix of what Jewish music has to offer, but Denburg's own experience with Jewish culture and music from Liturgical music to klezmer and even, perhaps surprisingly, a bit of Beatles.



▲ Tzimmes band members capture the many sounds of Jewish music.

"There's a Yiddish song that talks about stuff you love, and that can be followed by a song from the texts or the prayers with an original melody, [followed by] *In My Life*, which is a Beatles song, because it was associated with Tzimmes' musical practice for so many years [and] we always finished our gigs, our weddings, Bar Mitzvahs and Bat Mitzvahs with a goodbye song, wishing everyone to remember those who are not there anymore," says Denburg.

A story and history

Denburg has always been surrounded by a rich variety of music in his life. Having grown up in a rabbinical home in Montreal, Denburg says that he was exposed early on both to the music of the synagogue and Jewish people, as well as to the folk and pop music of North America

and the West. Over the course of a few decades, he would realize his love of music and develop a winding, international career and craft from forming an Israeli beat group in the late 1960s and early 1970s to recording liturgical World Music pieces throughout Canada until the 1980s.

It was around the mid-1980s however, as Denburg was settling into a groove of composing in Victoria, that he wanted to be sure that the music he was writing would be heard by people.

"I realized that my intercultural compositions could sit on the shelf forever and a day, and I'd be sitting on my hands, writing another composition that wasn't played," says Denburg. "I was always connected in one way or another with the Jewish community, wherever I went, and Victoria had a good Jewish

community. So I decided to create this group that would do a combination of all the things that I had been doing before, which was music in the secular realm, Jewish music of the liturgical realm and some folk music."

Formed in 1986, Tzimmes was named for the classic Jewish dish the band's ethos reflects: an arduous, sweet mishmash concoction. Indeed, the band would prove an excellent musical and cultural outlet for the bandleader and his mates for years to come.

Breaking through

Denburg has had a lot to reflect on since the early days of Tzimmes. Having been happily preoccupied with the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra, which he founded in 2001, the com-

poser-performer was recently compelled to return to music that spoke more closely to his own experiences. For Denburg, the title track of *The Road Never Travelled* represents a kind of 'treatise' on breaking free of one's uncertainties. It's a universal ideal, to be sure, but, for Denburg, it's also meaningfully informed by a Jewish context.

"There's a saying in the Talmud that goes, 'if not now, when.' In many cultures, there's that sort of idea, like 'grab the bull by the horns' or 'he who hesitates is lost.' [The song] talks about not missing an opportunity. How do you shake off the shackles of your hesitations and actually go forward in life," says Denburg. "Even though it isn't a Jewish piece in the sense that it draws upon liturgy directly, it resonates for me as a philosophy

of my life, a statement that I'm making with a whole heart and mind."

And despite a long and diverse career, there's always doubts and worries to be grappled with. Thankfully, for Denburg, the road never travelled becomes a bit easier to navigate with time.

"I have certain comfort about doing this that I didn't experience before, because earlier in one's career, there's a certain anxiety. You have to prove yourself. You're worried about how others are going to respond," he says. "Now, it's not that there's an overconfidence, but I'm doing things that I feel have come to fruition inside me. So there isn't this holding back, this worry, or the same anxiety." ✍

For more information on Tzimmes, visit tzimmes.net.

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**The
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**"We knew they would be good but we didn't expect them to be this good...
We knew they all had chops but boy oh boy they can sing too."
- Andrea Berman, Pacific Pickin' CiTR 101.9 FM**



**Gabriel
Dubreuil
with
Andy
Hillhouse**

Gabriel Dubreuil presents an exciting blend of Celtic styles steeped in North American fiddle styles and jazz. The music is intimate and heartfelt.

Friday, October 8th at 8pm

**The Mel Lehan Hall at St. James Square
3214 West 10th Avenue in Kitsilano
Advance \$20 in the hall + \$10 streaming**

www.roguefolk.com



Recipe by Selma Van Halder

Bourani Banjan

The first time one of my Middle Eastern friends cooked me dinner I could've sworn she made an entire bottle of olive oil disappear into the dish. To be honest I expected it to be greasy, heavy and unpleasant, but none of that was the case. In my culinary upbringing, we were conservative with fats and often used margarine. Nutritional science has since evolved and after going to a French cuisine-based culinary school I now know better. Good food needs butter. Good Middle Eastern food needs olive oil. This Afghan eggplant dish will be a nice exercise in loosening your olive oil wrist. And you know what? Olive oil isn't bad for you, either!

Ingredients

- olive oil
- salt
- 2 eggplants
- 3 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 can diced tomatoes
- 2 tsp turmeric
- dried chilli flakes to taste

Yoghurt sauce ingredients

- 1 cup Greek style yoghurt
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 bunch fresh mint

Method

1. Cut the eggplants into slices of about a centimetre thick. Discard the tops. Place the slices on a cooling rack and

salt lightly on both sides. Let sit for about ten minutes to draw out moisture and bitterness. Pat dry with a paper towel.

2. Preheat the oven to 350F.
3. Shallow fry the eggplant in olive oil in a heavy bottomed skillet on a medium high heat on your stove until lightly browned. You'll have to do this in batches. Use a colander to collect your cooked eggplant. Place it in a baking dish to catch any excess oil. Reuse the oil with your next batches.
4. Turn the heat down to medium. Use your skillet with about two tablespoons of oil (discard the rest) to lightly fry the garlic, turmeric, and chilli flakes (if using) for about a minute. Add the tomatoes and simmer for about ten minutes to form a tomato sauce.
5. Meanwhile prepare the yoghurt sauce by combining yoghurt, grated garlic and chopped fresh mint in a bowl.
6. Layer your eggplant and tomato sauce into your oven safe baking dish. Finish with the last of your tomato sauce.
7. Bake in the oven for about 15 more minutes. Top with the yoghurt sauce and garnish with mint leaves. Serve with jasmine rice or flatbread.



Photo by Selma Van Halder



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September 21–October 5, 2021

Cultural Calendar

by SIMON YEE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Welcome to Autumn 2021 everyone. Another summer has come and gone, the Canadian federal election has just concluded and the fourth wave of COVID is going strong in parts of the country. It's been a tiring slog, but we have to keep going, try to keep healthy and stay home if you're feeling ill or sick. In the meantime, check out some of these events - all of these events feature outdoors, online or limited indoor venues following health guidelines. Stay safe everyone and have a great Fall season!

Revolving: A Family Tale
Sept. 16–Nov. 27
www.centrea.org

Revolving: A Family Tale is a multimedia exhibition by Iranian-born artist Sona Safaei-Sooreh and presented by Centre A that revisits the semi-colonial history of the Iranian Oil Industry. In part, it takes the form of a comic script, printed in traditional tabloid-size newspapers, attempting to compare the story of the nationalization of the Iranian Oil Industry with present-day political affairs. For more information on the exhibit, check out the Centre A website.

Mid-Autumn Moon Festival 2021
Sept. 21–26
www.vancouverchinesegarden.com

Did you know the Mid-Autumn Festival goes back to the custom of moon worshiping during the Shang Dynasty, and has a history of over 3,000 years? Explore the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden during the Mid-Autumn Festival, celebrating the harvest moon, family and togetherness. Wander through this world-renowned Ming-dynasty inspired garden, enveloped by live music and colourful lantern decorations. Events last between Sept. 21 and 26, and includes mooncake tasting, tea ceremony demonstrations, live music, crafts, storytelling and moon-watching with the H.R. Macmillan Space Centre. Online pre-bookings are recommended. Walk-ups will depend on space and availability.

Riverfest
Sept. 21–28
www.fraserriverdiscovery.org

RiverFest 2021 returns for its 19th year! This free week-long festival is a great way to enjoy the beginnings of fall on the New Westminster waterfront by the Quay. Since its inception, the festival has continued to grow steadily with new and exciting components that highlight and celebrate the environmental, economic and socio-cultural importance of the Fraser River. This year, the Discovery Centre is planning online workshops and a weekend of community spirit, talented performances and other family-friendly activities! For more information, check out their website.

B.C. Culture Days
Sept. 24
www.culturedays.ca

Culture Days is a nationwide event celebrating and showcasing local arts and culture in Canadian

communities. Traditionally held over a weekend, because of the global pandemic, Culture Days has been extended to a month-long interactive, immersive arts and culture experience happening across Canada in-person, where possible, and online. Here in Metro Vancouver, many municipalities and cultural centres will be hosting hundreds of virtual concerts, live shows, exhibits, demonstrations, workshops and more. Culture Days hopes to instill appreciation for the role artists, historians, designers and creators play in the creation of art and the enrichment of our cultural fabric.

Come to the Cabaret: Where to Look for Cosmopolitan Egypt
Sept. 24
www.sfu.ca/sfu-community/events.html#!#view/event/event_id/25174

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies will be presenting award-winning editor and translator Raphael Cormack from the University of Edinburgh to speak about Cosmopolitan Egypt. The conventional history of cosmopolitan Egypt has its traditional heroes - Lawrence Durrell, Constantine Cavafy, E.M. Forster - and is usually based in Alexandria. Cormack's talk tells a different story of Egyptian cosmopolitanism, one that took place in Cairo's Arabic-speaking nightclubs, theatres and music halls. Here, Egyptians, Greeks, Armenians, French and more, all came together to put on the shows that came to define this golden age of Egypt's entertainment industry. This talk looks at some of the characters of that period and attempts to reconceptualize the image of "Cosmopolitan Egypt."

Mandinka Pilgrimage ft. Constantinople & Ablaye Cissoko, Kora
Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m.
www.earlymusic.bc.ca

From the 12th century up to today, the Griots, known as "the Bards of West Africa," have transmitted their music and knowledge from generation to generation through a sophisticated and unbroken oral tradition. This concert, presented by the Kay Meek Arts Centre, explores the epics of the Mandinka Kingdom, together with the griot master of the kora, Ablaye Cissoko. Montreal's Ensemble Constantinople will support Cissoko with their signature flair to create a cosmopolitan sound that blends West Africa with Persia. For tickets and more information, check out the Early Music B.C. website.

Haiku from the Tashme Japanese Canadian Internment Camp
Sept. 26, 4–5 p.m.
www.wordvancouver.ca

On Sept. 26, Word Vancouver will be hosting a reading that offers a window into a little-known community of poets in the midst of a dark time in Canadian history. Participants will hear selected poems by Sueko "Sam" Sameshima and Torao Takeda, written while they were incarcerated in the Tashme Japanese Canadian internment camp near Hope, B.C. during the Second World War. Beginning with a short introduction to internment camps, their



▲ Chapter 21: Dance meets strength and courage in the face of adversity.

haiku groups and the process of translating from Japanese to English, each poem will be read in the original Japanese, followed by an English translation. The translations were undertaken as part of a haiku history and translation project by Michiko Kihira, Jacquie Pearce and Jean-Pierre Antonio.

Chapter 21
Sept. 29–Oct. 3
www.firehallartscentre.ca

In this dance/theatre piece choreographed by Starr Muranko and directed by Yvette Nolan, Chapter 21, being held at the Firehall Arts Centre from Sept. 29 to Oct. 3, explores what happens when a vibrant, active artist comes face to face with a crip-

pling collision of events. Chapter 21 is a reflection on the days that have come to pass, and the art of becoming. For tickets and cast information, please check out the Firehall Arts Centre website.

Dog Without Feathers
Sept. 29–Oct. 11
www.dancehouse.ca

Brazilian choreographer Deborah Colker delivers a powerful work blending elements of contemporary, classical and traditional dance. Based on the poem *Cão Sem Plumas* ("dog without feathers") by Brazilian writer João Cabral de Melo Neto and enhanced by the striking images of filmmaker Cláudio Assis, this show portrays on stage the

course of the Capibaribe River, where the natural habitat and the local population are threatened. Performed by 14 dancers of astonishing physicality, the choreography interweaves classical, contemporary, popular and ritual dances, set against black and white projections captured during a journey where the dance company immersed itself in the world of the Capibaribe, its man-groves and its inhabitants.

Vancouver International Film Festival
Oct. 1–11
www.viff.org

The Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) announces its 40th edition, showcasing more than 110 feature films and events, including boundary-pushing Canadian work, adventurous East Asian cinema, inspiring documentaries, elevated genre cinema and festival favourites. The festival is being held in a hybrid format, with some films screening in cinemas and others being available throughout the province of British Columbia on the VIFF Connect streaming platform. To explore VIFF's 2021 programming, and to purchase Single Tickets and Subscriptions, visit the festival's website.

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