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Photo courtesy of Surrey Schools

How B.C.'s largest school district supports newcomer families

by LUC MVONO

Earlier this summer, The Source released an article in honour of World Refugee Day highlighting the extensive challenges refugee claimants face to be recognized and settle in Canada ranging from housing to employment. Whether accompanied by guardians or on their own, refugee children and youth face unique challenges to their integration.

The UN Refugee Agency estimates that 40 per cent of the world's displaced are children; 153,300 of those are un-

accompanied and separated from their families. Even once granted status in their host countries, refugee children and youth continue to shoulder trauma from events witnessed and endured. At the same time, they must adapt to the norms of their new environment.

"Like all school-age students, students who are refugees should be offered an education program that follows provincial curriculum and graduation requirements," states an excerpt from the Government of British Columbia website.

Unsurprisingly, the Government of British Columbia requires that children and youth

from the refugee class be enrolled in formal education and offers families and school districts funding to address their needs in settlement. This requirement provides unique access to school districts to refugee children and youth and their families, which many leverage to create various support initiatives for newcomers. In B.C.'s largest school district, serving Surrey and White Rock and the rural area of Barnston Island, the Surrey School District does this through their welcome centre.

The city of Surrey is B.C.'s largest city geographically, known nationally for its large immigrant population. Statistics Can-

ada estimates that 45 per cent of Surrey's population was born outside of Canada – more than Metro Vancouver's overall average of 42 per cent.

Data reveals that between 2016 and 2021, the City of Surrey experienced an unprecedented growth rate, more than twice that of the City of Vancouver, the province's largest city. Projections suggest that by 2050, City of Surrey will become the province's largest city.

Surrey schools welcome centre

With a high immigrant population and the promise of many more to come, the Surrey School

District aims to support the diverse needs of newcomers, including the most vulnerable among them: refugees.

The Surrey Schools Welcome Centre aims to "support the transition to life in Canada" by facilitating connections between newcomers and their communities. The Surrey Schools Welcome Centre offers a range of programs and services, including six-to eight-week social and literacy support sessions (Bridge Program) and homework clubs for students in elementary school.

Through their welcome centre, newcomer students benefit

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Issues and Ideas

International Day for People of African Descent

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies.

Honouring the contributions of the African diaspora, The International Day for People of African Descent was celebrated for the first time Aug. 31, 2021.

Through this observance, the United Nations (UN) aims to promote the extraordinary contributions of the African diaspora around the world and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against people of African descent.

The UN strongly condemns the continued violent practices and excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies against Africans and people of African descent; and condemns structural racism in criminal justice systems around the world.

Background

The Transatlantic Slave Trade is considered by the UN as one of the darkest chapters in our human history. And stresses the importance to continue upholding human dignity and equality for the victims of slavery (the slave trade and colonialism), in particular people of African descent in the African diaspora.

The year 2020 marked the midterm of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

While some progress has been made at legislative, policy and institutional levels, people of African descent continue to suffer intersectional and compounded forms of racial discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion.

Five years into the Decade, the COVID-19 pandemic shed light on the urgency to address long standing structural inequalities and systematic racism in health. The lack of recognition remains one of the major barriers impeding the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by people of African descent.

The year 2020 also marked a turning point in the way these issues are being addressed at international and national levels.

From George Floyd's murder, racial discrimination prompted important global discussions on racial justice.

The Human Rights Council adopted the resolution, on June 19, 2020, on the "Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers."

Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad: A secret path to freedom over Niagara Falls

An episode of Global Lens, available on the UN's website, examines the pivotal role of the Underground Railroad in establishing African American resistance, and celebrates the courage of those who risked their lives to help others escape, including the legendary Harriet Tubman.

The lead character is educator, author and human rights advocate Saladin Allah, a descendent of Underground Railroad forerunner Josiah Henson, whose life was the inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel Uncle Tom's Cabin.

As a visitor experience specialist at the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage

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Wellstream: Safe strategies for youth and teens

by ALISON MACDONALD

Although population data studies indicate the prevalence of mental health and substance use among youth and teens has been relatively stable over the past years, there has been a worrying increase in the harms related to substance use.

In the face of these challenges, Wellstream: The Canadian Centre for Innovation in Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of British Columbia is working to foster collaboration and cooperation between education, health, community, parents, and youth and teens.

“The current approaches are not successful – they are not resonating with them [youth and teens] with what their needs are for information and support,” says Emily Jenkins, a registered nurse, associate professor in UBC’s School of Nursing, and the Canada Research Chair in Population Health Approaches to Mental Health and Substance Use. She is also founder and scientific director of Wellstream.

Jenkins emphasises that abstinence and “just say no” campaigns or scare and fear-based messages are not effective.

“Youth and teens want meaningful conversations, to be included and seeing what their peers are doing and what they are experiencing themselves –

the opportunity to thoughtfully discuss important challenges with substance use and navigating their own decision-making. When the conversation is closed off, that it won’t be tolerated, they lack places to go for support,” she says.

For Jenkins, real collaboration, dialogue, and cooperation are needed to assist youth and teens, and to have their voices heard.

The need for new approaches

“With the national standards, we are working to reflect youth

increase in healthy conversations, “open and honest discussions with curiosity to understand the context and perspectives and the various reasons as to why they make the choices they do.”

She identifies Agenda Gap, an

stance use that ranges from the non-problematic to the potentially harmful. Parents need the confidence and supports to have non-threatening, helpful, and practical conversations and “tackle the issue accordingly. The im-

“ Youth and teens want meaningful conversations, to be included and seeing what their peers are doing and what they are experiencing themselves...

Emily Jenkins, a registered nurse

“This new initiative to develop national standards for K-12 schools is based on a decade plus of research on substance use and the reasons for use and how they make decisions and how we can reduce the harms for them and their communities”.



▲ Emily Jenkins.

needs, the education sector has to get this right,” says Jenkins. “Historically, the health sector has come out with solutions based on health content – which may or may not be the right strategy. The materials don’t land as the intended approaches and there are inconsistencies which don’t always come together. We need to collaborate with teachers. However, there are problems for teachers. There are not enough guidance materials available which are strong evidence-based, effective and impactful. There are inconsistencies across programs as to what is available. This becomes a professional vulnerability in keeping a safe space for them”.

Fostering trust, dialogue, and psychological safety

Jenkins argues that communication is the answer and an

initiative for “equipping youth to promote well-being for themselves, where youth come together with the team and adults to share their perspectives. This program creates conditions for them to be heard and valued more than ever and how simple it can be to develop relationships that are protective, promote well-being for young people [...], offer opinions that matter to them.”

Instead of putting young people in a box where they are not yet adult enough to make adult decisions, she says the program reveals that it is “quite amazing the capacity they can bring to make informed decisions from reviewing studies, identifying evidence/bias, and finding themselves quite able to make informed decisions.”

Jenkins also points out that there is a continuum of sub-

portance of the relationships where along the spectrum protective effects of trusted adults are there to have the conversation about substance use in a thoughtful way and prevent, reduce, and provide pathways to more intensive intervention.”

She points to the Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy as providing an education tool kit and resources for guiding discussions which can be helpful for parents navigating this conversation that may not always be comfortable. ✉

For more information:
<https://wellstream.ubc.ca>
<https://news.ubc.ca/2023/06/28/national-standards-for-substance-use-education-and-intervention-in-schools>
<https://youtu.be/i6vFziCktic>
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Truth and Reconciliation is not a single outcome but a generations-long journey

7GenCities collaborative forges path forward for Truth and Reconciliation

Indigenous peoples have experienced a long history of injustice and mistrust because of colonial legislation and policies in Canada. The Canadian state's relationships with Indigenous Peoples have never been based on recognition of Indigenous Nations as sovereign, equal partners.

Legislative and policy agendas enacted by the federal government, and other levels of government, have systematically excluded First Nations, Inuit and Métis from meaningful participation in governance decisions, and an equitable share of economic opportunities and benefits associated with their territories and resources.

Coloniality is so embedded in contemporary state legal and governance systems and relationships to land that government attempts at renewing relationships and addressing treaty and legal commitments have often been unsuccessful.

Is Truth and Reconciliation even possible?

Truth and Reconciliation is possible but it must start from righting relationships and a radically different way of working together that embraces multi-generational planning and decision-making.

First, Truth and Reconciliation is not a milestone that we can achieve at some particular time in the future, but an intergenerational journey of healing, repairing and rebuilding relationships with Indigenous Peoples and the environment that we must take together, with committed action from all people.

Truth-telling is foundational and involves reckoning with the ongoing legacies and impacts of colonialism on Indigenous

Peoples, and formal recognition of Indigenous lands and inherent rights. In this way, Truth and Reconciliation should be transformative and not aim to restore a harmonious past that has never existed.

That's the philosophy underpinning 7GenCities, a non-profit collective working with the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre and other Indigenous partners to embed Truth and Reconciliation in new social and civic infrastructures in cities across the country.

The collective is inspired by the Seventh Generation Principle of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and related Indigenous wisdoms on making decisions and provisioning for current and future generations. The Principle provides a living set of laws of peace and responsibilities that foster reciprocal relationships with people and the natural world for

a sustainable world seven generations into the future.

7GenCities draws on our book, *Sacred Civics: Building Seven Generation Cities* and invites Indigenous and non-Indigenous thinkers, practitioners and Knowledge Keepers to imagine and manifest what's possible in civic contexts when we unlock and nurture the collective agency and capabilities of all peoples – and change underlying systems to enable transition, adaptation and scaling of what works.

7GenCities fosters new social and civic infrastructure that embed Truth and Reconciliation principles.

How do we do this?

By:

- Committing to practices and systems that are radically inclusive and decolonizing, including Indigenous co-leadership.

- Recognizing Indigenous sovereignty and restoration of Indigenous lands and rights on reserve and in cities.
- Recognizing the interconnectedness of all living beings and honouring the natural systems that give us life; being a good relative.
- Thinking and acting for future generations.
- Recognizing the breadth of Indigenous leadership and contributions across social sectors and spheres.
- Implementing codified principles and actions and city-level action plans through frameworks provided under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Creating bridges across diverse communities, cultures and knowledges; and

working to eliminate ongoing harm and oppression of racialized and marginalized communities.

A concrete example of 7GenCities in action is the Wije'winen Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It is a beacon of reconciliation-embedded social infrastructure and kinship-based, decolonized land relationships. With their Every One Every Day (EOED) Kijipuktuk platform, they are focused on residents sharing and learning from each other, across cultures. Promising early results show that the EOED initiative can provide critical social infrastructure for embedding reconciliation in people's everyday civic interactions.

7GenCities is prototyping a Learning Community of six city teams across the country that will share reciprocal learning and build an ecosystem of Indigenous, municipal and civic leaders around their respective social infrastructure initiatives and reconciliation action journeys.

7GenCities is working with cities across the country to advance their Truth and Reconciliation journeys. Now, let's get inspired by and spread this foundational approach in ways that are guided by truth-telling, reciprocity, mutual care and seven generations thinking. ✍️

TANYA CHUNG-TIAM-FOOK, PhD is Co-Leader of 7GenCities with Jayne Engle at Dark Matter Labs, and an advisor, educator and researcher across environmental, Indigenous and community engagement, and health topics.

Source: Quoi Media



▲ 7GenCities is working with cities across the country to advance their Truth and Reconciliation journeys.

► "Newcomers" from page 1

from multicultural employees providing in-class support to children and youth in need. The centre also employs settlement workers equipped to serve children and their families in over 30 languages such as Arabic, Vietnamese, Russian and Swahili, per their website.

Community-building activities include different versions of the 'Connect Through' programs, including Connect Through Community Experience, Connect Through Healthy Living, Connect Through Homework, Connect Through Reading, Connect Through Sport, and Connect Through Voices. In each case, the Connect Through programs offer newcomer students and their families the opportunity to connect with each other and their communities by engaging in an interest-based activity.

The centre also features Bridge Programs (including continuous, co-op and work experience programs) focused on older youth, aged 15 to 19. In the past year, School District 36 provided support to more than 130 students from countries including Afghanistan, Ukraine and Somalia through their Bridge Program. The centre has also partnered

with Surrey RCMP to pilot offering free meals to Bridge and Bridge Co-op program students. Through this, all parties hope to support food security and engage refugee and other newcomer children on policing and community safety, according to the Surrey Schools website.

In May, the centre set up a cricket program for Afghanistan newcomers and refugees and a girls-only volleyball program. The cricket program is run by a settlement worker from the Welcome Centre and has drawn students from schools across the district who can connect with one another through weekly matches.

The volleyball team is led by two coaches from Volleyball B.C. to teach girls the foundations of the sport. For some, this is the first time they have the opportunity to engage in extracurricular sports. Both programs are run as part of a centre initiative to "bring sports to newcomers of Canada" and help ease the transition for the students, per the Surrey Schools website.

Support also offered to parents and guardians

Described by the district as a 'community hub,' the Welcome Centre aims to support not only students but their families as

well. The Literacy Foundations program targets ESL adults in the community aiming to complete their high school education who require settlement support. The program curriculum is designed for those with 'significant skills and knowledge gaps,' based on a required assessment administered to those interested in the program.

The Sharing Canadian Experience Conversation Circle is geared towards supporting the social needs of newcomer parents and caregivers in the community by creating a space for participants to engage with one another on topics relating to Canadian culture, community resources and more.

In preparation for new refugee and immigrant student enrolment in the fall, the Surrey School District has organized six of their 'Newcomer Networking Nights' between September and October to promote their services to newcomer families and give them the opportunity to engage with each other. ✍️

For more information about the Surrey Schools Welcome Centre and programs, please visit: www.surreyschools.ca/welcomecentre



▲ The Surrey Schools Welcome Centre's goal is to support refugee and immigrant students' transition to life in Canada.

► "African" from page 1

Center, Allah is an expert storyteller who takes the audience on an unforgettable journey through African-American history, and reminds viewers that everyone can play a role in shaping the next generation.



▲ Harriet Tubman.


The UN wants to send out the message that only through education and historical truth-telling can people achieve a recognition of past wrongdoing, and work toward a more just world. ✍️

For more information visit: www.un.org/en/observances/african-descent-day

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Children often influence what families eat and junk food marketers know it

A new study shows why mascots and cartoon characters don't belong in food marketing for kids

Would you let a clown influence what brand of car you buy? How about choosing your household appliances based on the advice of a cartoon bird or tiger?

Probably not. But young people in your family will likely let cartoons and mascots influence where your family eats out or what cereal you buy – indeed, many of your food purchases. Those choices and many others like them will, in turn, affect your family's diet and its long-term health.

licensed cartoon characters from popular media, such as Disney princesses, and spokes characters developed by food and beverage companies, such as Lucky the Leprechaun from Lucky Charms. They were shown ads directed at kids and adult-targeted ads. Kids were also exposed to ads with brands but no food product.

Children's food preferences, intent to purchase the product and intent to pester their parents to purchase the product was then measured. The

important elements because they are limited to just TV and digital advertising. They ignore the many other means of marketing frequently used: in-store and point-of-purchase displays, outdoor media (billboards, signage) including around schools, product packaging, as well as the use of mascots and cartoon characters in all of the above, which the study shows are so influential.

This new study adds to the weight of evidence that makes it clear that comprehensive restrictions on unhealthy food marketing to kids are necessary for the new rules to be effective.

Comprehensive restrictions have already happened elsewhere. In Chile, the use of cartoon characters has been banned to market products to children, including on packaging – so the look of some well-known cereals and other products is now very different.

And these are policies that Canadians want – restrictions on food marketing to kids is supported by more than 70 per cent of Canadians, according to a recent survey.

It's time for Health Canada to revise its initial policy approach and ensure new regulations are much more comprehensive in scope to address the reality of today's extensive and

“... restrictions on food marketing to kids is supported by more than 70 per cent of Canadians, according to a recent survey.

Unlike major household purchases like cars and appliances, children often play a large role in influencing what their families eat. Children are exposed to high levels of unhealthy food advertising in media like television and digital media and in settings where they live and play. The result of this tide of unhealthy food marketing to kids is poor diets for Canadians, and potentially serious health consequences for years to come – both for individual Canadians and for our health system.

A new study just completed by my team at the University of Ottawa shows that children's preferred food choices are greatly influenced by food manufacturers and restaurant chain marketing. Our research found advertising messages using cute cartoon characters and superheroes to market unhealthy food choices to kids sway children's choices.

Our new study evaluated the role product mascots have on Canadian pre-teens and how they influence their intention to eat or buy products themselves or to pester their parents to do so. This is a key group, since ultra-processed food consumption is highest in children aged nine to 13, making up nearly 60 per cent of calories in their diets.

To measure the effect of such child-targeted marketing, more than 1,300 Canadian kids aged nine to 12, with the consent of their parents, took part in the study, which was funded by Heart & Stroke. Kids were shown ads for foods featuring

results showed that children clearly preferred advertising using characters, particularly cartoon-type “spokes characters” as product mascots. Use of these characters in advertising had a strong overall impact on children's food preferences, purchase intent and desire to pester parents to purchase them. They also preferred products that targeted chil-



▲ Beware: young people will likely let cartoons and mascots influence where families eats out or what cereal they buy.

dren, with characters, games and fun designs.

The study provides timely evidence to support a clear need for federal government action. It's time to ban the use of cartoon characters to advertise unhealthy foods to children.

Health Canada had been consulting on new restrictions on the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to Canadian children. However, the proposed new regulations lack

unhealthy food and beverage marketing to kids. The banning of cartoon characters and mascots needs to be included in such regulations.

As a famous cartoon character once said, “That's all folks.”

Dr. MONIQUE POTVIN KENT is an Associate Professor in the School of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University of Ottawa.

Source: Quoi Media

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Recipe by Selma Van Halder

Summer BBQ salmon and Funchi

What better way to celebrate the summer than with a nice dinner from the BBQ? This summer salmon is cooked en papillote (in parchment) which makes for juicy and flavourful fish, cooked with aromatics. It is served with funchi, a starch that is a staple in the

Caribbean, noticeably eaten on special occasions in the Dutch Antilles, like on Dia di Rincon, on Bonaire, where I first had it as a child. Funchi is similar to polenta, or grits, as it is a set cornmeal porridge. It is usually inverted onto the plate from a little bowl for single serve portions or set on a large tray and cut into rectangles to serve several diners.

12 to 15 minutes. Cooking time is dependent on the size of your salmon; it is advisable to check after about ten minutes. Take the salmon off the grill when the flesh flakes at the touch of a fork.



▲ Summer days often call for BBQed salmon, cajun style.

5. Turn the funchi out onto a cutting board and cut into portions. Serve with the salmon and red onions.

6. Serve with a nice chunky salad. If you can find some watermelon, ripe pineapple, or mango, add it to the salad for a summery twist!

Ingredients for the salmon

- 1 side of salmon (ocean wise)
- 1 lemon
- 1/3 cup of your favourite spice rub (I used cajun)
- 1 red onion
- 1/3 cup of white wine
- Olive oil
- Aluminum foil

Ingredients for the funchi

- 1 cup coarse cornmeal
- 2 cups water
- Chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. Bring the water for the funchi to a boil in a pot on the stove. Stir in the cornmeal and seasonings, cook for about 10 minutes. Stir frequently. The funchi should be very thick.
2. When the funchi starts to pull away from the sides of the pot, turn off the heat. Stir in chopped parsley and taste for seasoning. Turn out into a buttered bowl or shallow dish to set at room temperature for about 20 minutes.
3. Slice the lemon and red onion. Lay a sheet of aluminum foil out in a large oven or serving dish and place a layer of onions and lemons on it. Rub the salmon with a spice mix (like cajun) and olive oil and place on top of the onions and lemon. Top with another couple of slices of lemon and add a splash of white wine. Fold the aluminum foil closed and tighten around the edges so it is sealed.
4. Place the aluminum foil package on a preheated grill at medium high and cook for about

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The last of the summer music

by STAFF WRITER

There is still time to catch some summer concerts before fall sets in.

From reggae, afrobeat and dub to soul to alt-pop with dreamy synths and melodious vocals, three distinctive concerts will offer audiences sounds to greet the end of this year's sizzling season.

Surrey's last Sound of Summer offerings

Get infused at Holland Park with Mivule's West Coast afro reggae vibes Aug. 30 as their dynamic rhythms and heartfelt lyrics go straight to the audience's heart.

In West Africa, the mivule tree is a place where villagers would meet to resolve conflicts and discuss issues.

Here, Mivule is a multiracial band that incorporates the styles of Reggae, Afrobeat and Dub – in English as well as in Luganda, a Bantu language used widely in Uganda.

Brian Broda, a Ugandan singer and songwriter, leads as front man of the band – delivering rhythm guitar and strong vocals, featuring lyrics ranging from themes of social justice, love and peace.

Bassist/Guitarist Matt Yard (aka 'Fake Drums Live') brings

his love of Dub music and PHAT bass lines to the lineup. He draws his inspiration from world renowned bassists such as Flabba Holt and Robbie Shakespeare.

'Jammin' Jesiah Yarish adds his Root Reggae blend of Prog Rock flare to the drums with a heaping side of Funk.

Backing vocalist Kiki Connely brings energetic harmonies as well as her own unique songwriting and arrangements to the mix.



▲ Krystle Dos Santos.

As keeper of the keys, Salvador Llanes lays down solid bubbles and melody lines. He also takes the band to outer space in dub sections.



▲ Bestfriend duo's Stacy Kim and Kaelan Geoffrey.

Surrey's Civic Plaza is where you can go Aug. 30 to explore fresh new vistas of urban soul from Krystle Dos Santos. Dos Santos' songs tell of falling in love, heartbreak, and struggle.

The Vancouver-based Edmontonian also has Guyanese roots, and her soul is planted deep in the rich terrain of jazz, soul, and the blues.

Her warmth is all-consuming as she applies her versatile, rich, and powerful voice to songs that pay tribute to her heroes and in-

fluences – such as: Etta James, Nina Simone, Toni Braxton and Chaka Khan.

This multi-talented singer also has an established acting career. Recently she co-created and performed *Hey Viola!* – a cabaret-style musical about Canadian civil rights trailblazer Viola Desmond, the fearless woman featured on Canada's \$10 bill. Other theatre credits include starring in the Vancouver productions of *Dreamgirls*, and *The Chelsea Hotel: The Songs of Leonard Cohen*.

Of note, Surrey's Sound of Summer concerts are free.

In Vancouver

The Fox Cabaret presents with Timbre Concerts Canadian alt-pop duo Bestfriend, formed of young artists Stacy Kim (lead vocals/guitar) and Kaelan Geoffrey (synthesizers/vocals), Sept. 13.

The duo has been making music from thousands of miles apart; Kim in Vancouver and Geoffrey in Toronto.

Half-formed through a mutual friend and half-formed through Instagram DMs in 2018, Kim wrote songs, created rough demos, and sent them to Geoffrey to produce.

The two bonded over their similar music tastes and sense of humour. When they eventually met for the first time in person in 2018, they decided not to let distance stop them from pursuing music together.

Bestfriend is now gearing up for *places I've left* EP, the follow-up sequel to *places I've lived*, which is set for a spring 2023 release via Nettwerk. The forthcoming EP, produced and written entirely by the band, is a culmination of all the experiences that have shaped them. ✉

www.facebook.com/bestfriendirl
www.krystledossantos.com
www.mivule.ca

Classification Crisis

A retrospective of Sonja Ahlers' work

by STAFF WRITER

Zines, poetry, installations, excerpts from her personal archive and a decade-plus worth of as yet unseen works are what awaits visitors at Sonja Ahlers' *Classification Crisis* exhibition.

For the past 30 years, Ahlers has been an influential voice for generations of feminists through her D.I.Y. approach to collage art, poetry, zines, mail art and other publications. *Classification Crisis* will showcase an important overview of Ahlers' rich, eclectic practice.

Highlights will include the artist's career from Victoria to Vancouver to Whitehorse and back. The geographic moves correspond with major shifts in her artistic practice.

"In a way, *Classification Crisis* tells a story of art in Vancouver

in the 2000s. This period of rapid urban growth and international recognition for both a handful of artists and the city itself brought about a hyper-competitive art scene that left a lot of very good artists behind," says curator Godfre Leung in a press release.

Leung adds that the exhibition highlights the importance of building communities and art infrastructures that are more humane and accessible.

The exhibition will run from Sept. 9 to Nov. 5, 2023, at the Richmond Art Gallery.

About the artist

Since the early 1990s the visual artist and poet based in Victoria has worked primarily in book and book-adjacent formats in a medium that she calls visual poetry. Ahlers is the author of *Temper*, *Temper and Fatal Distraction* (Insomniac Press, 1998 and 2004), and *The Selves* (Drawn & Quarterly, 2010), and was a key contributor to *Rookie Mag* from 2011 to 2015.

Ahlers began her career as a collage artist – a medium she describes as "gathering and collecting and organizing and archiving." Her work became influential within the feminist Riot Grrrl and zine subcultures.

Moving to Vancouver in the early 2000s, she shifted to installation works and the creation of more idiosyncratic books. Her time in Vancouver was difficult as she juggled an increasingly impenetrable art scene, personal difficulties and the high cost of living.



▲ Sonja Ahlers, *Shapes*, 2022, mixed media, 11" x 17".

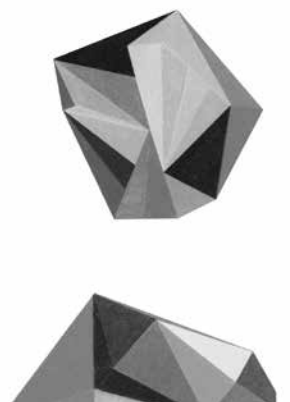


Photo courtesy of Sonja Ahlers

When she moved to Whitehorse for a change of scenery in 2008, Ahlers found space to renew and refocus her artistic practice. Returning to Victoria in 2014 to care for her ailing mother and her affairs led her to take stock of her own life's work as an artist. She continued to collect ephemera and produce art, which she archived in dozens of binders. Most of this remained private until the publication of her 2021 book *Swan Song* (Conundrum Press, 2021) that she described as "a goodbye to [her] former selves."

A collaborative commentary

Classification Crisis is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated publication of the same title, edited by Leung. Bound to become a collectors' item, the book includes contributions from such well-known feminist thinkers, writers and friends such as *Rookie Mag* founder Tavi Gevin-

son, musician Kathleen Hanna of Bikini Kill and Le Tigre fame and author Doretta Lau.

Ahlers' corpus is considered not only through the lens of biography and archiving but also the disturbing lessons taught by the #MeToo movement and vocabulary that has recently become common vernacular: grooming, negging and gatekeeping. The publication also features a brand new artist book, *Rabbit-Hole*, which Ahlers vividly describes as a "feminist memoir/scrapbook/confessional commentary on the art world and my place within it." ✉

The Richmond Art Gallery is organizing a wide array of programs in tandem with Ahlers' survey exhibition. Visit the gallery's website and social media for the most up to date information.

For more information visit: www.richmondartgallery.org/classification-crisis.



▲ Sonja Ahlers.

Merci!

We would like to congratulate our Senior Editor, Monique Kroeger, on her retirement from The Source newspaper.

As we bid farewell to Monique, we express our deepest gratitude for her invaluable contributions. Her legacy will continue to resonate through the pages of The Source, and her influence will forever remain in the hearts and minds of her colleagues and our readers alike.

We extend our warmest wishes to Monique as she embraces this new chapter in her life.

August 22–September 12, 2023

Cultural Calendar

by SIMON YEE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Welcome back everyone; I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! Although the back to school season signifies the twilight of yet another summer, a symphony of events and festivals that promise to paint the end of the summer with vibrant hues. From cultural gatherings that spark the imagination to outdoor festivals that set the rhythm for our evenings, the late summer invites you to embrace both the pursuit of knowledge and the joy of community celebration. Why not check out some of the events below?

Farewell to Summer Fireworks Festival

Aug. 26, 11 a.m.–9:30 p.m.
www.hyackfestival.com/fireworks-festival

The New Westminster Hyack Festival Association is sending summer off in style at the New Westminster Quay on Saturday, Aug. 26 for a spectacular day filled with artisan market vendors & exhibitors, live entertainment, fantastic food and the piece de resistance: a Fireworks extraordinary to captivate thousands of enchanted onlookers. Be one of them! For more information, check out the festival's website.

20th Annual Richmond Maritime Festival

Aug. 26–27, 11 a.m.–6 p.m.
www.richmondmaritimefestival.ca

The Richmond Maritime Festival returns for its 20th edition on Aug. 26–27 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. This free event brings the community together to enjoy nautical history and maritime-themed activities at the beautiful Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site in Steveston. Come and enjoy live music, food trucks, a display of beautifully restored wooden boats and ships and much more. Visit their website to scroll through to learn about the event programming and what to expect this year!

Harrison Sunflower Festival

Late August to Sept. 17, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
www.harrisonsunflowerfest.com

Formerly the Chilliwack Sunflower Festival, the Harrison Sunflower Festival is an ode to one of the best seasons of the year – summer! The fun begins in August and runs into early-mid September, with acres of beautiful blooming Sunflowers, Dahlias, Cosmos & Zinnias! Explore three kilometres of pathways through 20 acres of beautiful backdrops, including 45 varieties of sunflowers, other summer flowers and a large field of barley this year! Other photo opportunities to capture include several swing sets, antique tractors and horse carts, vintage bicycles, a 1950's convertible, a 1965 Airstream trailer and raised platforms that make it easy to stage your own family or group portrait.

Coastal Livelihoods: Visual anthropology of artisanal fishing communities in Otuam, Ghana and Sundarbans, India

Aug. 30–Sept. 29
<https://sppga.ubc.ca/events/event/coastal-livelihoods-a-visual-anthropology-exhibit-by-zana-mody>

Approximately 3.3 billion people around the world rely on fish and seafood as their primary source of protein and for their local economies, yet the methods for catching fish vary greatly in their impacts on the marine ecosystems. The Liu Lobby Gallery presents a month-long exhibition featuring the photography of Liu Scholar and IRES PhD student Zana Mody, visually demonstrating the diversity of small-scale fishing practices in two remote regions of the Global South. Join the UBC School of Public Policy and Global Affairs on Aug. 30 at 5 p.m. for refreshments, a discussion with the artist and a short talk by special guest Dr. Rashid Sumaila.

Nikkei Matsuri

Sept. 1–3
www.nikkeimatsuri.nikkeiplace.org

This annual celebration of Japanese culture hosted by the Nikkei Cultural Centre since 2013 returns to Burnaby once more, featuring food, performances, games and entertainment. Bring the kids to chow down on a Japadog, play ring toss and mini-golf, dress up in a yukata traditional dress and listen to talented musical and dancing contenders vying for singing glory at the Talent Search.

African Heritage Festival of Music and Dance (AHFOMAD)

Sept. 1–3
www.festivalafrica.org

The African Heritage Festival of Music and Dance, happening at the Massey Theatre in New Westminster, 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.

Serbian Days

Sept. 2–3
www.svetisava.net/serbiandays

Bring the kids to this family friendly event to partake in the celebration of all things Serbian at the 33rd Serbian Days at Saint Sava Church. Learn about the heritage and folklore of Serbian culture, compete in a soccer tournament, enjoy grilled barbecued meats and listen to traditional trumpet and popular music. For a complete list of events and activities, please visit their website.

Taiwanfest

Sept. 2–4
www.vancouvertaiwanfest.ca

The Taiwanfest is a three-day festival of arts, music, dance and film celebrating Taiwanese culture as well as related cultures in the Asia-Pacific region. Some highlights include DJ Dungi Sapor, an artist integrating Indigenous culture into contemporary sound, breaking the stereotype of Indigenous music; Harmonia, a string musician group; and a focus on Dutch influence in Formosa. There is also a street banquet and outdoor concerts. Open to the public.

Ninth Annual Polish Festival

Sept. 3, 1–8 p.m.
www.belweder.org

Come on down to the ninth 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. Check out their website for more information.

Vancouver Fringe Festival

Sept. 7–17
www.vancouverfringe.com

One of Vancouver's most beloved festivals returns to Granville Island to delight, entertain and inspire independent theatre goers of all ages. From the humorous to the intellectual, the tear-jerking to the naughty, there's something for everyone. On Sept. 6, the festival will have a two hour preview called Fringe4All, featuring many artists presenting their reason why you should see their show. For more information, please visit their website.

Vancouver Latin American Film Festival

Sept. 7–17
www.vlaff.org

The 21st edition of the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival (VLAFF) will take place from

Sept. 7–17. 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.

Little Shop of Horrors

Sept. 7–Oct. 8
www.artsclub.com

The *Little Shop of Horrors* will be presented at the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage from Sept. 7 to Oct. 8. Things start looking up for Seymour, a nerdy flower shop assistant, when he discovers a highly unusual plant during a solar eclipse. This fast-growing and fast-talking new organism, named Audrey Two, attracts fame and helps Seymour win the affection of his crush. But will the price of satisfying the plant's hunger for human blood prove too steep? You'll thrill to this comedy's '60s-inspired score, featuring the unforgettable tunes *Somewhere That's Green*, *Dentist!*, *Suddenly Seymour*, the titular *Little Shop of Horrors*, and more.

Turkish Tunes 6

Sept. 9, 6 p.m.
<https://events.sfu.ca/wcp/event/36880-turkish-tunes-6>

The Sixth Turkish Tunes will be held at the Fei & Milton Wong Experimental Theatre on Sept. 9, in partnership with SFU Woodward's Cultural Programs. Turkish Tunes is a community music event of the Turkish-Canadian Society (TCS), which includes choirs, bands, musicians singing/playing individually or in groups. Come listen to and dance with folk, jazz, pop and classical Turkish music from the multicultural land of Anatolia!

