

The Source

forum of diversity

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AI, ChatGPT... friends or foes?



by SAVA ROZSNYAI

It all happened so suddenly. OpenAI, arguably the world's most famous artificial intelligence laboratory, received 1.9 billion site visits this month alone, putting it in the top 30 most frequented sites on the World Wide Web. Students, office workers and intellectuals flocked to the website instantly, forfeiting original thoughts for compilations of letters and words generated by a server somewhere out there in the ether.

With ChatGPT, OpenAI's flagship program, and rapid develop-

ment of AI neural networks, it is revolutionizing the way people do business, study and research. GPT-4, the latest instalment of OpenAI's arsenal, demonstrates aptitude on standardized tests, American bar exams and medical licensing programs. It's not surprising that such a game-changer received widespread calls by certain regulators and ethics groups to investigate and even halt development of AI-based programs.

Some of the biggest names in Silicon Valley have hopped on the AI bandwagon, including Google, Nvidia and Microsoft, starting new projects and investing dollars in its future.

They say with great power comes great responsibility. So what are some important considerations to take into account when it comes to this uncharted territory called ChatGPT?

Education

GPT allows people to generate images and text with nearly any prompt or question one can think of. It feeds off of millions of data points, facts and events and compiles sentences to provide an answer that is more or less accurate. While this may seem powerful and even frightening, Jeff Spence, District Principal of Information Technology at the Vancouver School Board

(VSB) stresses that it's important to understand what GPT and related programs do before sounding the proverbial alarm.

"It's here to stay, and [we] shouldn't be scared of it. Students are signing up and [adopting GPT]," he says in a VSB podcast.

With OpenAI having opened millions of new accounts in a matter of months after its beta release to the public, Vancouver's local universities and institutions have been busy evaluating the potential of artificial intelligence in the education sector, at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels.

In late February, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme officially permitted the use of ChatGPT in schools as a source that can be cited. So what does this mean for the future of education?

According to Aaron Tarbuck, secondary teacher at the Vancouver School District, ChatGPT is another tool, similar to a graphical calculator or Microsoft Word.

The workplace

Joining Deutsche Bank, Citigroup and others, Apple is, perhaps surprisingly, the latest company to restrict the use of

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Asian Heritage Month was officially designated in 2002, after the Honourable Vivienne Poy – the first Chinese-Canadian senator – introduced a motion in the Senate to create the commemorative month and celebrate the contributions of Canadians of Asian descent.

As Canada marks Asian Heritage Month in 2023, eight senators share their reflections on what this means to them.

Senator Salma Ataullahjan

With the rise of anti-Asian racism and discrimination during the pandemic, I believe it is particularly important to celebrate Asian Heritage Month. It can serve as an educational opportunity to shed light on the challenges and barriers many Canadians of Asian heritage have faced in the past and continue to encounter today. It is also a moment for the community to come together to celebrate our diversity. Simply realizing that our differences as individuals are a strength as a community can go a long way. Outward differences, such as our looks, what we eat or how we speak, do not change the fact that we ultimately share similar aspirations. As the first Canadian senator of Pakistani origin, I am proud to show young Canadians of Asian heritage that it is possible to make a difference.

Senator Mobina S.B. Jaffer

I was born in Uganda, but my ancestors came from Gujarat, India. My family’s story is one of resilience and determination in the face of adversity. Although my father had been elected to the Ugandan Parliament, racial tensions came to a head when Idi Amin seized power. We were forced to flee because of our race, but Canada welcomed us with open arms. I had the privilege of becoming Canada’s first Muslim senator, first African-born senator and first senator of South Asian descent. I take

my role as a representative of these communities very seriously. I am proud to be part of a country that values and celebrates its diversity.

Asian Heritage Month is an important time for me, not just because it’s a chance to celebrate my heritage, but because it’s a reminder of how far we’ve come as a society in embracing diversity. It is an opportunity to reflect on the contributions Asian Canadians have made to this country and to celebrate our shared experiences. I am proud of my heritage and grateful for the opportunities that Canada has given me. I hope we can continue building a society that values diversity and celebrates the many different cultures that make up our country’s rich history and future.

Senator Yonah Martin

As we celebrate Asian Heritage Month this May, I am reminded of the pioneers, heroes and champions of Asian descent whose courage and sacrifices have built the firm foundation upon which I stand – a foundation forged in blood, sweat and tears. I think especially of my beloved father and mother, the late Lee Sung Kim and Kye Soon Kim, two such courageous pioneers (of the Korean-Canadian community) who struggled at various points in their immigrant journey, but who ultimately loved Canada for all the opportunities that she afforded our family. During this month, I look forward to sharing such immigrant stories and celebrating the achievements and contributions of Asian Canadians, past and present.

Senator Sabi Marwah

The value of recognizing people’s heritage is subtle, yet important. As a country, we commemorate a number of communities, ethnicities and cultures in the form of heritage months. This gives us, as a nation, the opportunity to shed light on the unique characteristics and contributions of various communities.

Asian Heritage Month is a time to remember, to celebrate and to educate future generations about the contributions that Canadians of Asian heritage have made, and the valuable role that

they have played and continue to play across the country.

As a Sikh and a member of a visible minority group, I am aware of the issues of racism and prejudice faced by many in minority communities. Such responses have much to do with the lack of knowledge of the history and values of such communities. Hence, by recognizing and celebrating our rich multicultural heritage, we create an opportunity to enhance the knowledge of different communities – which in turn contributes to an environment that encourages inclusiveness, cross-cultural dialogue and mutual respect for all.

Senator Victor Oh

My immigration story characterizes well the strength of this great country. The sense of acceptance upon arriving in Canada was immediate. I was fortunate to be welcomed and housed by the Goh family until I could get on my feet. Toronto quickly became home and I was riveted by the multiculturalism of the city, even back then. With the help of the local community, I was grateful to be able to integrate. As I settled into my new life, my appreciation of the Asian community’s impact on Toronto and on the country at large grew. I became very aware that these distinct immigrant communities house countless stories of sacrifice and achievements. I am continuously amazed by the industriousness of this community. From entrepreneurs who confidently establish small businesses to those who enter the fields of service to help those in need, their efforts benefit us all. During Asian Heritage Month, we highlight this meaningful impact on this great country, both past and present.

Senator Ratna Omidvar

The accomplishments and contributions of Asian communities in Canada are honoured during Asian Heritage Month. This is a chance to recognize the various histories, cultures and traditions of Asian people who have significantly enriched Canadian society. It’s also a chance to consider the difficulties and discrimination that Asian Canadians have encountered in our culture and still do.

Asian Heritage Month provides a platform to highlight and amplify the voices of Asian Canadians, to share their stories and experiences, and to celebrate their contributions to our shared history and future. Let us take the opportunity to listen, learn and appreciate the richness and diversity of Asian cultures.

Senator F. Gigi Osler

As we celebrate Asian Heritage Month, let us take a moment to recognize the invaluable contributions of Asian Canadians to our country’s history, culture and prosperity. From entrepreneurs and innovators to artists and community leaders, Asian Canadians have played a vital role in shaping Canada. They have brought with them unique perspectives, traditions and values that have enriched our communities and helped us build a stronger, more inclusive Canada.

But we must also recognize that there is still much work to be done to address the systemic inequalities that affect many communities. Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity to renew our commitment to social justice, equity and inclusion. We must work together to create a society that is welcoming and inclusive to everyone, regardless of their background, culture or ethnicity.

Senator Mohamed-Iqbal Ravalia

Asian Heritage Month is an opportunity to learn more about the many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian descent who, throughout our history, have helped weave the very fabric of our society. While we celebrate the incredible diversity that is our strength, we must also be resolute in our stand against all forms of anti-Asian racism and discrimination – a stand that has been demonstrated within and beyond my home province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Increased education, awareness and representation are essential to building a more inclusive Canada.

Senator Yuen Pau Woo

Asian Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Asian Canadians

and to salute the successes and countless contributions of this diverse community. On the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Chinese Exclusion Act, however, this year should also be a time of sober reflection on the rise of anti-Asian hate in Canada over the last few years and how it came about. There are insidious new forms of exclusion emerging in our society that seek to label, stigmatize and silence individuals because of where they come from, whom they associate with and what they think. Modern-day exclusion seeks to distinguish between Asian Canadians who are acceptable and those who are not. It is a product of ignorance, fear, groupthink and ideological excess. Asian heritage is more than festivals, songs, dances and traditional dress. It is also about the right to belong.

Senator Andrew Cardozo

Asian Heritage Month is an important way to acknowledge the presence and contribution of Canadians of Asian heritage here in Canada. It’s not about other countries but people whose origins are elsewhere and are here. I think of some great Asian Canadians who have made and continue to make major contributions. I think of former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson and Tommy Shoyama who was interned in his youth as a Japanese Canadian but yet rose to be Deputy Minister of Finance. I think of Olympian figure skater Patrick Chan; Piya Chattopadhyay, host of the Sunday Magazine on CBC Radio One; CTV anchor Merella Fernandez; McGill University Principal Deep Saini, Globe and Mail Reporter Tu Thanh Ha; author Rohinton Mistry; Hockey player Nazem Kadri, actor Sandra Oh, Toronto Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Eileen de Villa and of course Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, who so capably guided us through COVID. All award-winners of some kind, and there’s a much longer list and they all make our lives better. ✍

For more information visit: <https://sencanada.ca/en/sencaplus/news/senators-share-reflections-on-asian-heritage-month-2023>



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A slice of paradise worth protecting

by MARTINA PETKOV

Since 1985, Metro Vancouver’s population has increased by more than a million people. As a result much of the natural habitats in the area have been lost, including more than 1,600 hectares (4,000 acres) of forest – equivalent in size to four Stanley Parks.

“There is no ‘old growth forest’ left in the lower mainland,” says Utta Gagel, co-president of the Cariboo Heights Forest Preservation Society along with Aruna NB Khan. “I am so grateful for the nature that we have protected, but when you walk through the forest and see the giant cedar stumps of what used to be here and you see historical photographs of the area,” says Gagel. “I just wish I could have been here to see that!”

The Cariboo Heights Forest has not fallen to urban development despite being zoned for development under the 1987 Cariboo Heights Community Development Plan. Locals are now working hard to protect it.

“We have taken several members of the council and the Mayor through the forest,” says Gagel “...everybody who has walked through the forest has said that they cannot conceive of developing this. Once you experience the forest, it’s hard to imagine the area without it.”

The Society, originally called the Old Interurban Forest Preservation Society, came to life in 2015 after Rod Deakin-Drown discovered the remains of the old BC Electric Railway (Burnaby

Burnaby’s secret forest to discover birds, blooms, and berries. They also hope to continue coordinating events such as this, as well as advocating the removal of invasive plants, like the project at the Mill View Park site, to transform the area to a more beautiful, inviting, and ecologically friendly space.

Gagel feels strongly about the need to connect people with nature, quoting the motto of BC Nature ‘to know nature and keep it worth knowing’.

“The greatest value of this land is as a natural ecosystem, supporting a huge amount of biodiversity in the middle of a huge metropolitan area,” she stresses.

Protecting green spaces

Gagel, who grew up in Vancouver, has always considered nature education to be important. She believes kids need to spend a lot more time out in nature and a lot less time behind screens. Kids are hardwired to love nature, but they need time and space to explore and understand these environments. She is using her nature and education background to develop a school program to get kids into the forest, as well as working with Nature Kids and the Burnaby Home Learners, and creating walks tailored to families and kids.

“I do think it’s important for kids to get out into nature,” explains Gagel. “Sometimes families need a little support in order to know the best ways to take their kids into nature.”

The Cariboo Heights Preservation Society is also collabo-

▲ Aruna NB Khan, Co-President and Utta Gagel, Co-President.

Lake Interurban Line) and hiked the rail bed all the way along to Cariboo Road. Enchanted by the beautiful second growth forest on either side, Drown was determined to preserve the trail and the surrounding forest.

Nature walks, birds, blooms and berries

According to the Society, the benefit of green spaces, especially in urban areas, is becoming increasingly more important. They are places where people connect with nature, and support important biodiversity and wildlife habitats that would otherwise become extinct, while also helping to mitigate the increasing effects of climate change.

As part of Burnaby’s Environment Week, the Society is organising a free, fun, family friendly guided tour through

▲ Coyote pup.

rating with the Stoney Creek Environment Committee as one of the stewardship groups involved with the Road Salt and Salmon Project aimed at identifying the extent to which road salt contamination affects the salmon population in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

For more information visit: caribooheightsforestpreservation.org

Policies to protect kids' health good for future health spending too

Banning e-cigarette flavours and restricting the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children are vital to making our kids healthier adults.

The short and long-term health consequences of what people consume are dramatically different. In the short term, indulge in something a little too much and you are likely to suffer for a day or two. But you can fix it by giving your body a little TLC. In the long term, unhealthy behaviours eventually catch up to you with big consequences – personally and for our health system. Federal government health

which it must do to be truly effective in preventing young Canadians from starting to vape and becoming addicted to nicotine. The second is finally making good on a long-standing promise: introducing regulations to restrict the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to protect the health of children in Canada. This crucial element of the government's long held healthy eating strategy has had a tortuous legislative journey, having been supported in 2019 by the House of Commons but never completing the process before that year's federal election. We are in a long-term epidemic of poor dietary health for our kids, fueled by ultra-processed



▲ Putting residents and community at the heart of climate action.

policies also have two timelines – the short-term and the long-term. While short-term policies providing immediate results are popular, long-term policies are critical to ensure future generations grow up in an environment that protects their health to the greatest extent. Successful long-term policies prevent the types of short-term challenges the government faces today, while ensuring a healthier population in the future. What better legacy could a government leave?

To their credit, the current federal government has recognized the need to make long-term policy decisions to improve the health of Canadians. Many of these initiatives have, laudably, received multi-party support, including enacting front-of-package nutrition labelling requirements which will make shopping for healthier food choices much easier.

But there is more the federal government can, and must, do to protect the health of Canada's youth. We suggest starting with two vital policies addressing youth vaping and nutrition.

The first is to expand the proposed ban on e-cigarette flavours to include mint/menthol – an initiative that would help limit the attractiveness of vaping to young Canadians. Nine out of 10 young people cite flavours as an important reason why they started vaping and why they continue to do so. The allure of vaping flavours, the popularity of vaping among youth, and the nicotine addiction which occurs so rapidly are concerning due to the adverse health impacts associated with e-cigarettes.

Five provincial and territorial government have adopted or implemented policies that include mint/menthol in the flavours they prohibit, allowing only tobacco flavours to be sold.

The federal government is in the process of banning certain fruit and candy flavours, but has not included mint/menthol,

foods and sugary drinks and driven in large part by their daily, unrelenting exposure to marketing of unhealthy food and beverages across all media in many settings.

The marketing of unhealthy food and beverages, often using attractive and well-known cartoon characters or mascots, increases our children's vulnerability to wanting, even demanding, these products. It is an onslaught against which even the most determined parent can be found wanting.

It is time to speak up for our kids and prevent them from being unfairly influenced by food marketers – we have a duty to protect them.

The government must introduce comprehensive regulations restricting the marketing of food and beverages high in sodium, sugars and saturated fat to children under 13 years by this fall, as committed to by Health Canada. Industry self-regulation simply is not sufficient to control this marketing onslaught.

Improving the health of Canadians is a big effort. It takes immediate short-term measures such as increasing health funding to meet urgent needs, but we also have to play the long game. We need to make policy decisions today, particularly those affecting the long-term health of our children, that will have a big positive impact on their health, and our health system, for years to come.

ANDREW PIPE, MD, is a board member with Heart & Stroke and a clinical researcher at the University of Ottawa. He has been described as Canada's foremost expert on smoking cessation and the former chief of the division of Prevention and Rehabilitation at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute.

For more information visit: www.quoiimedia.com/policies-to-protect-kids-health-good-for-future-health-spending-too

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The hybrid spaces of Fashion Fictions



▲ Ronald van der Kemp, Overcoat, The Mind Vaccine collection, Fall 2021 (Look 34), felt made from textile trash. Courtesy of Ronald van der Kemp.

by LILLIAN LIAO

Fashion Fictions, an innovative exhibition, explores the liminal spaces between oppositional, and at times, contradictory ideas. Running from May 27 to Oct. 9 at the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG) the exhibition showcases works from well-known designers such as Comme des Garçons and Iris van Herpen as well as new artists. On display are various fashion items, including headwear, clothing, and footwear, that experiment with conventional design boundaries.

Curated by Stephanie Rebick, the VAG's director of publishing and content strategy, the exhibition takes its name from Julian Bleecker's 2009 essay "Design Fiction." Bleecker, who hold a PhD in technology and culture from the History of Consciousness Program at University of California, Santa Cruz, builds off American science fiction writer and futurist Bruce Sterling's work to highlight spaces as sites of extraordinary experimentation where the imaginary trespasses into the scientific, fiction crosses into reality, and the future merges into the present.

"The designers featured in Fashion Fictions play in these in-between spaces, combining science and fiction; the real and the imagined; the past and the future in interesting ways," says Rebick.

As its namesake suggests, Fashion Fictions is designed with an interdisciplinary approach. According to Rebick, the exhibit incorporates research from multiple fields, including engineering and science, as well as sources found in popular culture. With the curatorial help of Amber-Dawn Bear Robe, the exhibit also features work from Indigenous artists. Rebick sees this multifaceted method as motivating viewers to critically reflect on their everyday perceptions.

Architecting liminal and diverse spaces

Fashion Fictions also diversifies fashion by incorporating the works of over 50 interna-

tional creators. A challenge with installing an exhibition of this scope is figuring out how the different pieces co-exist in the same physical space.

"There are so many different types of work that it can be difficult to envision how they will all exist in the same space and in dialogue with each other," says Rebick.

To overcome this difficulty, Rebick worked with Measured Architecture, a Vancouver studio that specializes in modern design. Creating a fully immersive

sustainability. Fashion Fictions contributes to conversations on sustainable materials, use, and production in fashion by showcasing various artists using technology for sustainable purposes.

"A number of artists and designers experiment with evolving materials science and biotechnology to produce wares that take advantage of new processes of making," says Rebick.

She notes that one such artist is Alice Potts who repurposes human sweat to create crystal

“I hope viewers will be motivated to think more critically about how design can shape how we live.

Stephanie Rebick, director of publishing and content strategy, Vancouver Art Gallery

and liminal space, the exhibition is divided into three themes: "Material Futures," "Aesthetic Prophesies," and "Responsible Visions". The sections approach hybridity from perspectives of technological advancements, speculative futures, and sustainability. Despite the categorizations, Rebick argues that these frameworks exist together as liminal spaces.

"Collectively, they illuminate several possible trajectories for future design practice, ones that encourage us to consider other models for how we might exist in our current moment as well as in the near future," she points out.

Rebick notes that these themes are also represented in the exhibition's first installation, which showcases digital designs and a materialized garment from design group three-ASF0UR. To further support this hybridity, she suggests that visitors should enjoy the exhibition, which has no definitive starting or finishing line, in whichever way they see fit.

Futurizing sustainability

A significant part of futurizing design practices is also innovating

ornamentations. In addition to highlighting works that adapt materials, including plastic, for use in fabric production, the exhibit also showcases a transformative practice that removes fashion from conventional cycles of production, that of fashion digitalization.

"There are also examples of other designers who incorporate upcycling as a fundamental component of their practice, as well as a spotlight on digital design, which represents the complete dematerialization of fashion," says Rebick.

Such an avant-garde approach is likely to inspire viewers and provide a fun experience, which are part of Rebick's hope for the exhibition. As for her second wish, like many others working in arts and design, she hopes that this exhibition encourages further contemplation.

"I hope viewers will be motivated to think more critically about how design can shape how we live," she says.

For more information on Fashion Fictions, May 27 to Oct. 9, see www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Access

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Art Show Opening
The Gathering Place 12:00 - 3:00 PM

May 30

Accessible Gallery Tour
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May 31

Film Panel & Screening of *Shameless*
Vancity Theatre 7:30 - 9:00 PM

June 2

DISrupt the Slam Poetry Night
The Gathering Place 6:00 - 8:30 PM

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Parade
2:00 PM

Main Stage
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► "ChatGPT" from page 1
GPT and related intelligence tools, citing various privacy concerns. With AI dominating the news cycles of 2023, it remains to be seen how the workplace will be affected, for better or for worse. In the near future, some estimate GPT will be capable of assisting or even replacing human relations, data entry and similar positions due to their repetitive nature.

The benefits are clear: GPT can craft job descriptions or interview questions, write CVs or cover letters, create marketing campaigns that resemble the real deal and more. In addition, it's capable of communicating in several languages, including French and Spanish.

Employers are rethinking the way they see their employee's positions and responsibilities to determine whether AI is a good fit for modern workflows. According to the global information and technology company Bloomberg, 63 per cent of HR leaders were in the process of determining and formulating policies on the use of ChatGPT.

There are several considerations to make when evaluating these new technologies, including valid concerns about bias and conflicts of interest. There have even been certain reports of workers taking on separate full-time jobs, leaving their current one in the hands of artificial intelligence. While it may not be sustainable in the long term, employers can look at near-term solutions including current policies that could apply to their situations.

The use of AI is not limited to the tech sector either: the engineering, financial and biomed sectors are only some of the industries that are diving face-first into the sea of GPT.

Privacy and security

Just like any major Internet-based platform, security and privacy concerns have been raised by several lobbyists, regulators, entrepreneurs and, of course, governmental institutions. The Italian government has completely banned the service from use throughout the nation.

In early April 2023, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of

Canada launched an investigation into OpenAI and ChatGPT in concert with provincial institutions, later citing concerns of the validity of collection of personal information, accountability and transparency obligations in accordance with Canadian law, and others.

"AI technology and its effects on privacy is a priority for my Office," Privacy Commissioner Philippe Dufresne says in a statement. "We need to keep up with – and stay ahead of – fast-moving technological advances, and that is one of my key focus areas as Commissioner."

According to The Conversation, ChatGPT is a "privacy nightmare," as it has the capability to sift through and collect any posts or data publicly available online for its databases.

Now with over 100 million users, the neural network is improving fast, perhaps even capable of overtaking the speed of government regulators and human-driven bureaucracies.

For more information visit: <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/vsbafterthebell>

Blues at heart

by CURTIS SEUFERT

The Steve Kozak Band is bringing the blues to Blue Frog Studios in White Rock, June 3 with special guest Sherman ‘Tank’ Doucette.

Born and raised in Vancouver, Kozak and his band will be performing a mix of both covers and original songs, spanning the gamut of different blues styles but with a healthy dose of jazz-influenced West Coast blues style at its centre.

Kozak has long had a reverence and appreciation for blues music. But growing up in Vancouver, he’s a long way away from the geographical ‘centres’ of American blues music like Texas, Chicago, Memphis or even California – the birthplace of the West Coast blues style that many of Kozak’s songs take inspiration from.

Nonetheless, Kozak grew up with a great love for the genre, and he says a large part of what inspired him in his youth was growing up and being able to see legends of the genre live on tour around Vancouver.

Meeting an icon

In particular, Kozak had the chance to meet with the iconic, and apparently very friendly, blues legend Muddy Waters. That experience, he says, was a large part of what set him on course to play the blues for decades to come.

“I got to meet [Waters] when he played at the old roller rink in North Vancouver,” he says. “He was there for five nights

creasingly more radio play and awards, including a 2012 Maple Blues Award.

But despite the growing recognition and acclaim, Kozak says it has been the live performances – hundreds of which he has performed in the last decade alone throughout B.C. – that is the most exciting part of keeping up with the blues.

“That’s sort of the thrill of the whole thing – getting to those opportunities and getting to meet lots of your musical heroes at those events and whatnot,” he says. “It’s quite a rush to play for people. And when you get the groove happening with the band there’s really nothing like it. That’s what keeps you coming back.”

Sharing the music

Kozak has also had the chance to pass along that love of blues music throughout the province. He’s led workshops for a number of blues camps throughout the province in recent years, sharing his knowledge and expertise to any eager enough to learn.



▲ Steve Kozak loves to bring a moving groove everywhere he goes.

Kozak says he usually takes the opportunity to teach different styles from the greats and his personal favourites from different styles of blues, like Freddie King and T-Bone Walker, sharing what he can from the rich musical history.

“I’m not really a qualified music teacher or anything, because I’m self-taught,” he says. “So I try to make [something] that they can

learn in a short period of time, because it’s not easy to play guitar.”

But for the musician and his students, the results are always well worth it, with Kozak himself getting as much joy from sharing the blues as his students get from learning from him.

“They all seem to really enjoy it. It opens up new doors to them, and when you can show them something that they’ve been trying to figure out, or you see the light come on in their head like, ‘oh, that’s how that goes,’ you know? So it is very satisfying and a lot of fun,” he says. “At the end of the three days, so far, the times I’ve done it, it’s gone really well, and the guys have learned the stuff and done me proud.”

Overall, Kozak is excited to bring a moving groove wherever he goes, and he expects the concert with his band and Doucette to be a good time.

“We’re just looking forward to having a lot of fun and putting on a good show,” he says.

For more information visit:
www.bluefrogstudios.ca
www.stevekozakband.com



▲ The album *It's Time* was recorded at Afterlife Studios in Vancouver in 2016.

and we got to go. He invited us to come every night, and we got to hang out with him and chat with him. So he kind of put me on a mission to keep playing blues.”

That appreciation has driven Kozak to hone his craft of singing, songwriting and blues guitar performance. In recent years, that has led to albums which have netted him in-

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Polyphony takes to the stage

by STAFF WRITER

To be uncompromising with showcasing culture, and to have honest explorations of themselves is what rice & beans theatre want from artists when developing their art form. The first-ever Polyphonic Translation Residency Showcase (June 9), from rice & beans theatre, features the multilingual works of Emily Jung, Dead Korean Girl Comedy Show, (Toronto) and of Sarvin Esmaeili, Maman, do you love me? (Vancouver).

"Polyphonic is a step for us to find a way to increase the number of opportunities to develop and hone our skills as multilingual artists," says Pedro Chamale, rice & beans theatre's artistic director (from press release).

The collaboration also features Anthony Lee, Andie Lloyd, Jenn Park, Maki Yi, Tanaz Roudgar, Soha Sanajou, and Erika Mojtabaei.

Residency & showcase

The first of its kind in Western Canada, the Showcase is the culmination of Jung and Esmaeili's 10-day residency, where they received dramaturgical and collaborative support as they worked on their respective projects.

"The works by Emily and Sarvin are right in line with values that Derek [Chan] and I had when we started the company. They are passionate about the message," says Chamale.



▲ *Sarvin Esmaeili*

Jung's *Dead Korean Girl Comedy Show*, is a Korean-English play about two Korean girls trying to find peace after their accidental deaths. Esmaeili's *Maman, do you love me?* is a Farsi-English exploration of maternal relationships.

“Without the pressure of filling a theatre or being a hot-selling ticket,” says Chamale, “artists can take time and space to give their wonderful projects what is needed for these very personal and important works.”

Meet Polyphonic Translation Residency's first artists

Tkaronto-based Emily Jung (she/her) is an artworker. She is the director of communications at The Theatre Centre, and runs the conceptual artworker collective and meme page 'Labour in the Arts.' Jung is also a co-facilitator of The Theatre workers stop working and chill event se-

She has written plays with Arts Club's LEAP, Frank Theatre's Telling it bent, Rumble theatre and Blackout Arts Society. She loves holding sacred spaces for adults and children by allowing them to play and expand their creativity at Shadbolt Arts Centre. When in need of a break, they sing, drum and dance at a full moon ceremony with their soul family. The artist is grateful to rice & beans theatre for enabling her to explore Farsi on stage.

More about the residency

The Polyphonic Translation Residency is an expansion of

“ Polyphonic is a step for us to find a way to increase the number of opportunities to develop and hone our skills as multilingual artists.


Pedro Chamale, artistic director of rice & beans theatre

ries where she and artist Amanda Lin invite theatre workers to a consciously set aside, shared, non-work related creative zone-out time. Jung is grateful to be working on her play *Dead Korean Girl Comedy Show*, developing in part through rice & beans theatre's Polyphonic Translation Residency, with co-creator Jennifer Park. Her recent creative essay, *Korean Seniors Don't Care for Bingo* is available online at Choa Magazine.

Esmaeili, a graduate of Studio 58, was born in Tehran, Iran. As a queer multidisciplinary theater artist, she wants to create and to share stories/spaces that support the collective healing practice of the community.

their existing DBLSPK Program conceived to prioritize deepening of the field of multilingual theatre makers.

"I am so excited to be associated with these artists, and to be, for a short time, along for the ride. [Jung and Esmaeil] are forging new work that will only add to the growing plethora of fantastic IBPOC [Indigenous, Black, People of Colour] work that is happening," says Chamaele. "We are so lucky to have had them apply, and for them to be Polyphonic's first-ever resident artists."

During the summer, rice & beans will welcome two multilingual artists/translators who have a project in development, one local and one from out-of-town. Artists will be hosted in Vancouver, British Columbia at a local house rental for 10 days, and be provided all the resources needed for focused, uninterrupted time on their work. Over the residency, they will receive dramaturgical and collaborative support on their project and at the end of the residency, the artists will take part in a public presentation where community members can attend and engage in discussion with the artists around language and dramaturgy. 

Applications for the 2024 residency will open in the summer of 2023.

For more information visit:
www.riceandbeanstheatre.com

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May 30–June 13, 2023

Cultural Calendar

by SIMON YEE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

In early June, Vancouver becomes a hub of creativity, diversity and celebration. Whether you are a music lover, a cinephile, a theatre enthusiast, a foodie or simply someone seeking new experiences, this city has something extraordinary in store for you. Come and be part of the magic as Vancouver embraces the spirit of unity and revelry, creating cherished memories that will last a lifetime. Have a great June everyone!

Live Through This: Michelle Sound
May 20–July 8
www.seymourartgallery.com

The Seymour Art Gallery’s Live Through This by Cree and Métis artist Michelle Sound explores personal and familial narratives with a consideration of Indigenous artistic processes. Sound’s works explore cultural identities and histories by engaging materials and concepts within a contemporary context. Through utilizing such practices as drum making, caribou hair tufting, beadwork and photography, her work highlights that acts of care and joy are situated in family and community. She works with traditional and contemporary materials and techniques to explore maternal labour, identity, cultural knowledge and cultural inheritances. There will be an artist talk with Sound on June 11 from 2–4 p.m.

rEvolver Festival
May 24–June 4
www.upintheairtheatre.com

rEvolver brings audiences the full range of contemporary theatrical practice, from script-based theatre to devised and site-specific works, staged readings of work-in-progress and in-depth discussions with artists. Presenting adventurous, high energy and sophisticated new work by emerging companies and artists, the festival is dedicated to offering professional presenting oppor-

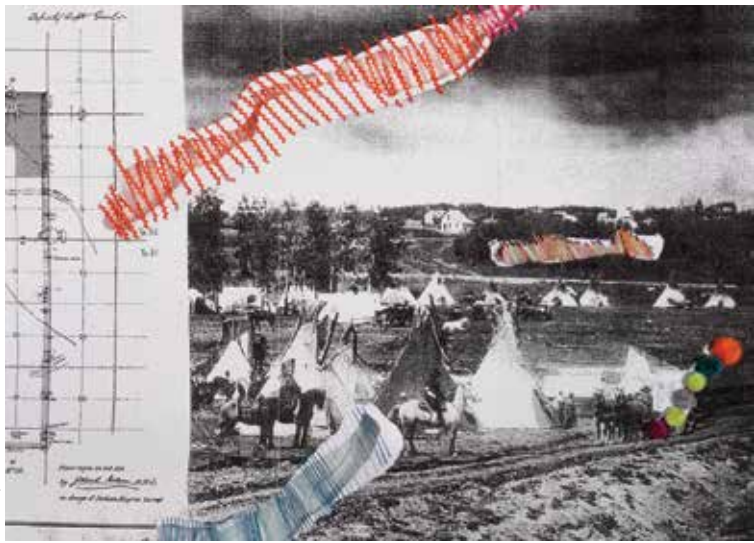


Photo by Jake Kimble

▲ Artist Michelle Sound explores personal and family narratives.

tunities to emerging professional theatre artists and companies. For a complete list of shows and performances, please check out the Up In the Air Theatre website.

Vancouver International Children’s Festival
May 30–June 4
www.childrensfestival.ca

Mark your calendar! The Vancouver International Children’s Festival will offer In-Person (on Granville Island) and Online programming this spring. The festival will feature dazzling performances from artists far and wide. From local treasures to rare and exotic finds, these captivating performers will put a smile on your child’s face and hopefully even make you hoot with laughter. Please check out their website for a complete list of performers and activities.

Second Annual Vancouver Greek Film Festival
June 1–4
www.thecinematheque.ca/series/second-annual-vancouver-greek-film-festival

The Hellenic Canadian Congress of B.C. and The Cinematheque will present the second Vancouver Greek Film Festival, an in-person event hosted at The Cinematheque. The festival is

a celebration of film as art, and they will present an eclectic offering of contemporary and classic Greek cinema. The festival’s aim has been to focus on the contributions that Greek filmmakers have made – oand continue to make – to film history and culture. The program presents a myriad of stories and experiences about the human condition, offering insight into the minds of Greek filmmakers that is at once intimate and universal. For upcoming screenings, check out The Cinematheque’s website.

C/4: Canadian Choral Composition Competition
June 2, 7:30 p.m.
www.chorleoni.org

Get an insider’s look into three brand new works by three of Canada’s top composers at this intimate, relaxed and entertaining concert. Meet composers Robyn Jacob, Chris Sivak and Laura Hawley, and hear their works performed as you follow along in your own score. This interactive evening, led by Artistic Director, Erick Lichte, has become an audience favourite and one of the most innovative and engaging new music events in Canada.

West Vancouver Community Cultural Fest
June 2–3
<https://westvancouver.ca/arts->

[culture/festivals-special-events/west-vancouver-community-cultural-fest](#)

The District of West Vancouver invites everyone to attend West Vancouver Community Cultural Fest. This two-day festival brings people together through food, music and culture. There will be cultural pavilions, live bands, international dancers, lounges and food trucks as well as a kid’s zone. Join the community as they celebrate the multicultural diversity of West Vancouver!

Doors Open Richmond
June 3–4
www.richmondmuseum.ca/doors-open-richmond

Explore the 39 participating sites that exemplify the City of Richmond’s rich history and diverse, multicultural communities. This year’s event features an array of in-person activities and guided tours that showcase Richmond’s diversity alongside its civic services, providing unique experiences for the whole family. Highlights include the Richmond Multicultural Community Services, offering newcomers an introductory public art bus tour that takes them through local parks and public spaces to discover diverse art installations, Turkish Canadian Society invites visitors to indulge in a mesmerizing cultural experience featuring a blend of traditional and contemporary Turkish art, crafts, cuisine and performances, including a Turkish choir and folk dances, and a return of the popular 39 Service Battalion & 12 Service Battalion Museum, where visitors can witness the dedication of everyday citizens who voluntarily train to support the local army reserve.

Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun
June 8–25
www.whiterockplayers.ca/kissthemoon

Kiss the Moon, Kiss the Sun by Norm Foster is the White Rock

Players’ Club’s final show of the season, a tender look at how real people can endure hardships with humour and kindness. Directed by Don Briard, he directs at many theatres around the Lower Mainland and has directed several shows on their stage. For tickets and show-times, check out the club’s website.

Italian Day on Commercial Drive
June 11
www.italianday.ca

After three years without the Italian Day festival, due to pandemic and related restrictions, the Italian Day organizers will be sharing Rinascimento in 2023, when the signature 14 block cultural street festival is set to return on Sunday, June 11! The event includes over 100+ street participants, including partners, vendors, community organizations – and an estimated 300,000 attendees of all ages and cultures. The festival is held on Commercial Drive, home to Little Italy, where the street is transformed into a lively 14 block festa. A festive community embrace, The Drive comes alive with piazza style animated zones, live music, food vendors, patios, lifestyle attractions, family fun activities and more.

Vancouver City Poems Video Poetry Awards & Screening
June 11, 1–3 p.m.
www.museumofvancouver.ca

Celebrate poetry videos and video-poetry by coming out to the award ceremony and screening of imaginative and evocative poetry videos by the finalists and winners of the Vancouver City Poems Contest, an innovative collaboration between local poets and post-secondary student media artists! Student teams from various universities have created a compelling array of poetry videos based on notable poems about Vancouver’s diverse historical, cultural and ecological sites. Spots are limited so please register early. This event is free but registration is required.



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