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B.C. schools poised to offer new languages to their students

by ALEXANDRA
BRADFORD-PATTERSON

In recent years, more and more languages have begun to be added to the BC language curriculum. The newest of these is Farsi, and part of its successful introduction can be attributed to the Farsi Dar campaign.

Up to now, the Education Ministry had nine additional languages curricula for French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish and American Sign Language.

Parallel to the Farsi-speaking community, estimated at over 43,000 according to the latest

census numbers, Filipino groups across B.C. have been aiming for the same goal.

Farsi Dar

The Farsi Dar campaign is a grassroots campaign that was started in 2018. It began with the ongoing conversations within the Persian community about the challenges that families faced in their attempts to preserve their language and teach Farsi at home and rapidly developed into an organization. After years of campaigning, Farsi Dar was able to realize the dream of the Farsi-speaking Canadian community: to introduce Farsi into the educational system.

“This is a new chapter for our community because our community was not visible despite all of our contributions and all the roles it has played in our society,”

guage for future generations is a great achievement and a great step forward.”

The new Farsi curriculum was developed by teachers from Co-

Although the group faced challenges, including the need to learn how a bureaucracy such as the school board operated and how to adapt to it, they continued be-

“As for anyone who wants to bring their languages to the curriculum, we are 100 per cent behind them.

Amir Bajehkian, President of Farsi Dar

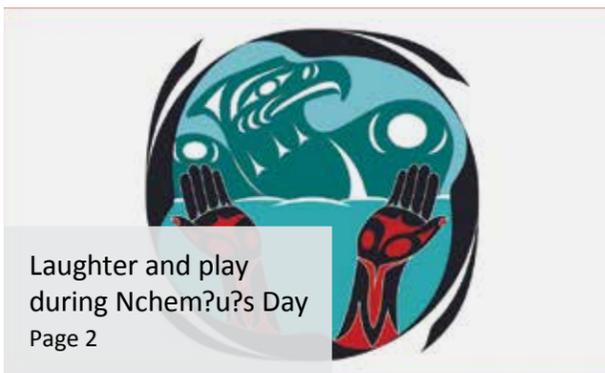
says Farsi Dar president Amir Bajehkian. “Having the recognition of our language and culture to speak for us, and the fact that we can now work towards protecting and preserving the lan-

quitlam and Surrey, with help from a Simon Fraser University professor, according to the British Columbia Association of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML).

cause they did not want to deprive the children of their community of the opportunity to learn Farsi.

“For second-generation Canadians, [the ability to learn their

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Nchem?u?s Day

A day of fun, Indigenous style

by ELAHA AMANI

North Vancouver’s Presentation House Theatre will host Nchem?u?s Day, an afternoon to celebrate Indigenous culture with food, music, shows and indoor and outdoor activities on the grounds of the theatre.

Nchem?u?s Day, happening on Aug. 25, is open to people of all backgrounds, although some activities may be more suited for adults.



▲ A game of Slahal.

To Keith “Bubbas” Nahanee, a comedian who will be performing during this day, Nchem?u?s Day is a day of fun, dropping all stereotypes and prejudices and to share the true meaning of the Indigenous lifestyle.

“A day where everyone can come together to learn about local Indigenous culture and participate in certain events, to have fun while learning Indigenous crafts, about legends, art, games, food and humour,” he says.

And of course, he is very much looking forward to performing. “I will be sharing a little bit of laughter; everything from the pandemic to dating on the reserve,” Nahanee reports.

Togetherness in playfulness

Participants will have the opportunity to listen to traditional storytelling, meet Indigenous Elders, witness carving demonstrations and artwork unveilings, and play the ancient Pacific Northwest Coast Indigenous game of Slahal.

Slahal is a gambling game composed of two opposing teams, two sets of bones (sticks),

one with a stripe and one without, as well as a set of scoring sticks. Two players are chosen on a team to hide the bones in their hands, leaving the opposing team to guess which hand has the unmarked bone. The game is lively and lightly competitive, often accompanied by singing and drumming to boost team morale and taunt the other team. Players and audiences can place bets on the teams, or individual matches within the game, in hopes of winning a cash prize.

Additionally, various stand-up comedians will be present at this community event. Nahanee will tell jokes to get the audience laughing yet thinking at the same time. He will share the stage with Jon Gagnon, stand-up comedian, and host of *This Month Tonight*.

Laughter as vocation

Nahanee, who comes from a family of the Squamish Nation, was born and raised in North Vancouver. He has always had a passion for comedy, starting by entertaining family at get-togethers then gradually making his name known in the community.

His *Bubbas Comedy Show* strives to be fun, engaging and totally unique, often involving bringing up an audience member and playing interactive games. Each show features comics and can be tailored to an all-native show or something entirely different.

Nahanee adores bringing laughter to his audiences, retelling stories of his life and living up parties, fundraisers, and pubs and casinos on comedy nights. Recently, he has filmed his first TV special, *Comedy Invasion 2.0*, scheduled to be released this upcoming fall on Tubi and Hulu.

Nahanee’s future aspirations include producing a comedy show of Indigenous comedians from the east to west coasts of Canada, sharing his comedy across different reservations, and continuing to inspire young comedians in the country. Ultimately, he has every intention of improving his expertise in humour and stand-up comedy and putting a smile on the faces of all he is able to reach.

“I will continue to direct, produce, and continue comedy until the day I cannot laugh anymore. To support anyone who wants to be a comedian,” says Nahanee. “I especially want to make those in correctional centres laugh, and hope they can make others laugh one day, too.”

For more information, please visit: www.phtheatre.org/nchemus-day-august-25-2022



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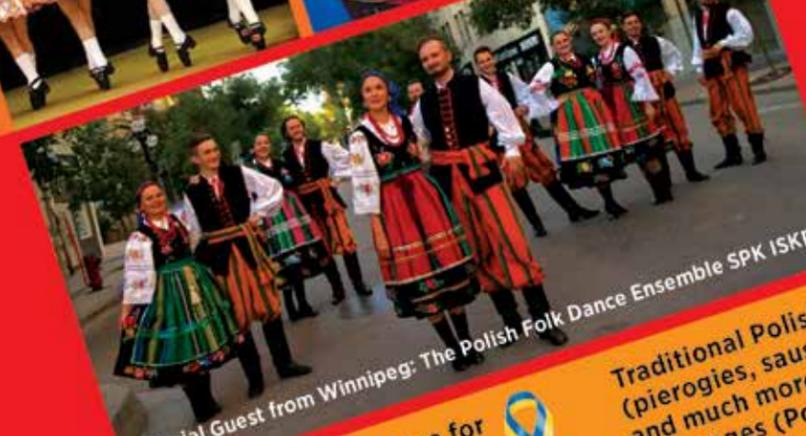
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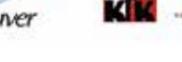













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Can robots be good therapists?

by XI CHEN

Using therapeutic robots to support people's needs is a rising field of research in healthcare. Designing them for best results, however, is more than an engineering problem according to Paul Bucci, a Computer Science PhD student at UBC.

A variety of robots are currently available for assistive care. PARO, a white baby seal robot from Japan, is perhaps the most well-known. It has been successfully utilized for dementia care in multiple countries since 2003.

A number of studies on therapeutic robots have been done to evaluate their effects. After working closely with sick children at the Canuck Place Children's Hospice in 2019, Bucci realised robot designers can learn from therapists.

"With my work in particular, we were using the robot that I had developed in my Master's degree and we were looking at how we might continue to create touch-based robotic interactions

at the Children's Hospice," Bucci says. He and his team developed CuddleBits, furry robots that can be handheld and are more mobile and robust than larger robots.

"It's a very complex, complex field. A lot of our findings were more engineering questions of how do you actually do the work of creating the interactive programs and the physical structures themselves," he explains.

A human-centered approach

But beyond that, he suggests that researchers and designers need to think about emotions in the ways that therapists do – that they aren't inherent or experienced the same way by everyone.

He adds that the current studies tend to lock down a very precise mathematical description of what goes on in terms of specifying what the robot and the human are behaving and feeling, but he doesn't think that is the right approach.

"I think that the models that we were using were not complex or accurate enough in terms of human emotions. What I'm suggesting is a human-focused approach – to work more with the interaction itself and less with an engineering-focused approach," he explains.

Bucci says designing interactions doesn't take very advanced artificial intelligence. It is more about the narrative.



▲ Paul Bucci, UBC computer science PhD student, with objects used to investigate people's emotional and physical responses.

"We did a study where we had the exact same robotic motions given to 10 to 20 different people. What seemed to change their emotional reactions was actually the narrative that they placed on the robot. Literally the same motions didn't really matter because it was all about the story that they brought," says Bucci.

Based on his findings, past experiences should be included when analyzing emotional interactions. For example, someone who was bitten by a dog in the past would not feel as comfortable with a robotic dog as others would.

"If we were to change our thinking about emotions and

how to measure them, we wouldn't waste time designing and running studies that don't really measure their goal, and ultimately, we could build more emotionally impactful robots," he says.

Bucci thinks the future of designing therapeutic robots really depends on the therapists. Designers and engineers need to work with them to understand the therapeutic technique and how it would look to incorporate interactions with robots into the practice.

"The funny thing is that people tend to attribute agency and emotion to anything, in which case it means we need to design

the robots to be intelligent as much as very reactive," he says.

He concludes that technology can do amazing things, but it doesn't replace people. So, when designing technology, it is always better to keep in mind people's need for interaction with other people and the emotional implications of such interactions.

For Bucci in the end the robots are only tools to enable therapy; it is not the robot that makes for effective therapy but the human agent. ✍

For more information visit: <https://news.ubc.ca/2022/07/07/what-robots-can-learn-from-therapists>



Photo courtesy of Paul Bucci

▲ An example of a robot designed for therapy.

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Issues and Ideas

Photo courtesy of Quoi Media



Why do some asylum seekers make it into the West quickly – while others have to wait more than a decade?

They were relatively civilized middle-class Europeans who looked more like the family living next door than the refugees western nations had become so accustomed to seeing trickle across their borders. At least, that's how Western news media and politicians depicted the Ukrainian citizens forced to flee their homes following the start of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February.

As a second generation Canadian and daughter of two Eritrean refugees, the distinctions made between refugees were textbook dog-whistles messages that were impossible to ignore. When I travelled to Ethiopia and visited my uncle this past May, I witnessed first-hand how refugees who don't look like people who might live next door – who come from places that are not seen as "civilized" – have become forgotten casualties of broken asylum systems.

Picture this: you grow up living in an eight-bedroom home in a residential neighbourhood two-hours outside the capital city. Your father runs a public transportation business, and your mother is a shopkeeper who sells spices. You and your seven siblings attend the only private school in town. The life you lead is a good life until one day, the political situation of your country changes and

suddenly your family loses everything. In the blink of an eye, fifteen years passes by in the refugee camp where you've been waiting in limbo for your asylum papers to arrive.

This is my uncle's story, in a nutshell. Despite hailing from Ethiopia, the life he led prior

wondered why the same quick action couldn't be taken for the refugees who have languished in the system for years. But during a CBS News broadcast report from Kyiv in late February, senior foreign correspondent Charlie D'Agata voiced what had to that point been largely

years until 2021, when he was found homeless on the streets of Addis Ababa. When I met him this summer, his mental health had deteriorated to such a point that my family decided to pool resources and place him in a private facility where he could receive treatment for depression

nation welcomes across its borders and into its society reveals who belongs, who doesn't and which lives it believes are worth saving.

Criticism of slow resettlement processes are usually met with the excuse that an increasing number of asylum claims have

“Applaud our government for the exemplary support provided to Ukrainians in need – now urge them to apply this same urgency and care to all refugees, equally.”

to the 1998 Ethiopia-Eritrea border war was not all that different from the life of your average middle-class Canadian citizen. Yet December will mark 18 years since my uncle first filed an asylum claim in 2004. He does not “seem so like us,” as one Telegraph writer described Ukrainian asylum seekers – and there is no telling when his ordeal will end.

Meanwhile, the Canadian government announced measures in March that would fast-track the arrival of an unlimited number of Ukrainians fleeing the war and allow them to apply for a renewable three-year temporary residence. Many

implicit: Ukraine, he declared, “isn't a place, with all due respect, like Iraq or Afghanistan, that has seen conflict raging for decades. This is a relatively civilized, relatively European – I have to choose those words carefully, too – city, one where you wouldn't expect that, or hope that it's going to happen.”

Research studies have long indicated that lengthy asylum processes adversely impact the mental health of refugee claimants, leading to an increased risk of life-long psychiatric disorders. After my uncle spent 15 years in the Shimelba camp in Ethiopia's Tigray Region, we lost all contact with him for two

while he continued waiting to be granted asylum.

While his case is an extreme one, long asylum wait-times are not uncommon. In a 2017 memo, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada estimated that by 2021 wait times for asylum claims would take up to 11 years – this is much closer to the bleak reality faced by refugees than the projected 24-month period indicated on the board's website.

Canada moving at a break-neck speed to implement targeted supports for Ukrainian asylum seekers was a reminder that our refugee policies are not race-blind commitments to humanitarianism. Who a

placed an untenable weight on a system already weakened by a mounting backlog. Yet the international response to the Ukraine crisis has revealed how governments in the west can operate like well-oiled machines when they feel the need.

Applaud our government for the exemplary support provided to Ukrainians in need – now urge them to apply this same urgency and care to all refugees, equally. ✉

HERMONA KULUBERHAN is an Ottawa-based writer currently completing a master's in journalism at Carleton University.

Source: Quoi Media

► “Languages” from page 1

own language] is a means to reconnect them and to make sure that they're grounded, especially when there's an opportunity for everyone to be proud of who they are and what their roots are,” says Bajehkian.

Although the campaign has been ongoing for four years, the introduction of Farsi into the Coquitlam school curriculum still feels new to members of the community.

Its introduction has built a concrete floor and will ensure that the language of Farsi does not slip through the cracks and is preserved in Coquitlam. It means that the young and the old speakers of the language will be able to communicate and maintain the bonds that make the Farsi-speaking community such a tight-knit one.

“I want [the children of the Farsi speaking community] to be proud of their roots, of who they are, and to learn about the profound impact their language had on different regions,” he adds. “Farsi has had an influence in a lot of different places. They should be proud, and get closer to other communities, because for centuries, Farsi is a language that would connect people.”

The possibility for the introduction of other languages to achieve what Farsi has and to enter the curriculum is one Farsi Dar completely stands behind.

“We are strong believers in linguistic diversity. We believe that we are all in this together, and we are allies to everyone who wants to fight to try to keep their language alive for future generations and to share with each other. So we are in this

together, and this is about doubling down on who you are,” Bajehkian says. “As for anyone who wants to bring their languages to the curriculum, we are 100 per cent behind them.”

Tagalog

Tagalog, the language widely spoken in the Philippines, is another major language in B.C. that has had its representatives campaigning for its introduction into the B.C. school curriculum. According to a government census in 2016, of all the Tagalog speakers living in Canada, 18 per cent reside in British Columbia – and the number has only been increasing. As the population increases, so does the need for Tagalog to be taught in schools. The Embassy of the Philippines in Ottawa reports a population count of 123,170 Filipinos and

Filipino-Canadians in Vancouver, forming the fourth largest visible minority.

Communication often breaks down between second-generation Filipino-Canadians and recently arrived Filipino immigrants. The introduction of Tagalog classes can bridge the communication gap.

“It's another type of connection that would be fostered if Tagalog was to be introduced in the B.C. curriculum because many people who are already living here in B.C. – second generation Canadians – have already forgotten not just our language but our culture,” says Ian Caguiat, the former president of UBC's Filipino Students Association, Kababayan. “Learning the language will give them an introduction to the culture that we are all very proud of in the Philippines

and will also help them make the connections with the first generation Filipino immigrants.”

As Caguiat points out, language is a tool that can be used to help integrate Filipino immigrants into Filipino communities and Canadian society, in the same way that it has been for members of the Farsi speaking community. As for Bajehkian, introducing the Farsi language in the B.C. Curriculum is simply a cultural and community-building campaign effort.

“We want this to be a step towards a more inclusive society in Canada,” he concludes. ✉

For more information visit: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/languages/courses>

To get involved with Filipino culture visit <https://www.instagram.com/ubckaba/?hl=en>



Recipe by Selma Van Halder

Brazilian lemonade

Ever thought of putting condensed milk in lemonade? I sure hadn't. But the Brazilians have, and it's delicious. This 'lemonade' uses whole limes, making use of both juice and oils without the hassle of zesting. So it'll take you very little time to go from ordinary Vancouver summer to next level tropical Vancouver summer.

Ingredients

- 4 limes, whole
- 1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup (cane) sugar
- 4 cup water

Method

1. In a bowl, dissolve the sugar into one cup of hot water. Let the sugar water cool.
2. Wash the limes and cut them into eighths. Combine the sugar water with the limes in a blender or food processor, and pulse until the limes are in small pieces.
3. Strain the mixture and use a wooden spoon to press the liquid out of the lime bits.
4. Rinse the blender and put the liquid back into it. Add the rest of the water, and the condensed milk. Blend till frothy.
5. Pour over ice to serve and drink up.



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The 22 per cent

by RAMAN KANG

Realwheels Theatre began as a professional theatre company with a mandate to create and produce performances that deepen understanding of disability, but they didn't stop there.

The company expanded into community engagement work and then again into ancillary projects that address problematic barriers to people with disabilities.

Most recently, Realwheels launched an actor training academy customized for people with disabilities.

When the pandemic hit, the company pivoted to create a podcast series called *22 Percent*, which explores the experiences of people living with disability.

"Twenty two per cent of all Canadians live with a disability", says Rena Cohen, former managing artistic director of Realwheels, referring to the podcast name.

But before there was a podcast, there was a play.

Before the podcast

"We were actually developing a new play called *Disability Tour Bus* says Cohen, "when the pandemic caused us to change direction".

That play, which takes place on and off a moving city bus, is inspired by stories told by people with disabilities about navigating the city.

"The stories alternate from hilarious to horrifying, and they inspired the concept for the show *Disability Tour Bus*," Cohen explains.

Cohen witnessed many of these stories in action with people arriving at rehearsal and talking about what it was like



▲ Twenty two per cent of all Canadians live with a disability, says Rena Cohen.

getting there or waiting for the HandyDART to pick them up.

"[The play *Disability Tour Bus*] also aims to show how the quest for disability justice is aligned with other social justice causes," she says.

Then came the pivot. "We couldn't continue developing a roving, site-specific play during the pandemic, so we decided to take some of the material that had surfaced through our creative prompts in developing *Disability Tour Bus* and redirect them into making a short podcast series," she says.

"Many stories and issues that weren't going to be in the play were still important and interesting, and a podcast was a viable and entertaining platform on which to share them. Creating a podcast series kept our creative team together, sharing ideas and developing work until it was safe to gather in person".

The play is now scheduled to be released in Spring 2023.

The podcast

"There's a lot of resilience, strength, and humour in the disability community and I'd like to think that comes across in all of the *22 Percent* episodes," says Cohen.

In three of the episodes, Emily Grace Brook, Caspar Ryan and Alfiya Battalova talk about dating, invisible disabilities and growing up in a place where disability was denied.

"The four episodes are ten minutes long. The three in-

terviewees share personal stories about things that impacted them in a very deep and significant way", she adds.

The last episode rounds it all out with a parody called *Wordability Game Show*.

The game show episode contains a number of triggering words in order to have an impact but with a light touch.

"We take the issues seriously but we try not to take ourselves too seriously," she says.

Importance of words

"Words are important, and so is intention", says Cohen. "We all make mistakes but when we can acknowledge our mistakes, we can move on".

It takes a while to get accustomed to not using terms we used casually over the years. For example, the word "wheelchair-bound."

"A wheelchair is a source of freedom, mobility and independence. Consider the difference in saying a person may be a wheelchair-user, in contrast to calling someone 'wheelchair-bound'," Cohen explains. "Fortunately there's been great progress and much more awareness today than when I began working with the disability community 12 years ago. There's still a long way to go, but I hope projects like *22 Percent* and *Disability Tour Bus* contribute to making incremental changes".

Learn more here: www.realwheels.ca

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▲ Rena Cohen.

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Bringing it all together: Queer as Funk wants a space for everyone

by CURTIS SEUFERT

Fostering fun and community to live audiences – by bringing funk, motown and soul along the way – Queer as Funk, a queer-led inclusive band, is set to bring a good funky time to the TD Community Plaza for the Coquitlam Summer Concert Series on Friday, Sept. 2.

“It’s that sort of mission of building community, but it’s building community through real amazing music,” says Jocelyn Macdougall, vocalist and long-time member with Queer as Funk. “That’s how we’re able to build community in a really particular way, that’s rooted in phenomenal music and dance.”

With the band coming up on its ten-year anniversary, Macdougall says there’s been a lot of time to reflect on not just the musical process, but also the

role the band serves in a public-facing space.

Bringing people together

When Macdougall first saw Queer as Funk perform eight years ago, she knew she had to try and join them. While she

the band, Macdougall underlines it was a real opportunity to join something special.

“I just saw them and I thought, ‘Oh my gosh, this is incredible,’” she says. “[But] they’re singing all this Motown and they don’t have a backup singer, they

people. The band features members from the LGBTQ+ community and allies, and has played everything from small-town pride events to weddings of all varieties.

Throughout it all, Macdougall believes the band has brought

er, there’s such generosity and openness. Any ideas get a go,” says Macdougall. “There are lots of ideas that get left on the cutting room floor... [but] it’s because we try it collectively and we’re like, ‘Ah, that didn’t quite work.’”

“It’s that sort of mission of building community, but it’s building community through real amazing music.

Jocelyn Macdougall, vocalist and long-time member with Queer as Funk

hadn’t ever been in a formal band before, she says she was always that kid who sang into her hairbrush, which would end up translating to some experience with musical theatre.

But seeing now-fellow vocalist Connie Buna’s performance on stage alongside the rest of

don’t have a doowop girl... so I worked hard to get my foot in the door, but I’ve been very fortunate to be singing with them for eight years.”

For Macdougall, Queer as Funk is all about bringing people together, ensuring first and foremost that includes queer

queerness to the fore in a fun and welcoming way, that stands to benefit all audiences.

“[It’s] making space for queers to sort of fly their flags, but also inviting everyone to be part of that... as we lean into the idea that gender is not binary, sexuality is not binary, desire is not binary,” she says. “That is a really beneficial sort of way of experiencing the world that benefits straight folks as well. It’s all about being able to explore all the parts of who you are.”

A free exchange of ideas

As for the band members themselves, Macdougall says it’s an open environment where anyone can share the ideas they have. As members with less formal experience are free to share their ideas with the group, Macdougall explains that the more experienced musicians in the group are often pleasantly surprised by the free flowing musical process.

If an idea gets cut, she adds, it’s never for lack of trying.

“There’s a real spectrum in terms of experience. But when it comes to collaborating together,

In addition to the band’s commitment to community, she feels they’re always looking to grow as a group, and offer space and recognition to artists who deserve it.

“It’s important to acknowledge so many of the Black artists we pay tribute to with our music, who did not get the kind of notoriety or recognition they deserved when they were making their music,” she says. “We like to lift up other artists from communities that are different from our own.”

Overall, it’s a key piece of the puzzle for a band that’s committed to bringing queer joy to all.

“It’s important to us because our central mission is about building community,” says Macdougall. “It’s important to raise our own awareness, and by extension helping audiences to raise their own awareness about how all these things are interconnected.”

For more information about Queer as Funk, visit queerasfunk.com

For more on this and other Coquitlam summer series events, visit coquitlam.ca/803/Summer-Concert-Series



Photo by Sharon Steele Photography

▲ Queer as Funk is all about bringing people together, says Jocelyn Macdougall, vocalist and long-time member of the band .




ubcfarm.ubc.ca



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Farmers' Market

Produce, food trucks, crafts and more!



UBC FARM
Centre for Sustainable Food Systems

Weekly June to November!

- Saturdays 10am - 2pm
- Tuesdays 4pm - 6pm
- Wednesdays 11am - 2pm

August 23–September 6, 2022

Cultural Calendar

by SIMON YEE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

I'm hoping everyone has been enjoying their summer so far! Enjoy these next two weeks before Labour Day by enjoying the sun and checking out some of the events and festivals below.

* * *

Fifth Annual Chilliwack Sunflower Festival

Aug. 10–Sept. 5

www.chilliwacksunflowerfest.com

The Fifth Annual Chilliwack Sunflower Festival is happening now until Monday, Sept. 5 and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.! Take a stroll along the winding pathways on the farm, brimming with floral beauty. This year, the festival organizers have planted nearly 50 gorgeous varieties of sunflowers, including the stunning Sunrich Orange, Giant Sunflowers and three picturesque display gardens, along with the u-pick section that features three different varieties. There will also be a dazzling array of dahlias, gladiolas and, new this year, zinnias and cosmos!



▲ Jamaican, Nigerian and other Afrocentric foods, musicians and vendors planned at the North Plaza of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

litical class that needs to hear and respond to the challenge.

* * *

avourites: food stands and trucks; merchants and other vendors; live music and fashion; Il Giardino – food, wine and beer court; contests and activities; children's area with crafts and more.

* * *

African Heritage Festival of Music and Dance (AHFOMAD)

Sept. 2–4

www.festivalafrica.org

The African Heritage Festival of Music and Dance, happening at the Surrey Civic Plaza, is a festival featuring arts, music and dance, cultural to contemporary, from the African Canadian perspective with performers from the local, national and international arts and culture market from Africa, the Americas and all of the African diaspora. For a complete list of events and performers, please check out the festival's website.

* * *

Taiwanfest

Sept. 3–5

www.vancouvertaiwanfest.ca

The Taiwanfest is a three-day festival of arts, music, dance and film celebrating the Taiwanese culture as well as related cultures in the Asia-Pacific region. Some highlights include Kanatal, a musical group focusing on experimental musical genres; Harmonia, a string musician group; and a focus on Indonesian and Malaysian cuisine, dance and fashion. There is also a street banquet and outdoor concerts. Open to the public.

* * *

Vancouver International Flamenco Festival

Sept. 3–25

www.vancouverflamencofestival.org

As one of the few celebrated festivals devoted to flamenco art outside of Spain, the Vancouver International Flamenco Festival nurtures flamenco's hybridized

roots in Sephardic, Persian, Gypsy and Indian cultures. Running for over 20 years, the festival is produced by Flamenco Rosario. The festival organizers strive to reflect flamenco's diverse sociocultural identity through work narratives underlining the form's universal message of humanistic tolerance. For a complete list of performers, check out their website.

* * *

Eighth Annual Polish Festival

Sept. 4, 1–7 p.m.

www.belweder.org

Come on down to the eighth annual Polish Festival at the Shipbuilders Square in North Vancouver for a day of family fun. Activities include puppet shows, arts and crafts, singing and dancing. Traditional cuisine will be available, as well as vendors selling Polish accessories and merchandise. Portland band Zabavva and Vancouver band Hey Ziuta will perform.



▲ Almost 50 gorgeous varieties of sunflowers are sure to please the eyes and soul.

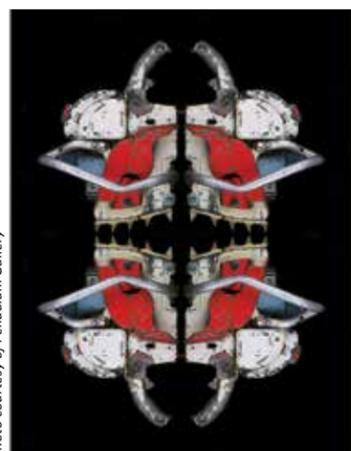
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Mercy Mercy Me

Aug. 15–Sept. 16

www.pendulumgallery.bc.ca

Until Sept. 16, the Pendulum Gallery will be hosting an exhibition, entitled Mercy Mercy Me, featuring several artists addressing the issue and impacts of climate change. The exhibit considers the underlying aesthetics of the new wave of environmentally focused art and how things such as visual dynamics and conceptual complexity factor into the images and objects being produced. It asks how contemporary artists might incorporate this serious and multifaceted topic into their overall practice, in a way that maintains the reading of the artwork as embedded in art history and the artists' particular visual language. Finally, the exhibition proposes that visual art is well placed to distill and present the issue in a way that helps put the urgency of the situation in front of a public and po-



▲ Brian Howell, Chainsaw Monster #1, 2022

Vancouver Latin American Film Festival

Aug. 25–Sept. 4

www.vlaff.org

The 20th edition of the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival (VLAFF) will take place from Aug. 25–Sept. 4. The festival's mission is to provide a forum for the promotion and exhibition of Latin American cinema in Vancouver. This multi-day annual festival encourages dialogue among cultures, and explores and celebrates the art of contemporary Latin American and Latin Canadian filmmaking. For a complete list of films being shown for the festival, please visit their website.

* * *

Vancouver Black Block Party

Aug. 27, 1–9 p.m.

www.thevanblackblockparty.com

Celebrate Black culture, talent and creativity at the Vancouver Black Block Party happening at the North Plaza of the Vancouver Art Gallery on Aug. 27. There will be Jamaican, Nigerian and other Afrocentric foods, musicians and vendors at this event. For a schedule of events, please check out the party's website.

* * *

Italian Day

Aug. 28, noon–9 p.m.

www.italianday.ca

Italian Day returns in a village style setting on Sunday, Aug. 28, from noon until 9 p.m.! Grandview Park and side streets will be fully activated in a village style setting to include all fan fa-