

Schooling and dancing unite in movement  
Page 6



# The Source

forum of diversity

IN SOLIDARITY WITH  
CHARLIE HEBDO

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Illustration by Afshin Sabouki

## Verbatim

This strange language that is now mine

by ANNE-DIANDRA LOUARN

A balancing act...that's how I perceive my conversations since my arrival in Vancouver a few months ago. Surrounded by and immersed in North American English, French-Canadian French and the French of my native France, I like to juggle all three cultures, which are dear to me, both at work and elsewhere. But I also watch the way I speak a lot. At least I try to...and what is the result? I now speak a sort of strange "franglais" or "frenghish" with intonations from Québec at times and with expressions that my listeners don't always comprehend. It is an awkward "FranQuélish" that resembles Acadian, which makes people smile, if not burst out laughing at times.

Try to explain to your family or friends from France that your job has had a sex change here, as in you have "une job" here, not "un job." Or that for someone's birthday you don't go to "une fête d'anniversaire" but rather to "un party de fête." Or that in Québec the order of the meals is "déjeuner" (breakfast), "dîner" (lunch) and "souper" (dinner) vs the French "petit déjeuner" (little breakfast), "déjeuner" (lunch) and "dîner" (supper)! Conversely, try to explain to a Quebecer how the French engage in "shopping" rather than in "magasinage" (magasin = shop) and park their car in a "parking" lot vs the "stationnement" found in Québec (stationner = to park). Yes, the French language of France embraces many Anglicisms and words ending in -ing. All this is to say that the French butcher the tongue of Molière, while Quebecers try to preserve it in a minority environment.

So who's wrong? Who's right? As for me, I've given up trying to figure it out. To top it off, the answer may not lie  
See "Verbatim" page 8 >

# Happy New Year all year round

by MANDEEP WIRK

**Jan. 1 may officially be New Year's Day, but not all Canadians celebrate the new year on the same date.**

Canadians from the Filipino, Jewish, Russian, Ukrainian and Tibetan communities greet the new year at different times and celebrate in different ways.

### Polka dots for prosperity

"Preparations begin immediately after Christmas and New Year celebrations start on December 31

and end on January 7," says Tomas Avendano, founder of Multicultural Helping House and a member of Vancouver's Filipino community.

On New Year's Eve, family members share a midnight meal to strengthen family ties.

"I used to celebrate New Year's with 78 members of my extended family. I'm the eldest and everybody kisses my hand to pay respect and receive blessings," says Avendano.

Some food traditions show a Chinese influence, like noodles for long life and eggs for new life.

"We cannot celebrate anything

without roasting a pig. There is food in abundance on the table," says Avendano.

Homes display 12 round fruits and people wear polka dots in order to attract prosperity.

Before the clock strikes midnight doors are left wide open for good luck to enter.

"The night before the New Year is very noisy with fireworks. Around midnight many people drive around town honking their horns to chase away evil spirits. The more noise you make, the more abundance you will see," adds Avendano.

"We pray for good jobs, good health and good relations," Avendano says.

### Self-reflection and repentance

"Jewish New Year or Rosh Hashanah occurs in late September/early October," says Deborah Tabenkin, program director at the Jewish Community Centre.

Jews believe Rosh Hashanah is also a time when God passes judgement on all beings.

"On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, there is a ceremony called Tashlich where you go to mov-

See "New Year's" page 7 >

## Also in this issue



Iranian community shares stories  
Page 7

Turkish films bring out the colours and complexities of the Middle East  
Page 8



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## Experiencing a (real) virtual escape: How a business innovator created his EXIT strategy

by SIMON YEE

**When Justin Tang, founder and director of EXIT Canada, relocated from Hong Kong to Canada in 2013, he wanted to act quickly to capitalize on the growing popularity of the real-life escape room concept that is gaining in East Asia and successfully port it to Canada.**

In November 2014, EXIT Canada, which simulates escapes from virtual reality game rooms, won Richmond Chamber of Commerce's 2014 Innovation of the Year Award. EXIT has inspired several other similar businesses to open shop throughout the Lower Mainland.

EXIT started out as a real-life escape game where participants are challenged to discover ways out of locked, themed rooms. Some of EXIT's original scenarios included trying to escape from a prison cell, a laboratory and a sunken ship reminiscent of point-and-click puzzle video games. However, Tang and his

throughout Canada. Ultimately, Tang's dream is to create a brand that can rival theme parks like Universal and Disneyland: an interactive theme park for gamers.

"I always wanted to bring virtual entertainment into real life and I could see the opportunities in Canada. It sounds like dream," says Tang. "And everyone has a

game concept was only a few years old. Somebody in Japan came up with that idea and I thought, okay, this could be the first step towards bringing virtual reality into real life," Tang says.

**Success is 99% failure**

For the first several months in

**“Our game success rate is 1% but our gameplay attracts people who never give up.**

*Justin Tang, director of EXIT Canada*

dream. But if you don't work for it, it'll stay a dream.”

**From a booth in Hong Kong to an innovative business in Canada**

Before starting EXIT, Tang was working in Hong Kong as an exhibition booth producer for several years where he helped construct fancy, elaborate and intricate

2013, Tang started the business by himself and was the only one working on the design, layout, gameplay and investor materials. The stylized 'double-E' (出) in his company logo is a Chinese symbol for 'out' and his initial promotional video was purposely vague in order to foster curiosity and attract prospective customers and investors to try it out and experience EXIT first-hand. But Tang credits his team, especially his earliest employees who started out as customer service representatives but became pivotal creative artists and designers, for the success that EXIT had experienced throughout 2014.

"Admittedly, in the beginning months, EXIT's gameplay was way worse than it is now!" says Tang. "No one person could do everything best, and I wanted to find out what my team was capable of. And I think they're reaching an A-grade to my C-grade [in 2013]!"

Regarding what makes EXIT's gameplay different from other escape game parlours, Tang quoted the old aphorism: "Success is 99% failure", which he applies equally to the difficulties users face when trying to escape, as well as to his own dreams.

"Over there [in East Asian parlours], if you create a game that is too hard to play they don't like it. Here, we have many customers who book the same rooms to try to beat it," Tang says.

Tang says EXIT doesn't compromise on theme and gameplay to make it easy because the customers he attracts are those who are in it for the experience, not just to win.

"Our game success rate is 1% but our gameplay attracts people who never give up. Every business would be happy to see repeat customers, but for us it's more rewarding to see how they are not giving up."

Visit [www.e-exit.ca](http://www.e-exit.ca) for more details.



Photo by Simon Yee

▲ Justin Tang, founder of EXIT Canada.

team plans to expand and extend this concept into other video game genres such as action-adventure, role-playing games and racing. His team has fleshed out around 30 new themes for use in future franchised EXIT locations

booths that evoked imagery and atmosphere of the products being sold. For example, a jewelry store booth exhibit could be shaped in a form of a diamond. It was doing this job that provided Tang with valuable experience on how to design and maintain a brand and also contributed to his decision to bring the newly burgeoning business of the escape game to Canada. His parents were skeptical about his decision to move to Canada, but supportive.

"In Asia, the real-life escape

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Bernie, First Nations counsellor

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Office  
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Telephone (604) 682-5545  
Email [info@thelastsource.com](mailto:info@thelastsource.com)  
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Photographers Denis Bouvier, Pascal Guillon,  
Peggy Lam, Jenny Tan, Simon Yee  
Illustrators Joseph Laquerre, Afshin Sabouki,  
Gordon Spence  
Writers Johana Boukabous, Anna Chemery,  
Alison Chiang, Adrien Disclair, Jesenka  
Duranovic, Sonja Grgar, Robert Groulx, Pascal



Photo by Edward Tien

# Local team skates circles around cultural gaps in overseas tournament

by CARIME LANE

**Youngsters slicing ice in a beeline for a puck is a cherished Canadian image. In the spirit of helping to establish a similar scene in China, Richmond-based Seafair Atom A1 Islanders attended the inaugural Canuck's Cup in Shanghai (Jan. 1-3). The Islanders were the sole team representing North America.**

The Islanders (between the ages of nine and 10 years) faced seven other teams from Beijing, Taipei and Shanghai. However, the trip's central purpose explains Cody Kusch, Seafair Minor Hockey vice president, was to enable an off-ice cultural exchange and create memories to last a lifetime.

"The hockey part is only one piece of it. How we interact off the ice is more important to us," says Kusch.

**Savouring each dimension of the journey**

Bicky Gundarah, MVP of the Islanders' last game, sampled fish

eyeballs and enjoyed bargaining at the markets. The team shepherded Gundarah throughout the trip, as his single mother was unable to accompany him.

"My team is amazing," says Gundarah.

For Niko Tsakumis, age nine, the most memorable parts of the tournament were winning bronze and what followed immediately afterwards.

"At the end of the Bronze medal game, we exchanged jerseys [with Taipei]. I did it so I could remember the tournament and have good memories. I'm probably going to frame it," says Tsakumis.

The Islanders' opposing teams' polite gestures impressed Islanders right winger Aidan Teixeira.

"They always said good luck and bowed to the fans," says Teixeira.

Like Gundarah and Tsakumis, Teixeira also forged new friendships.

"We connected really well [through hockey] and they could speak pretty good English so we could have good con-

versations together, talk about life and things like that," says Teixeira.

**Nurturing hockey roots in Shanghai**

The tournament emerged from Seafair coach Aaron Wilbur's connection - initially arranged by a Chinese Seafair dad - with the Century Star hockey club in Shanghai. Wilbur has been developing his relationship with the organization for the past three years by periodically coaching and running clinics in Shanghai.

In Wilbur's experience, hockey in Shanghai invoked the same community spirit and passion to which he was accustomed in Canada. But it was still subject to growing pains, particularly in the areas of structure and organization.

"What's really different over there is that, in general, none of the parents grew up playing [hockey]; and in most cases, none of them grew up with the experience of playing on a team in an organized sport," explains Wilbur. "I think that, up until about 10 years ago, the thought of having kids play a recreational sport for the

sake of recreation didn't really register with their culture."

Since his first visit to Shanghai, Wilbur has watched the interest in hockey grow at "unbelievable" rates. In the past three years, the Century Star Club has seen a 400 per cent increase in the number of new player admissions. So, for this growing league, the tournament was a milestone event, which included a skills competition, awards banquet and opening ceremonies.

"I believe it's going to be the first time [for the Chinese teams] to experience something on this kind of a scale," says Wilbur.

**Laying groundwork for cross-cultural connections**

With their invitation to the tournament arriving six weeks prior to the event, the Islanders raised funds for the trip by selling ad space and Canucks SuperSkills tickets. Their efforts cut each traveler's expenses by half, thereby facilitating the trip for all 17 players and the 24 parental and leadership escorts.

Upon settling the financial necessities, the Islanders began de-

veloping ideas for bonding with their host team.

"Canada is the mecca of hockey, so we wanted to make sure that [if] Seafair and our Atom A1 team were involved, [that we left] a legacy behind," says Kusch.

Edward Tien, the Islanders team manager, explains a shoebox swap (designed to inspire friendships) was arranged. Along with a letter about themselves and their lives in their home country, the shoebox held other items significant to the players, such as their favorite candy, chocolate or comic book.

Other gifts of pucks, apparel and mini sticks were dwarfed by a banner - weighing over 150 lbs - created by the Islanders. Forty-eight Canuck and Islander-signed pucks were painted and arranged in the shape of a Canadian flag to form a piece that Kusch describes as a symbolic gesture.

"It's a thank you to the Shanghai skating club. While at the same time, it's a commitment to them to be a sister association for a lifetime," says Kusch.

Seafair Minor Hockey Association: [www.seafairhockey.com](http://www.seafairhockey.com)

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## Left Bank



# Don't let Christy Clark and the Liberals continue to fly under the radar

Three key B.C. political issues to watch in 2015

Since Christy Clark took over as Premier of British Columbia, she has convened the Legislature in Victoria so seldomly that it's easy to forget about provincial politics altogether.

With a federal election looming sometime in 2015, and the next B.C. election still more than two years away, it would be easy to let Clark and the B.C. Liberals continue to fly under the media radar. But that would be a terrible mistake.

Under the Canadian system, the provincial government wields key powers. Premier Clark clearly prefers "governing" without messy legislative process and debate. Put less charitably, she prefers a permanent campaign, and a permanent sales pitch, to democracy.

There are a number of key issues to watch in this New Year.

For starters, we need to pay close attention to what initiatives Clark and the Liberals roll out with respect to education, after last year's bitter and protracted labour dispute with the B.C. teachers.

On Jan. 29, Education Minister Peter Fassbender, who antagonized B.C.'s public school teachers to no end last summer, will unveil a so-called Innovation Strategy, which he claims will aim to put "education transformation into action by working with other schools and post-secondary researchers to gather evidence that shows actions are improving student success." That's a mouthful, but what education advocates are really looking for in 2015 is a commitment by the B.C. government to at last, after years of being rebuked in the Courts, address the issue of class size.

tion of what the B.C. government knew and did about Mount Polley prior to the breach, and also more scrutiny of how they have deregulated the mining industry in general. Clark sold herself as someone who would "cut red tape" to help big business; now that a disaster of this magnitude has happened, it's time to put that kind of pro-corporate rhetoric in question.

First Nations are taking the lead on this front. In the wake of the Polley spill, the chief of the Neskonlith band issued an eviction notice to Imperial Metals, specifically ordering the company not to proceed with its planned zinc and lead mine at Ruddock Creek, located northeast of Kamloops near the Upper Adams River.

Finally, in 2015, all eyes should be on the government's grandiose plans for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exports. Christy Clark and the B.C. Liberals pulled off their stunning, come-from-behind election win in May 2013 with a campaign centred on the promised windfall B.C. would get from the development of LNG. Clark went so far as to refer to this industry as a "\$1 trillion" windfall for B.C., linking this coming boom in gas exports with a promise to eliminate the provincial debt.

All this LNG hype could evaporate into thin air, however, with world oil and gas prices plummeting and more jurisdictions developing new and competing gas export projects. Even the Business Council of British Columbia showed extreme skepticism in a recent report, noting that "only a fraction of the 19 LNG projects listed in the [government] inventory" were ever likely to come online.



▲ Mount Polley mine near Likely, B.C.

Vancouver School Board (VSB) Trustee and public education advocate Patti Bacchus, who unfortunately is not continuing as the Chair of the VSB thanks to a cynical move by new Green Party Trustee Janet Fraser, noted on social media that the B.C. government's Jan. 29 event features five men and no women, "Good grief. All male experts coming to B.C. to talk about future of #bced."

In addition to education, the environment will be a key issue in 2015. Last summer's disastrous tailings pond breach at Mount Polley ranks as the worst such mining disaster in the province's history. There needs to be a much more thorough investiga-

tion of what the B.C. government knew and did about Mount Polley prior to the breach, and also more scrutiny of how they have deregulated the mining industry in general. Clark sold herself as someone who would "cut red tape" to help big business; now that a disaster of this magnitude has happened, it's time to put that kind of pro-corporate rhetoric in question.

Premier Clark seems more at home selling LNG and other corporate projects abroad than debating policy in Victoria. It's up to us – the media, civil society and the public at large – to help make up this democratic deficit. A decent, sustainable future for B.C. is at stake. ✂



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### Burnaby Seniors Club provides free activities for immigrant seniors aged 55+. Accepting registrations for 2015 Winter term.

A multilingual poster in Chinese, Farsi and Korean is attached.

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#### Burnaby South

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☎ 604 438 8214

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Beginners' English Practice:

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Knitting Club:

January 20–March 27, Tuesdays, 2–3:30 pm

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# Unearthing ancient ideas at Langara's Philosophers' Jam

by AUDREY TUNG

**At an upcoming Langara Philosophers' Jam event, guest speaker Michael Griffin will be sharing his passion for ancient Greek philosophy and offering a chance to gain insights into the question: "Can ancient ideas make us happy?"**

The Jan. 15 public forum will begin with a presentation by Griffin, who is an assistant professor of classics and philosophy at the University of British Columbia, followed by a moderated discussion. Langara's Philosophers' Jam dialogue sessions provide exposure to new ideas and the opportunity for discussion without the com-



▲ Michael Griffin, assistant professor of classics and philosophy at UBC.

mitments and time constraints of a for-credit course. The Philosophers' Jam program, with its emphasis on discussions among audience members, was created as an alternative to other public forums in the Lower Mainland.

"We created an edgier alternative with more controversial issues with a more open context for dialogue. We wanted to foster not only discussions between the moderator and audience, but also between audience members," says John Russell, chair of Langara's department of philosophy and one of the creators of the program.

The program was originally intended to be an offshoot of Simon Fraser University's Philosophers' Café program, but headed in its own unique direction when the plan failed to come to fruition.

"Initially we wanted to join ranks with SFU and do something along the lines of their Philosophers' Café, but at the last minute they said they didn't want to work with us. And they had actually copyrighted the Philosophers' Café," Russell explains. "So we came up with the name Philosophers' Jam and approached Julie Longo, who is the Dean of Arts at Langara. She told us to create something more distinctive, something edgier."

### An 'art of living'

Griffin explains that philosophy, which fuelled the Renaissance-era frenzy of technological ad-

vancements, originally stemmed from a pursuit of fulfillment.

"Philosophy eventually sparked many of the mathematical and scientific breakthroughs of antiquity and the Renaissance, but before all that, it was an 'art of living,' a search for a genuinely happy, meaningful and fulfilling human life," he says.

At the event, he will be introducing ideas spearheaded by Socrates and his successors in their personal quests for happiness.

"Socrates only asked us to try to look for such a life; he said 'the unexamined life is not worth living.' His successors tried to provide some answers, some experimental guidelines. I'll be talking about Socrates' inspiration, and some of the recipes for human happiness and a well-lived, fulfilling life that his successors offered," says Griffin.

### The modern appeal of ancient ideas

Griffin will also examine these ancient perspectives through a modern lens, with respect to psychology and philosophy. What drew Griffin to these ancient ideas was their comprehensive, multi-disciplinary nature.

"Classical studies gave me a chance to study a bit of everything: some poetry, art and law; some science, math and philosophy; some politics and history; some language and archaeology," he says.

He explains that such ancient ideas still thrive today, and he

enjoys catching glimpses of this legacy in everyday life.

"Even after 2,000 years, those ancient ideas are very alive, underpinning many of our institutions and intuitions; and I was just hooked. Looking at the social world through the lens of history, especially the history of ideas, is almost like seeing the programming language it's all written in," says Griffin.

Griffin notes that the timeless, universal relevance of ancient ideas make them an enduring point of discussion – even in the 21st century. He believes that the ancient topics of happiness and meaning, which will be focal points of the upcoming Philosophers' Jam, are particularly important because they are intrinsic to the human condition.

Greek philosophy is common property because it is neither religious nor secular. Studying ancient ideas about happiness and meaning is especially valuable. They never get old, because they are part of the human condition.

"Ancient ideas are always with us," Griffin explains. ☞

Griffin will host the next session of the Philosophers' Jam on Jan. 15 at 7 p.m. in the Employee Lounge of Langara College's Main Campus, 100 West 49th Ave.. For further details, visit [www.langara.bc.ca/departments/philosophy/philosophers-jam/index.html](http://www.langara.bc.ca/departments/philosophy/philosophers-jam/index.html).

# An old math tool for a new generation

by JESSENKA DURANOVIC

**A second-generation soroban teacher, Norie Ikoma, is delivering abacus training to Vancouverites seeking to improve their math skills and learn more about the computational method's cultural roots.**

Although the Japanese abacus, the soroban, is still a widely used tool for enhancing mental dexterity in Japan's jukus, or special subject "cram" schools, it is relatively uncommon in the Canadian educational system. Having seen the superior math test scores of Japanese students in comparison to those of their global counterparts, local parents and educators are starting to incorporate the juku drills in after-school abacus classes.

The abacus evolved over time and space, reflecting cultural and societal needs. What started as maneuverable pebbles in sandboxes, to visualize summation, evolved to a computing tool used across different countries, often alongside sophisticated calculators. The Japanese soroban was imported from China some 450 years ago, and modified to increase speed over subsequent centuries.

### Ancient tool develops multiple skills

Today, the soroban offers an immersive experience to its students; the clicking and sliding of the beads add auditory and visual stimuli to the already

intimate tactile experience. In Vancouver, Norie Ikoma, a second-generation Japanese abacus teacher, has been teaching this tradition to an ever-growing number of students interested in improving their arithmetic skills.

"We teach people how to live without modern calculators and make quick mental calculations without them," Ikoma explains. "We try to push students to reach their full potential."

Ikoma opened the Ikoma Abacus Learning School in Vancouver when she noticed the lack of abacus training in the area. For the past 10 years, students at Ikoma Learning have been acquiring mental calculation skills, enhancing mental dexterity and attaining computational efficiency to improve exam results through their soroban training. However, Ikoma says the intangible benefits of building self-esteem and increasing focus levels are just as important.

"Students can expect improvement in their math grades but also the development of their brains and a boost in their confidence. After they acquire knowledge of the abacus they can help out the new or slow learners and develop leadership skills as well," she says.

### Beyond technical learning

Lee Brighton enrolled her children, nine-year-old Madison and seven-year-old Denver in Ikoma Abacus Learning with the simple hope that their arithmetic skills



Photo courtesy of Ikoma Abacus Learning

would improve and aid them in their everyday lives. Although they are not at YouTube fame levels yet, Brighton has seen a great improvement in Madison's and Denver's math levels.

"My kids have improved dramatically. Although they are still not as fast as kids on TV, that will happen with time and continued work on learning the skills," says Brighton.

Ikoma Abacus Learning has also sparked another interest for the Brightons: Japanese culture. From karate classes to at-home activities, the family is learning about various aspects of the country that brought them the soroban.

"We have enrolled our son in a karate club that focuses on the kids learning some Japanese culture and language; at home we are currently reading Japanese folk stories and bought a game that teaches the Japanese language," Brighton says.

Instruction at Ikoma Abacus Learning is available in English and Japanese, and Ikoma emphasizes that students from all cultural backgrounds are welcome. Although the soroban inevitably evokes its cultural heritage, the classes are really focused on learning the techniques that will improve students' math skills.

"There are a lot of Japanese students, but also there are quite a few students from other countries such as China, Korea, India and Canada," says Ikoma.

Ikoma Abacus Learning offers classes in five locations across the Lower Mainland. The basic program consists of nine levels, which can be completed in three years or less. ☞

For more information on Ikoma Abacus Learning, including class schedules and fees, please visit [www.ikomaabacus.com](http://www.ikomaabacus.com), or contact Norie Ikoma at [nori@ikomaabacus.com](mailto:nori@ikomaabacus.com) or 778-233-7999.



Photo by Yvonne Chew

▲ Mother and baby dancers in the Foolish Operations Ensemble create a performance of *Embody/In My Body*.

## Living the curriculum: an Italian-inspired approach to learning

by ALISON CHIANG

**Susan Hoppenfeld, a Vancouver childhood educator for over 30 years, used to sit with teachers each August and work on their back-to-school lesson plans. Hoppenfeld says this form of instruction wasn't helpful for her or her fellow teachers, and hopes that a long-established Italian approach will make a difference.**

"We didn't even know the kids," Hoppenfeld explains.

Hoppenfeld credits an Italian childhood learning theory – the Reggio Emilia Approach – for introducing her to a different method.

schools in Italy and today helps to fund Italian day cares and programs. Rather than parents or teachers deciding what children should learn, the adults' role is to be supportive and allow children the freedom to explore by themselves.

"My goal at the end of the day is to take Reggio Emilia ideas and get a different kind of call to action on how we work with children," says Hoppenfeld.

She adds that the process is more important than the product, and parent involvement is essential for children to flourish.

### Children as teachers

Conference organizer Julie Lebel moved from Quebec to Vancouver

can infiltrate into the community and continue to grow," says Lebel.

### A meeting of minds and methods

By chance, Patricia Reedy found out her own work with children and dance was parallel to the Reggio Emilia Approach. Reddy, founder and director of Luna Dance Institute in Berkeley, California, says she's honoured to be invited to the conference as a keynote speaker and wants to share her extensive dance experience and academic background in childhood education.

Reedy supports how the Italian method respects children's process of being able to let go and 'do their own thing.' She says it not only allows children the space to grow but also allows teachers to share with each other and evolve their own professional competence. Reedy says this way of learning – through movement – applies to all.

"Every human being was somebody's child," says Reedy. "Everybody has a body and everyone can express themselves through movement – it's a universal appeal." ☞

*Embody/In My Body* takes place Jan. 17, at 11 a.m. at the Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre.  
www.roundhouse.ca  
www.julielebeldanceprojects.wordpress.com  
www.vancouverreggioconsortium.ca/reggio-emilia.html  
www.julielebeldanceprojects.wordpress.com



Photo by Luna Dance Institute faculty

▲ Group during Luna family dance class 2014.

"The notion of children being citizens in a democracy colours the way I work with children and their families," says Hoppenfeld, who also serves as director of Child Development at the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver.

Hoppenfeld will be joining several guest speakers in the *Embody/In My Body: Dancing the Early Years* conference, which takes place Jan. 17 at the Roundhouse Performance Centre. The conference will offer a glimpse of educators who have incorporated the Reggio Emilia Approach into their teaching and interaction with children and adults.

Hoppenfeld explains that the Reggio Emilia Approach started in the Italian city of the same name after Second World War with the intention of creating a different future for children: creative, competent and capable. This school of thought essentially brought forth modern-day pre-

ver in 2005. After having twin girls in 2010, she found it difficult to continue her dance practice and instruction while being a full-time mom.

Lebel eventually found a community where people were interested in moving with their children and this evolved into dance sessions in a few Vancouver community centres.

Lebel got the idea for a conference when she started to think beyond using the Reggio Emilia Approach with dance classes.

"What if children have a real contribution to offer? Consider children who can't speak yet but can express their physicality – how can we take this seriously?" says Lebel.

For Lebel, dance may not be a natural place to go if you are an educator, but the Reggio Emilia Approach is not a 'top-down' way of learning but rather focused on skills.

"I hope some of these ideas

## CiTR: Broadcasting diverse news and music from UBC

by NAOMI TSE

**Produced out of a studio at UBC's student union building, the CiTR radio station (101.9FM) was created as an outlet for students to discuss life on campus and local news around the university. Today, the CiTR hosts over 90 diverse music and talk programs that represent different voices in the community.**

According to Brenda Grunau, station manager at the CiTR, the station has a mandate to provide alternative radio programming with a local focus. In addition, their mandate is to empower UBC students and community members through training and participation in broadcasting since the CiTR relies on student volunteers as well as staff members to operate.

With respect to the type of programs they decide to broadcast, Grunau says that they can help anyone produce their show as long as the programming is in line with their mandate and does not replicate any other commercial radio programs. Although the station is based out of UBC, you do not need to be a student to get involved with CiTR.

Grunau says that the CiTR has only two to three ads per day since they are very picky about ads.

"We want our ads to align with the interests of our listeners and our mandate," says Grunau. "We do a lot of sponsorships to promote local festivals but those are not paid."

### RhythmsIndia

Originally from Bombay, India, Nalini Bhui speaks eight different languages (Kannada, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Bengali, Malayalam, Telugu, Hindi and Punjabi), five of which she learned through her mother's singing. With such diverse linguistic knowledge, Bhui tries to incorporate music from at least two to three different Indian languages in her show, *RhythmsIndia*.



Photo courtesy of Nalini Bhui

▲ Nalini Bhui, host of *RhythmsIndia*, a radio program that showcases the diversity of music in India.

Bhui explains that in India, the culture, food and music vary from province to province and even festivals such as Diwahli are celebrated differently due to the differences in climate and geography. From Hindusthani music (classical music from Northern India) to Bhangra music (traditional folk music and dance from Punjab region), Bhui strives to provide a taste of the music from different regions of India.

"The rhythms of India are so diverse that you can discover which village a washerwoman is from by the way [rhythm] she hits her clothes with the washing stick," says Bhui, who is also a public speaker.

Bhui also brings local and international artists and players of traditional Indian instruments such as the *sitar*, *dhol* or *tabla*, to perform live on her show. Sometimes the music will focus on a specific instrument or an upcoming Indian festival. Besides just playing music, she also encourages listeners to get up and dance or exercise to the music as well.

You can catch *RhythmsIndia* every other Sunday from 8–9 p.m.

### Asian Wave 101

Steve Zhang, host of *Asian Wave 101*, had not always envisioned himself as a radio show host. After encouragement from friends and family members, he participated in a DJ selection competition and eventually started *Asian Wave 101* in May 2014.

"My intention was to bring Chinese and Korean pop music to people who may not have heard it before or had heard very little," says Zhang, who is a history student at UBC.

Zhang says he mostly plays Mandarin and Korean pop songs with an occasional Japanese or Cantonese song thrown into the mix. He explains that Asia is growing prominently as a world entertainment scene and Korean pop music and Chinese cinema have also gained international attention in recent years.

"The rising prominence of Asian pop culture where I'm from [China] has inspired me to share it in a way that other people can enjoy and connect through music appreciation," says Zhang.

Zhang hopes to be able to faze in a co-host and start a segment to discuss Asian music with guests who are not familiar with it.

*Asian Wave 101* is on the air every Wednesday from 4–5 p.m. ☞

All shows on the CiTR are available as a podcast. To see a full show schedule, please visit [www.citr.ca/index.php/schedule/shows/](http://www.citr.ca/index.php/schedule/shows/).

## HAYDN'S "THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF CHRIST"

JANUARY 24, 2015 AT 8:00 PM  
ORPHEUM ANNEX

with poetry by Robert Bringham & Jan Zwicky — "The Crucifixion of the Earth"

Marc Destrubé & Linda Melsted violins; Steve Creswell viola; Tanya Tomkins cello

In 1785 Josef Haydn wrote a chamber work based on the Biblical seven last words spoken by Christ on the cross. Traditionally, the words or phrases are spoken, followed by a meditation on those words, then by the Music. EMV, in association with Green College at UBC, have invited renowned BC poets Robert Bringham and Jan Zwicky to prepare poetry for each of the seven movements that stimulates a dialogue based on the universal qualities in the text and also in Haydn's deeply affecting music.



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# Oral history project shares stories from Iranian community

by PEGGY LAM

**Sharing Our Stories, an exhibit at the North Vancouver Museum and Archives (NVMA), features the stories and objects of 12 Iranians living on the North Shore.**

Recognizing the large presence of the Iranian community, the NVMA's assistant director, Shirley Sutherland, and her colleagues formed an advisory committee to investigate how the members of the Iranian community would like to be involved in museum programs.

"Canadian museums were solely working with the first settlement groups such as the First Nations or European [white] pioneers. Other settlement groups weren't engaged with Canadian museums at all," says Sutherland.

## Stories of arrival

Fereshteh Kashefi, multicultural services librarian at the North Vancouver City Library, has been part of the advisory committee for more than two years. For Kashefi, the exhibit marks North Vancouver's recognition of the presence of the Iranian community and the role it plays.

"For me this is really new and interesting. It's admirable," she says.

The exhibit focuses more on oral history than displaying objects. The first phase of the project entailed gathering arrival stories and interviewing differ-

ent members of the Iranian community. The group of interviewees included merchants, artists, thinkers and writers.

Sharon Fortney, a researcher and curator for NVMA, said the team ran into many challenges while undertaking the first phase of the project. Some Iranian community members were unable to understand the English spoken by the interviewer, while time conflicts were another barrier to be overcome.

After interviews were conducted, memory boxes were created to feature objects highlighting the community's experiences. Participants were asked to choose objects they wanted to use to illustrate their story. Examples of these objects are books, dance costumes and historical photographs.

"The boxes were made so they can be placed elsewhere in the community, [with] other agencies and offices after the exhibit dissolves," Fortney explains.

Over the years, the project evolved from a few memory boxes into an entire exhibit. Panels were added to document the community's growth in the city. Kashefi recounts her experience trying to display the community's diversity and rich background in the exhibit.

"You can't just start with memory boxes and leave people in the dark. There are so many questions that people have: Who are these people? What is their background? And when did they start coming here? All of these



▲ Fereshteh Kashefi believes the exhibit creates unity in North Vancouver.

have been worked on as a part of the project," says Kashefi.

## Making it relevant

For Sutherland, the purpose of the exhibit is to shine a light on the past and create cross-cultur-

al understanding between different groups in North Vancouver.

"We have a lot more different cultures that are thriving and living here. Yet we were not playing a role in building those bridges of understanding or inform-

ing," she says.

Small groups of Iranians came to the North Shore between the 1950s and 1970s. The revolution in Iran sparked a larger wave of immigration. Legislative changes in Canada's immigration system in the 1980s also made it easier for members of the non-elite to come and start their own businesses.

Sutherland acknowledges the need for museums to display exhibits that keep up with current demographic trends in order to remain relevant in the 21st century.

"Museums presented pioneer families who are proud of what they have started, but have moved on [from the area]. Their achievements [displayed] are now met with no interest. The idea is to work with the community as it exists today," says Sutherland.

*Sharing Our Stories* features Iranians representative of different religions, genders and economic backgrounds. For Fortney, the most inspirational part of the project is for children to see themselves represented in the exhibit.

Fortney remarks on how important it is for the kids' self-esteem to feel welcomed in the community. When kids come in to do an archive program, they look at the displays and can see their own cultures, past and present, represented. ✎

## Sharing Our Stories

North Vancouver Museum and Archives, 3203 Institute Rd., Lynn Valley, North Vancouver  
Until March 28



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**From Sea to Sea:** Sunday, June 7th, 2015. 7pm at the Evergreen Cultural Centre, 1205 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam. Enjoy songs of travel, adventure and risk on high seas, beautiful songs of Canada, and rollicking folk tunes from our Maritimes and East Coast. Join us as we celebrate our vast and inspiring country, through songs of the sea and the waterways that unite us all.

**Indiekör:** Saturday, June 14th, 2015. 7:30 pm at the Vogue Theatre, 918 Granville Street, Vancouver. Experience what everyone is talking about! Mixing Mumford and Sons with Monteverdi, Coastal Sound Youth Choir and local indie band The Salteens join forces for a fourth year to present their innovative cross pollination of classical choral music and indie rock. Choral music just got cooler than ever.

Ticket pricing and purchase information for all shows at [www.coastalsoundmusic.com](http://www.coastalsoundmusic.com). VIP Season Pass program for preferred seating and other advantages available until November 1st, 2014.

## About the Coastal Sound Music Academy

Coastal Sound Music connects singers and outstanding choral music educators with the community. From the wee 4 to 5 year old Sources song play program, to the professional and award winning Youth and Children's Choirs, to DeCoro, a new choral experience for adults, there is a place for singers to share a sense of spirit, artistry, heart and community.

## ► "New Year's" from page 1

ing water and throw bread into the water. And the symbolism is that you're getting rid of sins. The 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is a time of repentance and self-reflection, and then you fast on Yom Kippur to be inscribed into the Book of Life," says Tabenkin.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are solemnly observed holidays for Jewish people.

"Rosh Hashanah is not so much celebrated because it is a religious holiday. People go to the synagogue to pray and have a festive meal at home," Tabenkin says.



▲ Deborah Tabenkin, program director at the Jewish Community Centre.

Apples dipped in honey are eaten on Rosh Hashanah for a good and sweet New Year.

## Three chances to celebrate

New Year is a bigger holiday than Christmas in Russia, a legacy of communist times when New Year took the place of Christmas.

"Russians celebrate New Year's Day officially on January 1 and then they celebrate old style New Year again on the night between

January 13 and 14. Since the revolution we celebrate the New Year twice," says Inna Mikhailov, proprietor of Russian World, a Russian specialty store in Vancouver.

Although the state follows the Gregorian calendar, the Russian Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar.

"Russians keep their Christmas tree till New Year. Our friends here celebrate New Year with their family. We go to their house with presents for the old style New Year," says Mikhailov.

On New Year's Eve, Russians enjoy a late supper party with family and friends.

"Traditionally we have blintzes (pancakes) with red caviar and Salad Olivier," says Mikhailov.

Many Russians now also celebrate Chinese New Year in February by eating out at a Chinese restaurant, says Mikhailov.

"Russian people look for new traditions to make life interesting and they like the Chinese symbols," she adds.

## Grains for good luck

"New Year's Day is January 14. On New Year's Eve, we have a banquet and a dance called Malanka at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre," says Gladys Andreas, community organizer.

Ukrainian dancers entertain festivalgoers as they enjoy perogies and cabbage rolls with sauerkraut.

"When I was little and lived on a farm, on New Year's Eve the guys would get dressed in costumes and go from farmhouse to farmhouse playing pranks on farmers," says Andreas.

According to Andreas, some traditions have been lost with people moving into the city. However her church still organizes a group to go sowing grain from house to house on New Year's Day. After obtaining permission, members sprinkle grain on the floor while saying a verse.

"Rye and wheat and all other grains, for your good luck and your good health, may the crop that you reap be better than last year," Andreas recites.

## Time to seek advice

"This year, Tibetan New Year, or Losar, will be on February 19," says Tashi Tsetan, community volunteer.

Houses and monasteries are cleaned and decorated with colourful prayer flags.

"On the night of February 17, we have a dumpling soup that predicts our fortune," says Tsetan.

He adds that it is a time to put away negative thoughts to start the New Year afresh.

"On Losar, families visit monasteries to pay respect to dharma teachers and get advice for the year ahead," Tsetan says.

People enjoy eating festive food like fried pastries called khapse.

"We burn juniper leaves, chant mantras and wish good for the country and humanity," says Tsetan.

## Common human aspiration

All cultures deem the newborn year to be an auspicious time. Although the cultural communities celebrate New Year's in different ways, they all desire a happy and prosperous year ahead. ✎

# Savouring the momentum: Festival celebrates the renaissance of Turkish cinema

by SONJA GRGAR

The inaugural Vancouver Turkish Film Festival (VTFF) is capitalizing on an extraordinary year that at once celebrated the centennial of Turkish cinema, as well as delivered an unprecedented calibre of recognition and the highest number of films ever made in an industry that merges eastern and western aesthetics.

"Turkey has [always] been a bridge between Asia and Europe. Turkish cinema, dating back to 1914, combines Europe's artistic sensibilities with the colourful complexities of the Middle East. As a result, our films are visually very compelling," says Eylem Sonmez, VTFF president and co-founder.

Both Sonmez, who is also a veteran Vancouver-based production coordinator, and local filmmaker Hakan Burcuoglu, VTFF director and co-founder, wanted the festival to serve as a platform that will raise the profile of Turkish cinema in Vancouver by presenting culturally specific stories which resonate well internationally.

## The Turkish connection

Burcuoglu says that the local Turkish community is quite small and consists of only about 5,000 people. However, Sonmez explains that the number of Turkish students coming to study in Vancouver has been on the rise recently.

"There are many Turkish students coming to get their film education in Vancouver, but they usually go back to Turkey to continue their career because Turkish cinema has been growing at a very fast speed in the last 10 years," says Sonmez.

Composer Rahman Altin, who successfully splits his career between Turkey and Hollywood, also testifies to the changing conditions within the Turkish film industry.

"In Turkey people are discovering the power of communication, so finding funds for projects [there] seems easier nowadays than in the U.S.," he says.

## A complex identity

Altin composed the score for VTFF's closing film *The Butterfly's Dream*, a sentimental romance



▲ *My Child* depicts a parent group that courageously fights for the rights of their LGBT children in Turkey.

that resurrects real life stories of two lesser-known Turkish poets who died in the 1940's. It is the biggest budget film to come out of Turkey to date, and a symbol of the growing prowess of the still largely state-funded Turkish film industry.

In addition to attracting as wide of an audience range as possible, it was vitally important to Sonmez and Burcuoglu to represent the complexity of Turkish culture at VTFF by offering a selection of mainstream, arthouse, short and documentary films.

"We are not defined by our stereotypes. Turkish cinema is very diverse, and we want to surprise Vancouver audiences," says Burcuoglu.

*Silent*, another VTFF film and winner of the 2012 Cannes Film Festival's prestigious Palme d'Or award for best short film, illustrates this diversity by depicting the perspective of the country's oppressed Kurdish minority.

The film is a touching story about a Kurdish woman who, while visiting her husband in prison, is forced to be silent be-

cause only Turkish language is allowed to be spoken in that setting.

## Shifting political consciousness

The documentary *My Child* is another VTFF offering, and conveys the stories of an activist parent group that fights for the acceptance of LGBT rights in Turkey. Director Can Candan heard the parents' stories at a university conference, and was immediately moved to make a documentary about their struggle.

"I realized that the very act of these parents sharing their stories publicly and openly was a tremendously powerful political act. This was happening in an extremely homophobic and transphobic society where LGBT people are constant targets of hate crimes," says Candan.

To his surprise, Candan had little trouble securing the necessary funds for *My Child*, and the film has been released theatrically in Turkey, had been commercially distributed on DVD and online, and was received extremely well within the country. "Documentary in Turkey has become an area of opposition and activism with more and

more diverse voices being expressed," says Candan. "We designed, structured, and promoted *My Child* to resist any attempts at marginalization."

He feels that the democratic aspirations of Turkish people when it comes to LGBT rights are far ahead of the country's conservative and oppressive political leadership. And though his film has garnered significant support, Candan says that it is still challenging to secure funding and wide distribution for independent documentaries in Turkey.

This is why both Burcuoglu and Sonmez are excited to contribute to the longevity of the blossoming Turkish cinema by having VTFF serve as an international platform for the nation's filmmakers.

"Films are particularly poignant and powerful snapshots of the truth, beauty and struggle of people in a particular place, and for this reason I believe that Turkish cinema will bring a [fresh] perspective to Vancouver audiences," says Sonmez. ☞

Vancouver Turkish Film Festival runs from Jan. 23–25. For tickets and information, visit [www.vtff.ca](http://www.vtff.ca)



▲ *The Butterfly's Dream's* international success is a testament to the growing power of Turkish cinema.

## ► "Verbatim" from page 1

in France or Québec, as the future of the French language lies in Africa. According to the Organisation Mondiale de la Francophonie, 85% of francophones will be living on the African continent by the year 2050. By then 750 million people will be speaking French, and the language will be tied into increasingly multilingual national contexts. No doubt regional accents will intensify and possibly even supplant the traditional French accent, that is to say the accent of those who imagine themselves without one.

Here in Canada my traditional French accent is rather well received, certainly better than a Québec accent is in France. Being a Quebecer in France is to be the country-bumpkin cousin that makes you smile. The cousin who amuses you with

their colourful expressions that no one dares to use in France. It's clear that Québec folklore and camaraderie have no place in the business world of France, particularly not in the media, which is my domain. Quebecers are seen as much less credible from the point of view of high French society (mainly Parisians), who believe themselves to be speaking the "true French," that which is the most neutral.

So, my Québécois friend, you will have to tone down your accent the same way a Belgian or even a resident of Marseille or Toulouse would if you want to work in the French media, unless of course you become a sports-caster. You have to realize that discussing rugby with an accent from the southwest of France, well, that's a good thing.

What a shame that France, a supposed welcoming land, is

depriving itself of so much multiculturalism. Is there but one good recipe for beef bourguignon, a Paris-Brest pastry or poutine? Vancouver attests to just the opposite each day with its intermingling of cultures and the resulting creativity. Vancouver has shown me that there is no "good" or "bad" French, no "good" or "bad" accent, but that there exists in fact as many varieties of French as there are francophones. So I can go back to perfecting my "FranQuéGlish" without shame. A "FranQuéGlish" that reflects my life, my experiences and the cultures that I have made mine. And that's only the beginning. ☞

*Speaking with an accent implies appealing to the sentiment and then everything is turned upside down.* – Arthur Schopenhauer

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## A portrait of the artist as an exile

by ANASTASIA SCHERDERS

**In his latest exhibition, *Crossed*, Vancouver-based artist Ahmad Tabrizi shares a unique form of portraiture and visual poetry, where the complexities of language, expression and identity overlap with the experiences and memories of a political refugee.**

“The work is about political memory and experiences, but it is not just political,” says Tabrizi, “It is about the experiences of life.”

According to Makiko Hara, the independent curator of *Crossed*, Tabrizi’s work reveals many layers of the collective experiences of exiles and refugees living in contemporary society. Furthermore, she feels it encourages the viewer to feel the sense of pain, frustration, confusion and dis-

placement experienced by someone who has struggled as an exile. “We’ve all been pricked at one point or another. It is a universal symbol of pain,” he says.

In this exhibition, Tabrizi adds another dimension to his photographs by arranging them in the formation of a crossword puzzle. English words on the surface of each photograph connect along a vertical or horizontal line to create fragmented phrases which read like lines of poetry: “foreign fruit... taste... like... exile” and “beholder... displacement... taste... another... failure.”

Tabrizi creates an atypical kind of self-portrait, something he describes as an “oddball portrait of displacement,” providing the viewer with a complex and layered visual arrangement.

**Power to inspire and provoke**

Hara states that the power of Tabrizi’s visual poetry is what is

“Creating art is my mediocre attempt at communication...There is no revolution to join in, so this is my attempt at having an effect, if any.

*Ahmad Tabrizi, Iranian-born artist*

placement experienced by someone who has struggled as an exile.

Tabrizi fled Iran in 1984 because of his involvement in the student movement leading up to the Iranian Revolution and found refuge in Vancouver in 1987. Before his departure from Iran, Tabrizi studied comparative literature in Tehran and intended to pursue a PhD and a teaching career.

**Framing the artist**

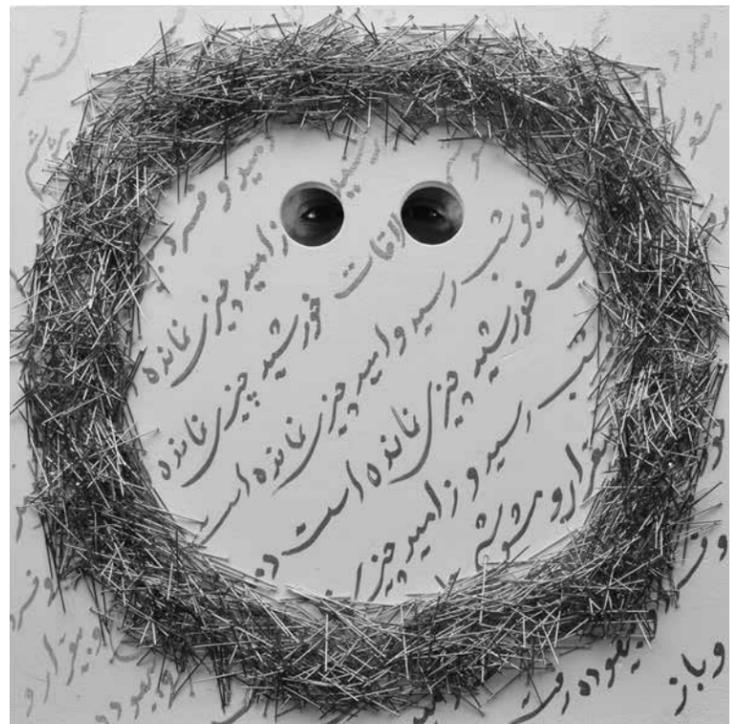
With an installation of 38 framed photographs, *Crossed* presents a series of Tabrizi’s elaborate, and original, self-portraits, consisting of tilted Farsi script, an English word (written in red) in place of a mouth and two cut-out eyeholes that reveal a different expression of the artist’s eyes in each photograph.

most striking about the exhibition. “It unveils an untranslatable narrative written in-between the mother tongue and foreign language,” she says.

While Hara hopes the exhibition inspires the viewer to imagine the artist’s life, Tabrizi wants his work to raise questions for the viewer. At the same time, he is modest about the influence of his art, and quite skeptical about the impact of not only his own work, but also the creative work of all artists.

“Creating art is my mediocre attempt at communication. The effect of art is pretty mediocre. The very best art is quite mediocre. There is no revolution to join in, so this is my attempt at having an effect, if any,” says Tabrizi.

In addition to the installation of photographs, *Crossed* will feature a video which includes over-



▲ One of the pieces in *Crossed*.

lapping recordings of the artist outlining each portrait with a circle of dress-making pins, making the portrait appear like a prickly and ironic cartoon happy face. For Tabrizi, who has worked as a costume designer since the late 1990s, the dressmaking pin is a meaningful object.

lapping recordings of the artist reciting a poem in English, and another voice singing a poem in classical Farsi. ☞

*Crossed* is exhibiting at grunt gallery from Jan. 15 until Feb. 21. Opening reception Jan. 15, 7-10p.m. Visit [www.grunt.ca](http://www.grunt.ca) for more details.

surrey art gallery **SURREY ART GALLERY**  
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## Surrey Art Gallery kicks off 40th anniversary with exhibits about Surrey and its region

**Views from the Southbank I: Histories, Memories, Myths**

January 17–March 15, 2015 | Opening Reception: January 17, 7:30–9:30pm

Marking the Gallery’s 40th anniversary, the exhibition *Views from the Southbank I* reveals a deep and complex set of histories and memories related to Surrey and its neighbouring geography. This exhibition presents artwork that engages the cultural legacies, individual memories, and collective myths of South of the Fraser. Whether it be the re-enactment of history through the celebrations and displays at Fort Langley, the burying of ancient history under new freeways in North Delta, or the memorialization of the past in one of the province’s oldest pet cemeteries in Surrey, artists in this exhibition show the many ways the Southbank region of the Lower Mainland collectively presents—or turns away from—its histories and memories. The exhibition features art from the Gallery’s permanent collection along with artworks borrowed from private collections. This project is the first of a three-part series of exhibitions titled *Views from the Southbank* that will run throughout the year.

Participating artists include Jim Adams, Michael Abraham, Sean Alward, Nicoletta Baumeister, David Campion and Sandra Shields, Roxanne Charles, Sanjoy Das, A.S. Dhillon, Robert Gelineau, Robert Genn, Polly Gibbons, Ravi Gill, Shandis Harrison, Jeremy Herndl, Brian Howell, Reuben Kambeitz, Micah Lexier, Suzanne Northcott, Deborah Putman, Bill Rennie, Don Romanchuck, Carol Sawyer, Kevin Schmidt, and Lenore Tkachuk.

**Re:Source—A Living Archive 1975–2015**

January 17–December 13, 2015

In celebration of the Surrey Art Gallery’s 40th anniversary, five local artists are plunging into the depths of the Gallery’s archives to chart its innovative, colourful, and sometimes humorous history. *Re:Source—A Living Archive 1975–2015* will trace the Surrey Art Gallery’s crucial role at the forefront of British Columbia’s globally renowned art scene. Jim Adams, Polly Gibbons, Cora Li-Leger, Haruko Okano, and Mandeep Wirk will bring the archives to life through an ever-evolving installation in the main Gallery, highlighting unknown stories, behind-the-scenes photographs, commentaries and critiques, while allowing visitors to interact with a selection of themed documents. As the year progresses, the artists will modify the exhibit based on their research, introducing new ideas and objects to the display while expanding their definition and understanding of the archive. Each artist has selected a different theme around which to orient their research; topics include community outreach, invisible narratives, the interchange between art and society, time-based media, and multiculturalism. Scheduled exhibition programming will include artist’s talks as well as the publication of a digital edition.

**Taryn Hubbard: Surrey City Centre née Whalley**

January 17–March 15, 2015

In the first exhibition of *Open Sound 2015: Polyphonic Cartograph*, Surrey-based writer Taryn Hubbard presents a multi-channel soundscape of Surrey’s new City Centre and surrounding community. Collected over the course of one year, these audio recordings from across North Surrey, particularly the new City Centre and larger Whalley region, document a city in transition and constant motion. Major construction projects such as South Fraser Perimeter Road and the new City Hall, along with the ebb and flow of commuters and commerce, present a cacophony of sound in contrast to the gentle atmosphere found within local parks and nature sites. Hubbard’s work is an audio map of the city, conveying both the serene and jarring qualities it encompasses.

Admission to these exhibitions is by donation.

Surrey Art Gallery is located at 13750-88 Avenue, 1 block east of King George Boulevard, in Bear Creek Park. 604-501-5566 | [www.surrey.ca/artgallery](http://www.surrey.ca/artgallery)  
HOURS: Tues–Thur 9am–9pm | Fri 9am–5pm | Sat 10am–5pm | Sun 12–5pm | Closed Mondays and holidays.  
Surrey Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of BC Arts Council and Canada Council for the Arts.



Photo courtesy of Vancouver Biennale

## An "F" from Ai Weiwei

by DONG YUE SU

Unveiled just before the Christmas holiday, a public sculpture in the shape of an "F", created by the world-renowned Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei, sits on a lawn in Harbour Green Park at the north end of Bute Street. The work, enigmatically titled *F Grass*, has left many people guessing at what it means.

Although Vancouver has seen Ai's works before, this is the first artwork he has created specifically for the city, at the request of the Vancouver Biennale.

### Picking his spot

Ai, as a political activist, was under constant surveillance in Bei-

“He picked this controversial site... perhaps Ai wants to generate some kind of controversy.”

Barrie Mowatt, president of Vancouver Biennale

jing and cannot leave China. He chose this site through imagery sent to him by the Biennale and came up with this site-specific work, which will stay there for 12 months. This is the same location as the controversial sculpture of an upside down church installed by American artist Dennis Oppenheim from 2005 to 2007.

“We have offered him lots of places to choose from in Vancou-



Photo courtesy of Vancouver Biennale

▲ Detail of *F Grass*.

ver, but he did not look elsewhere. He picked this controversial site where Dennis Oppenheim had started. Perhaps Ai wants to generate some kind of controversy,” explains Barrie Mowatt, founder and president of the Vancouver Biennale.

*F Grass* is comprised of 1328 blades of grass made of cast

iron. Lower than knee height and mounted on a metal platform, the grass is arranged in a stylized "F", covering an area of 13.5 square metres. Because of its horizontal orientation, it is not easy to make out the beautiful calligraphic "F" shape except from the south side facing the sculpture. Some cast iron has already oxidized and appears to be brown in colour, as intended.

“If it were elevated, the work would have been more eye-catching,” says Mowatt.

### Grass, grassroots or the F word?

Despite its underwhelming appearance, the work has gotten people talking. Mowatt says that spectators are guessing what "F" and "Grass" mean for the artist, what they mean for Vancouver and what the artist wants to say about the city.

According to Shengtian Zheng, the managing director of Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art, the "small and humble" grass represent faceless individuals who, when held together, "bear tremendous power and vitality." In this notion of the grassroots, *F Grass* can be seen as the continuation of one of Ai's most famous works, *Sunflower Seeds*, exhibited in London in 2010.

Based on the news release from the Biennale, the word "grass" is pronounced as "cao" in Mandarin and it is a homonym for the Chinese character that means "f...." *F Grass* is a catchphrase Ai invented to mean "f... you," demonstrating a defiant attitude towards the online censorship in China. Using creative homonyms is one of the ways he gets around the keyword censoring on the Internet.

Mowatt is happy that the work has resonated with spectators. He says that some regards "F" as freedom, fortitude or other meanings held dearly to them.

Mowatt is also quite interested in what "grass" means for Vancouver.

"Grass can be associated with marijuana in Vancouver. The blades of grass in the sculpture resemble cannabis plants a little bit. It is very interesting to think that maybe Ai is making reference to the cannabis culture in Vancouver," says Mowatt.

As part of the official launch of the *F Grass*, Vancouver Biennale started a live Twitter event to get people talking about the sculpture, highlighting the fact that Ai has been using Chinese Twitter for his activism. You can join the conversation by including @van\_biennale, #van\_biennale and @aiww in your tweet.✉

*F Grass*  
Harbor Green Park  
The public sculpture was unveiled on December 17, 2014 and will be in place for 12 months.

# Paying for secrets

by FLORENCE HWANG

Everyone has secrets, and some people have shared theirs anonymously through an online forum as part of a project called *PostSecret*. Three actors based in British Columbia will be telling these secrets on stage: Kahlil Ashanti, Nicolle Natrass and Ming Hudson.

*PostSecret: The Show* aims at engaging the audience through a crowd-sourced narrative of stories around the most sexual, sad, funny, controversial, hopeful and inspiring secrets.

The theatrical performance takes the audience on a visual, auditory and emotional journey of people's deepest fears, ambitions and confessions.

Vancouver-based artists TJ Dawe, Kahlil Ashanti and Justin Sudds teamed up with Frank Warren, creator of the popular website *PostSecret.com* in order to give unheard voices an audience. *PostSecret.com* has grown into a viral phenomenon, with over a half-billion visitors to date and a million anonymous secrets received.

### Strength in vulnerability

Nicolle Natrass, a performer, dramaturge and certified counsellor, says she absolutely loves TJ Dawe's work, particularly his solo shows. She was intrigued by the project. After she read the script and the *PostSecret* books, she felt incredibly moved.

"I feel like right now, this world needs this message," says Natrass.

She wanted to be involved because she loves the message the show delivers.

"This show really promotes communication, the power of the written word and healing – combined all in one," says Natrass,

who is keenly interested in each of these elements. She believes this type of show creates transformative possibilities in people's lives.

Natrass notes that even though much of people's online lives are isolated, there can be a strong community in an online forum, which she finds very powerful and moving.

"I think of secrets as being truth telling," she says.

She will be sharing some of

going through in your life, you can always find a secret that speaks to you.

As an actor in this piece, Hudson feels it's her job to give a voice to these words.

Hudson, who knows TJ Dawe from the University of Victoria, helped in the workshop development phase of the show in 2012. The show premiered in North Carolina in 2014. Hudson has since performed in the show in Cincinnati, Ohio and Saginaw, Michigan.



▲ One of the many secrets revealed.

these secrets in the show, but doesn't want to give them away at the moment.

### Secrets and healing

Ming Hudson, an emerging theatre artist and recent theatre graduate from the University of Victoria thinks there is a universal appeal for the show.

"*PostSecret* is a community of individuals that come together and share a part of themselves. Its strength comes from the bravery of the submitters to be vulnerable, and the support and recognition they receive from those reading their deepest, darkest secrets," Hudson says.

Hudson believes that one of the reasons *PostSecret* has been such a success is because no matter who you are or what you are

According to feedback from the last performance, having a personal secret read out loud, or hearing a secret close to one's own can give a person the power to make peace and finally release it.

"That is what live theatre gives to the *PostSecret* project, and that is why this production is so important to its community," Hudson says.

Hudson says being part of *PostSecret* was an absolutely life-changing experience, "It's not every day that theatre artists have the chance to work on a show that moves them in such a personal way."✉

*PostSecret: The Show* will be playing at the FireHall Arts Centre from January 20 to February 7.

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For All The World To See

# Cultural Calendar

January 13–27, 2015

by SALENA TRAN

Start your new year off right by attending different events around the Lower Mainland! January is packed with festivals, dance performances and much more. Embrace the diversity and enjoy fun activities while you're at it. There are no shortages of events, so don't let the weather keep you indoors!

\*\*\*

## Western Waters: The Royal Canadian Navy on Our Coast

Jan. 4–June 30  
Vancouver Maritime Museum  
1905 Ogden Ave., Vancouver  
vancouvermaritimemuseum.com  
604-737-8300

Learn about the brave men and women of the Canadian Navy at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. At this exhibition, you'll be able to explore and learn about the history of the Canadian Navy and all that they stand for. Western Waters includes individual stories and accomplishments of the Navy.

\*\*\*

## Public Talk with Gen-la Dekyong

Jan. 15, 7:30–9 p.m.  
Goldcorp Centre for the Performing Arts  
149 West Hastings St.,  
Simon Fraser University  
www.kmcvancouver.org

Have you ever wanted to learn to meditate? Do you enjoy the teachings of peace and freedom as demonstrated by Buddhists? If so, this is the event for you. Gen-la Dekyong is an experienced Buddhist nun who enjoys spreading positive energy through her inspirational teachings. This one day event includes a guided meditation and a discussion.

\*\*\*

## Art Theatre Company Presents: Bullet Catch

Jan. 15–Feb. 7  
Revue Theatre  
1601 Johnston St., Vancouver  
www.artsclub.com

Bullet Catch will surely leave you breathless with magic tricks and death-defying stunts. Playing only for a month at Revue Theatre, this is a show magic-lovers won't want to miss. Be astounded as Rob Drummond performs in-

tense stunts right in front of your very eyes. For more information on ticket pricing and scheduling, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Presents: New Music Festival

Jan. 15–18  
Orpheum Theatre  
601 Smithe St., Vancouver  
www.vancouversymphony.ca/festivals/14NMF  
604-876-3434

This three day affair is guaranteed to move music-lovers alike! The New Music Festival is held for a wide range of audiences, including critics and classical music lovers. The festival also includes pre-concert talks and discussions, as well as post-jazz cabarets. This annual event is not something contemporary music lovers would want to miss! For more information on scheduling and performances, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## Gord Grdina's Haram & Vashaan Persian Ensemble

Jan. 16, 7 p.m.  
Performance Works  
1218 Cartwright St., Vancouver  
www.caravanbc.com

Join the musical Persian ensemble at Vancouver's famous Granville Island. Celebrate Persian and Arabic culture with musical performances by Haram and the Vashaan ensemble. These two groups embrace their heritages and share it with their audiences. For more information on the groups and ticket prices, please visit the website.

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▲ Rob Drummond in Bullet Catch.



▲ Dancer Lisbeth Gruwez performing.

## Pacific Theatre Presents: Sideshow

Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m.  
Pacific Theatre  
1440 West 12th Ave., Vancouver  
www.pacifictheatre.org

This year's annual Pacific Theatre presentation is going musical! Sideshow is a night of improv fun with a musical bonus. This event is family friendly and is enjoyed annually by children and adults alike. Sing along with the improv groups, and prepare to laugh the night away. For more information on tickets, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## PuSh International Performing Arts Festival

Jan. 20–Feb. 8  
Multiple Venues, Vancouver  
www.pushfestival.ca  
604-605-8284

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival features over 200 performances from all around the world. This year's event includes performances, dinner and theatre experiences in partnership with Dine Out Vancouver; other free events and much more! There's something for everybody at this year's festival, so find something that interests you and celebrate the performing arts.

\*\*\*

## One Man, Two Guvnors

Jan. 22–Feb. 22  
Stanley Alliance Industrial Stage

2750 Granville St., Vancouver  
www.artsclub.com

This hilarious performance is guaranteed to bring laughter and enjoyment. One Man, Two Guvnors is a satire show that is a take on an older Italian comedy. The protagonist, Francis Henshall, lives his life trying to balance jobs and bosses, but he only has one thing on his mind: fish and chips! For more information on ticket pricing, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## Global Dance Connections: Lisbeth Gruwez/Voetvolk

Jan. 22–24, 8 p.m.  
Scotiabank Dance Centre  
677 Davie St., Vancouver  
www.thedancecentre.ca/events  
604-684-2787

Enjoy this dance performance by Lisbeth Gruwez from Belgium. In partnership with the PuSh festival, this 2 day performance is a spectacular showing of modern dance. Telling a story through dance and sound, Gruwez puts on a show that will leave you breathless. For more information on scheduling, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## Whistler Pride and Ski Festival

Jan. 24–31  
Multiple Venues, Whistler  
www.gaywhistler.com

Whistler's Pride and Ski Festival is jam packed with events, activities

and a lot of snow! Embrace diversity in Whistler's Olympic Village, and enjoy comedy shows, live music and a lot more. For more information on ticket pricing and packages, please visit the website.

\*\*\*

## Walk for Memories

Jan. 25, 1 p.m.  
Stanley Park Pavilion, Vancouver  
www.walkformemories.com  
604-681-6530/1-800-667-6742

Make a difference in the lives of over 70,000 British Columbians living with dementia by joining the Vancouver Investors Group Walk for Memories. The money you raise will support individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and dementia in our province. Register on the website or by phone. If you would like to volunteer for the event, call Daphne Tsai, Special Events Officer.

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## Cesna?em: The City Before the City

Jan. 25–Dec. 30  
Museum of Anthropology  
6393 NW Marine Dr., Vancouver  
www.thecitybeforethecity.com

The City Before the City is a three-venue exhibition that proudly tells the story of cesna?em, one of the largest ancient village and burial sites that Vancouver was built upon. Each exhibition, at Musqueam First Nation, Museum of Anthropology and Museum of Vancouver, shows the significance of this historical village. Learn more about cesna?em and the importance of oral history, language and the Musqueam First Nation's actions to protect cesna?em.

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## What Does it Mean to be Bicultural?

Jan. 26, 7 p.m.  
Simon Fraser University  
Third Floor Lounge,  
422 Richards St., Vancouver  
www.sfu.ca

Living in Vancouver, we encounter multiculturalism every day. In this lecture, the idea of biculturalism is explored. Questions raised include how people manage their cultural identities and what the effects of biculturalism are. Learn more about biculturalism and how it influences our lives and other cultures.

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# The Last Whaling Wall

If you're coming over the Granville Bridge into downtown, you'll be struck with the view of life-sized orcas on the side of the Continental Hotel. This is one of 100 famous murals or "Whaling Walls" created by US environmental artist, Wyland. The Wyland project of creating 100 whale murals began in the early 1980's and completed in 2008 at the Beijing Olympics with "Hands Across the Ocean," a nearly mile-long series of giant canvasses painted with kids from over 100 Olympic countries. The Wyland project spans five continents, 17 countries and 79 cities around the world. Wyland's goal is to inspire young people to be ambassadors of ocean conservation since he understands our oceans and waterways are in jeopardy. He has painted for more than 20 years with over one million children. His inspirational hero is B.C. artist Robert Bateman who also connects children with their natural environment.

The mural on the Continental is one of three in Vancouver. There is one at 1170 Melville Street, with the whales no longer visible due to new construction, and one at the Vancouver Aquarium, partially destroyed and no longer accessible to the public.

The Continental Hotel is currently undergoing demolition, which means the last of Wyland's intact whale murals in Vancouver will disappear. No one really seems to be mourning the loss of the Continental



Hotel itself. It was built in 1911 and designed by Parr & Fee, prolific architects and developers who worked together from 1899–1912. They designed seven more hotels on Granville St. within blocks of the Continental. Other notable buildings are Vancouver Block, Hotel Europe, Manhattan Apartments, Dunsmuir Hotel, Dufferin Hotel (now Moda) Glen Brae House, and the list goes on.

At the time the hotel was built False Creek was booming with industry. The CPR rail yards had been relocated there with repair facilities, and lumber was loaded

on to railway cars. There was a shingle mill, cooperage, cement works and sawmills. The Continental, like many of the hotels in the area such as the Cecil (now demolished) and the Yale, served to house the False Creek area workers. At one time it did have a saloon and it would be hard to imagine it did not operate as a prolific watering hole like its more infamous neighbours: the pubs at the Cecil and Yale hotels.

The Continental was acquired by the city of Vancouver around 1954 at the time of the construction of the third and current

Granville St. Bridge. It became literally surrounded by the bridge and its ramps. Subsequently it was operated as a social housing facility till 1992 when funding diminished. Finally, it was taken over by Property Endowment Fund and operated as single room rentals until the present time. Many of the 86 occupants have been moved to a hotel the city purchased in southeast Vancouver.

The Continental will likely be replaced by another high-rise as those being built around it, so there is a new boom of a sort in

the area. It's a neighbourhood in flux especially Granville St. which has tried to enliven itself as an entertainment area. We can see many of the old hotels on Granville in varying stages of renewal or decay. As our old buildings are destroyed, so is some of our history. We can't remake the past but let's hope we can save our future by not destroying what the whale mural represents even though it is crumbling along with the Continental.

Don Richardson

Recipe by Selma van Halder

## Japanese Onigiri

Japan holds a very special place in my heart. I've had the privilege to travel to this intriguing country several times, the first of which lasting a full summer, staying with a Japanese family when I was 15. Since the Japanese food that is most famous all across the world (sushi, ramen, sashimi, teppanyaki) is not generally consumed on a daily basis at home in Japan, I want to share with you a dish that is made often by Japanese moms to feed their families. It is incidentally also one of my favourites, if only for the warm memories eating these hold for me.

As this is a highly flexible dish, I will not provide a recipe, but rather a walk through of the process. Plain onigiri (rice balls) will keep well in the fridge for several days, in an airtight container. Add your toppings just before consuming, as a snack or light lunch, at home, school, or work. Once you get the hang of it you can go all out by shaping them like Hello Kitty heads or panda bears!

1. Prepare Japanese short grain (sushi) rice on a stovetop or

in your rice-cooker. Wash the rice twice before cooking it. Don't forget to salt the water.

2. Prepare your fillings. Fillings are all up to you. My favourite is flaked soy marinated grilled salmon. Also great are spicy tuna mayo or chicken teriyaki. Really, any leftover protein will make a lovely filling. Of course you can also opt for vegetarian fillings, such as spicy plum compote or avocado and Japanese mayo. You won't need a lot of filling for each of the balls; count on toony sized heaps per onigiri.

3. Fill the balls. Shaping takes a bit of practice, and perhaps a YouTube tutorial, but don't fear; they'll taste great anyway. The onigiri will be as big as the palm of your hand. This step will turn out best while the rice is still warm. Wet your hands with cold water, to prevent the rice from sticking to your fingers. Place a layer of rice on the palm of your left hand. Make a small indentation in the middle and fill it with your choice of filling. Place another layer of rice on top and



▲ Three Onigiri rice balls.

shape the ball into a triangle by cupping your left hand and cupping your right hand over it, your right pinky touching your left index finger. Roll the ball over in your hands a couple of times or use the countertop of your kitchen to help you with shaping.

4. Topping or wrapping the balls. Onigiri are traditionally wrapped in dried seaweed (nori), to add crunch, flavour,

and to make it easier to hold on to the sticky rice. Don't wrap the balls in seaweed too long before eating it; the seaweed will become soggy. Next to wrapping, you can get creative and use toppings. Toppings include sesame seeds, fried onions, or little bits of the filling. You can even pan fry the whole thing to give it a nice golden brown colour and some crunch. Itadakimasu!



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