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Community is central to all of us at Langara College. Whether you are a student, faculty, or a staff member, our campus thrives on the companionship that we lend one another. To be a Langaran means that you are part of a network of support. As we continue to celebrate our 49th year of operations on West 49th Avenue, it’s fitting that this issue of Pacific Rim Magazine features several community-focused stories.

Inside these pages you will read stories that are meaningful and that highlight connections in the community. You will find a feature by Marie Adamo with three profiles of Vancouver-based, female-owned businesses that each use a value-based model to give back to the communities they serve. In another story, author Kathleen Murdock examines the K–12 curriculum which has changed with the aim of including Indigenous perspectives and the need to honour our shared history. A third feature by Rachel Jackson studies the precarious nature of homelessness in Vancouver and offers hope in the search for a solution to this pressing issue.

Since last October, Langara has been celebrating our community and all those who have contributed to who we are over the last 49 years. We have exciting initiatives planned throughout this anniversary year, including the recognition of 49 Langarans—individuals who have positively impacted our institution, their field, or the broader community. On June 15, we will celebrate with Community Day presented by RBC Royal Bank. It will be a celebration with food, live music, tours, workshops, mini-reunions, and much more. Join us on campus to help us celebrate all that we have achieved in our first 49 years and what is to come Beyond 49.

I congratulate this year’s Publishing program students on this 31st edition of Pacific Rim Magazine. The issue that you hold in your hands is the result of months of hard work by our dedicated students. I wish them success in their future endeavours.

Lane Trotter, EdD
President and CEO
From the Publisher
Welcome to the 31st issue of *Pacific Rim Magazine*. *PRM* is written, designed, and produced by the students of the Langara Publishing program. Having designed and published several publications in my career, I am still in awe watching our students produce this magazine in their second semester of the program. Often an experienced magazine staff produces an issue in a matter of months; our students did the same while also learning and developing their skills.

As you read through *PRM*, I hope you will enjoy our stories. This year the theme is “Community Matters.” In this issue, the writers, editors, designers, illustrators, and photographers explore community. “A Better Measure of Success” showcases women entrepreneurs who are making their community better, “The Road Home” examines ways cities can help support homeless individuals, and “Untold Histories” looks at the implementation of Indigenous perspectives in BC’s curriculum. This year our students profiled several ambitious and creative individuals, including an illustrator, a novelist, a visual artist, a publisher, and a filmmaker. In keeping with the theme, our students have written articles on green community spaces, earthquake preparedness in BC, and community-based tourism.

It’s truly an honour to share this issue of *PRM* with you and I hope you will enjoy it.

Josué Menjivar
Publisher

From the Editors
As we selected content for this year’s issue of *Pacific Rim Magazine*, we noticed that a strong theme of community emerged in every story. As a group of diverse students from different backgrounds working together to create this magazine, we found that community stories resonated with us. Our differences strengthen us, and there is value in the intersections we share. As a team, we believe in making meaningful change, and we hope to connect with those around us through the art we create. We are grateful to celebrate artistic expression and to live, learn, and create on the unceded, ancestral, and occupied, traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Səl̓ílwətaʔ (Tsleil-Watuth), Stó:lō, Shíshálh (Sechelt) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations of the Coast Salish peoples. We are glad Langara College is working to strengthen relationships with the Indigenous Nations that welcome us as guests here.

For this issue, our writers were privileged to connect with interesting, creative, and gracious interview sources. This included educators, business owners, volunteers, and artists who aim to inspire change in their communities. *PRM* aims to honour both our cultural diversity and shared experiences—across BC and the Pacific Rim. We hope you will be inspired by the incredible individuals we had the joy of featuring this year and by the work of the creative, passionate students that make up *PRM*’s staff.

The Editorial Team

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In May 2014 Euge Leung created a digital illustration of a pug. Since then Puglie Pug has grown from a doodle to a brand and is now Leung’s full-time job.

Leung’s urge to draw “fat, stupid things, food, and something stuck helplessly in a doughnut” led to the birth of Puglie. He describes how two gruelling months of art block and anxiety ended when he cleared his mind and started drawing with no concept or expectations. “For the first time in my life, I looked at what I drew and laughed out loud and felt absolute joy seeing him,” Leung says. “Puglie came to life for me when he made me laugh. And that’s what fuels me to this day.”

Leung describes the first steps to merchandise Puglie as scary. He decided to take the leap of leaving his stable job as a procurement manager to pursue his entrepreneurial dream of growing the Puglie brand—a choice that terrified, motivated, inspired, and excited him. “I had to assure my mom that I was going to be okay when I announced that I was quitting my job to pursue Puglie,” he laughs. At the time he had no way of knowing that his illustrated pug would attract thousands of followers on social media.

“We grow up with this notion of stability that can be acquired by working a nine-to-five job,” Leung says, “but I’ve witnessed how people can lose their jobs out of nowhere.” Growing his business allowed him creative freedom. “I was finally free [by] my own personal standard,” he says.

Leung did not have connections in the art industry so he had to make them. Early on he joined the agency and online shop For Fans by Fans. “I always envisioned Puglie to be a vinyl toy and [to] one day have a presence in certain stores, like Hot Topic,” he says. Licensing and selling with For Fans by Fans comes with advantages for self-managed artists like Leung. The company connects him to conventions, gives him opportunities to network with other companies, and helps him create and sell more merchandise. “They really care about Puglie and what my goals for [him] are,” he says. “It’s non-exclusive, so I get to keep my freedom of direction.”

Leung’s growing fame has not come without a price. Such sudden growth means Leung has a heavy workload. As the sole creator of Puglie, he cannot delegate to anyone. He describes having to learn “the basics of bookkeeping, accounting, banking,
and laws on intellectual property, business, and contracts,” but says it is “not so much a challenge as it is just growing pains.” Now that his main revenue comes from attending conventions and art exhibitions, Leung spends less time on illustration. “Drawing is really about 10 per cent of my overall work week,” he says. Most of his time is spent “juggling responsibilities that actual companies would have dedicated people to work on.”

Leung says that despite all the stress he has experienced during his transition from art to business, he would not change a thing. He values art as a hobby and passion, whether or not it results in monetary gain. Despite all his hardships, Leung has never felt more fulfilled.

“I don’t see myself retiring ever,” he says. “I really love conventions, because I get to meet and thank fans. It’s a really endearing experience to witness others be just as happy about Puglie as I am. I love creating and producing and putting more things back into the world than I take, and that’s kind of my life goal.”

Left: Creating Puglie allowed Euge Leung to turn his passion for art into a fulfilling full-time job. Above: Puglie Pug has evolved from an illustration to merchandise that Leung sells at conventions.

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Fearless Fiction

Novelist Chelsea Rooney confronts the uncomfortable in hopes of changing perspectives

Story Marie Adamo
Photography Nicola Erricson
Illustration Valeria Valdeiglesias

When she was in seventh grade in rural Nova Scotia, Chelsea Rooney was assigned to research what she wanted to be when she grew up. An internet search of the term “professional writer” on her family computer led to her discovery of the creative writing program at the University of British Columbia. She set her goal then, at twelve years old. Though Rooney was initially discouraged by her teachers and guidance counsellor from leaving her home and moving across the country, this only strengthened her resolve. “They kept telling me, ‘it’s too far, you’ve never even been to the campus. Go somewhere nearby,’” she says. Six years later determination and a rebellious nature brought her to Vancouver, where she went on to earn a bachelor of fine arts and a master of fine arts in creative writing.

It was this same determination that led to the completion and publication of her first novel, Pedal, which was published by Caitlin Press in 2014. The novel was originally her master’s thesis, though her initial concept evolved dramatically over time. She planned to write a non-fiction book about sustainable farming practices across Canada, but she kept finding her focus and research drifting toward—as Mary Schendlinger of Geist put it—“severe social taboos” and the complex topic of sexual abuse. With graduation quickly approaching, Rooney decided to trust her instincts. “I don’t think I would have pursued this scary idea that I had to work through a lot of personal stuff for if there wasn’t that pressure,” she says. Nonetheless it requires bravery for a first-time novelist to take on the topics of sexual abuse, incest, and pedophilia. As Brett Josef Grubisic of The Vancouver Sun wrote in his review of Pedal, Rooney “ought to be commended for perceptively addressing such a difficult and inflammatory (and decidedly uncommercial) topic.”

At a time when she needed reassurance, Rooney took advice from her step-dad and committed to the subject. “He said, ‘You have to ask yourself: has this book been written before?’” she recalls. “I realized I was trying to do something that I knew...
could be done. And I needed to not worry about that and write something I was driven to write.”

Luckily she didn’t have to do it alone. After reading her first draft, her thesis advisor and award-winning novelist, Keith Maillard, told her: “Congratulations for writing something that I can’t stop reading. We’re going to make this into something you can get published.” While Rooney does not think school is essential for prospective writers, believing that as an art “there’s not a ‘right’ way to do it,” connections definitely are. “In Canada, because the writing industry is so small, you really need to know someone who is championing you. Or you need to get very, very lucky,” she says.

Rooney forges her connections by participating in her local literary community. She has been a contributor on The Storytelling Show podcast, a moderator at Growing Room: A Feminist Literary Festival in Vancouver, and she teaches at Openstudio Academy of Art and Design. While she does not think you can teach how to write, she hopes to “facilitate writing and give people time and space and encouragement,” as her teachers did for her.

As for what is next, Rooney believes the answer to that question will always be “the next novel.” She says, ultimately, “I needed someone to tell me I could write a book. And now I know I can write a book.” Now, she is only a few weeks away from finishing her second novel. Though she declines to share what it is about, she says, “I’m putting a lot of pressure on myself, but the world is on fire … I want to publish something meaningful.”

“I needed someone to tell me I could write a book. And now I know I can write a book.”

Rooney in Vancouver.

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Spartacus Books is a radical, volunteer-run, not-for-profit bookstore. They carry books on feminism, labour, Marxism, incarceration, and radical theory. They also have a massive selection of local and non-local zines, local authors’ self-published work, and more.

Alexander Daughtry, a volunteer at Spartacus Books since 1976, says that Spartacus has stayed non-sectarian since they began. They cater to anybody in search of positive social change, though many of their visitors may just be looking for a good book.

Spartacus also offers a free event space. The shelves are on wheels and can be cleared to accommodate up to 30 people. Daughtry says the space is used for weekly movie nights, as well as a monthly accordion night: “It’s an open night for people to come and play accordions together [called] Squeezebox Circle.” He also describes a writer’s group called Writers for Utopia that has “produced three science-fiction collections from their meetings here.” Authors, self-published or not, can hold readings or book signings. The space is free of charge, and anybody can book and use it.

River Brooks, a past volunteer, believes that Spartacus will be gone in a few years, as that is what is happening to many small bookstores. But Spartacus is more than the average bookstore. “This is a resource of people,” Daughtry says.

Spartacus began as a book table run by students at Simon Fraser University in 1972. It was such a success that a year later it became a bookstore located above a pool hall. Within two years, Spartacus moved to 311 West Hastings Street, where the store operated for 30 years. It burned down in 2004, and as they could not afford fire insurance, they lost everything. This included old materials that detailed the history of Spartacus Books.

Despite the apparent hopelessness of their situation, they were able to begin again with support from the community and thousands of donated books. Eventually the rising cost of rent forced them out of their neighbourhood. Since May 2014 Spartacus Books resides on Findlay Street, down the street from the Croatian Cultural Centre off Commercial Drive. Daughtry says their position under the SkyTrain line keeps their rent down but at the cost of lower visibility.

Spartacus is a great place to volunteer. They are welcoming to all who join their collective and treat those who work with them as equal partners. They are always looking for volunteers and donations in the form of books to sell or funds to help them pay the rent. Spartacus is more than just a bookstore; it is a unique volunteer-run gathering space and a great community-within-the-community. Places like these are a rarity in Vancouver—let’s hope Spartacus Books sticks around for another 30 years.
Asia Youngman sat nervously in a theatre at Toronto’s 2017 imagineNative Film + Media Arts Festival, the world’s largest showcase of Indigenous film. Her first film was about to premiere: a short documentary titled *Lelum’* (the Hul’q’umi’num’ word for “home”). Surrounded by a sea of strangers, Youngman felt vulnerable wondering how they would react. To her surprise, *Lelum’* won the award for Best Documentary Short. “It was such a proud and rewarding experience,” she says. “I knew I had to continue making films to represent my people and tell our stories.”

As a person of Cree, Haudenosaunee, and Métis heritage, Youngman hopes to inspire women and Indigenous youth with her work. But she wants to tell more than just stories defined by her cultural identity, and she has many to tell.

**Forging a Path**

Five years ago Youngman could not have predicted her current success. Her first real job in the film industry was as a production assistant to the acclaimed documentary...
filmmaker Nettie Wild. When the film premiered, Youngman watched excitedly as the credits rolled. Eventually, her name appeared on the screen; it was misspelled. She laughed it off but the experience motivated her to forge her own path.

“I was so grateful for the experience,” she says. “But I decided, if I wanted to direct something, I needed to get out there and do it myself.”

An observant and reflective person, Youngman says she was always intrigued by photography and film. She realized that visual expression could help her find her voice and even empower others. “I’ve always been an extremely visual person,” she explains, “so I feel like expressing myself through film allows me to share my thoughts and opinions to the best of my ability.”

After completing her bachelor of arts at the University of Victoria in 2013, Youngman began working for the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), where she used film to develop online Indigenous youth wellness programs. She filmed, edited, and assisted in the production of online videos that, according to the PHSA website, are meant to “empower youth, encourage culture, and promote wellness.” Youngman travelled to communities across BC to lead youth workshops on how to film and edit videos. Her time at PHSA inspired her to take a leap and return to school full-time at Vancouver Film School (VFS) in 2016.

During her studies at VFS, she began to create Lelum’. The documentary, which is narrated by Indigenous youth, features aerial shots of the BC landscape that Youngman grew up in. The film is described by imagineNative as a film that “portrays the strength and beauty of the land … that speak[s] to our inherent responsibility to protect and show respect for our home.”

“I am constantly inspired by the landscape here,” Youngman says, “and feel so fortunate to live, work, and grow as a filmmaker here on the traditional and unceded land of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.”

Changing the Industry

Lelum’ made a name for Youngman locally and internationally. In 2018 she was selected by the Māoriland Film Festival to take part in a 72-hour filmmaking challenge in New Zealand. There she co-directed the short drama and comedy Te Kaitiaki (Māori for “guardian”). That same year Youngman co-directed In The Valley Of Wild Horses, a short documentary which premiered at the 37th Vancouver International Film Festival (VIFF) and continues to screen at festivals around the world. The documentary follows Chief Jimmy Lulua and the Xeni Gwet’in First Nation as they travel 200 kilometres by horse and wagon from Nemiah Valley to the famous Williams Lake Stampede “to honour a 94-year tradition of inclusion, trade, and relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples,” according to VIFF’s summary.

In an interview with Shelley Joyce of CBC Kamloops, Youngman said “a huge part of the film was representation” and that she hopes people will learn about different Indigenous communities in BC from the story.

Individual Indigenous Nations are not often able to represent themselves in Canadian mainstream media. In his book Elements of Indigenous Style, Dr. Gregory Younging explains that Indigenous Peoples in Canada are diverse, distinct cultures. There is no one universal Indigenous perspective, so multiple perspectives are needed in the film industry to represent Indigenous Peoples in Canada in an authentic way.

Youngman dreams of a day where Indigenous perspectives are woven into every part of the film industry. Youngman dreams of a day where Indigenous perspectives are woven into every part of the film industry.
“For so many years we’ve been told that it’s not okay to be Indigenous, but the reality is that we come from such a beautiful culture that deserves to be acknowledged and celebrated,” she says.

**What’s Next?**

Although Youngman’s films portray and empower Indigenous Peoples, her ideas for future films are not limited to cultural expression. “I don’t want to do what people expect in terms of the films that I create,” she explains. Youngman plans to write and direct dynamic films, including a science-fiction thriller centred on technology with an Indigenous lead. “I would [also] love to write and direct a love story or a family drama where the characters happen to be Indigenous, but not make the central focus of the story about them being Indigenous,” she says.

Youngman’s chances of bringing these ideas to the screen look promising. She was recently one of eight women selected by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for a six-month apprenticeship for emerging female directors. “It’s an incredible initiative to give women more opportunities and experience through mentorship,” she explains. Youngman believes having women in the director’s chair is essential to promote a “safe and respectful environment for women to create and feel equal,” and to ensure they are portrayed accurately on screen.

Youngman is set to bring new stories to the screen in 2019, and she continues to pursue her goal of inspiring women and Indigenous youth. She is currently in post-production for a short documentary she directed for CBC on revitalizing traditional Indigenous tattoo practices, and the development of her first feature-length documentary is underway.

Youngman wants to transform the film industry and is willing to break barriers and defy expectations to do it. In many ways, she is like the strong Indigenous superhero she dreamed of seeing as a child. It is hard to imagine that Asia Youngman’s name will be misspelled on anything she helps create again.
As a Vancouver-based visual artist, Jenny Hawkinson never saw herself becoming a filmmaker. However, her recent visual art piece, Waver, uses film to explore themes of home in spaces of conflict. In the piece, she gave participants a white flag with the words “Homeland,” “Homesick,” and “Homeless” on it. Participants used the flag in various ways: they raised it over a makeshift shelter as a statement of belonging, they marched it through Stanley Park, and they hung it from places as disparate as streetlamps and boat masts. Hawkinson filmed it all. “The artwork is the flag,” she says, but for her, the work “needs to be engaged.”

Hawkinson’s most recent show, I Am Here Too, ran from October 1 to December 19, 2018, in the Vancouver Civic Theatres Annex. The show explored street communication and the messages that people leave behind. “People don’t really notice the graffiti or see what it says,” Hawkinson explains. She wanted to draw attention to the street-art messages that get ignored, so she embroidered some of these messages on white doilies with red thread using Old English lettering. The doilies were hung in frames with slogans like “I am validating my own existence” embroidered in the
Blackletter forms. They were hung alongside a series of plein air drawings, or “field notes” as Jenny calls them, of tents set up in Oppenheimer Park and throughout the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver.

The plein air drawings gave Hawkinson an opportunity to engage with the community in a direct way, but this came with its challenges. “I’m basically a captive audience,” she says; Hawkinson describes trying to draw a tent while someone engaged her in conversation. Eventually she took a short break from the drawing to talk with them. When she came back to her work, the tent was gone.

Still, the struggle for community is why she makes art; even when Hawkinson travels abroad, she is drawn to places in conflict. Most recently she has made a number of trips to Belfast, where she has been doubling down on her filmmaking. “Everywhere I’ve been,” she says, “I feel like, who am I to talk about this?” However, she often finds that being an outsider gives her a way in. She talks about meeting Irish Catholics and Protestants who still carry The Troubles with them 20 years after the Good Friday Agreement. Her orange hair notwithstanding, they hear her Northwestern accent and know she is safe to talk to. “I used to think I wanted to make art about peacekeeping,” Jenny says, reflecting on her desire to solve conflicts. Now she says she finds it “more important to ask questions than offer solutions.”

Hawkinson uses her trips to Belfast to gather materials to make art at home. On her most recent trip, she collected sketches of fences and rubbings of plaques, manholes, gravestones, and various bits of text carved in stone and cement. The process was deeply rooted in the history of the region. In the nineteenth century, Belfast became an important manufacturer of linen, earning the name “Linenopolis.” As a textile artist, Jenny saw the connection to her work immediately and made her graphite rubbings on white linen.

Back in her studio in Vancouver, that wealth of material has been a challenge. “I couldn’t figure out how it was going to work,” she says. “I just need to do the work.” That meant taking those raw materials and, as she puts it, “tearing the fabric up and sewing them back together.” The way she describes it sounds like the proliferation of cell-division, but what she will distill from that, be it textiles, films, paintings, or something else entirely, is a closely guarded secret.

Every time she returns to Belfast, Jenny continues her collaboration with the artistic community there. And it seems she cannot get enough of that collaboration; when asked if she will return, Jenny responds, “I’m going back in October.”

Left: Artist Jenny Hawkinson uses mixed media and participant engagement in her work. Above: Sketches and rubbings on white linen, collected from the streets of Belfast.
The DIY mentality never goes away, but instead passes in waves from underground to mainstream in response to people’s need to make, mend, and share.

Amber Morrison is an emerging contemporary artist from Nanaimo, BC, who is pursuing her need to create. She graduated from Vancouver Island University with a bachelor of arts in visual art and creative writing, and is now the managing editor, graphic designer, and publisher of her own online art and poetry magazine, Sad Girl Review.

Morrison released the first issue of Sad Girl Review on July 5, 2018, after a two-month submission, editorial, and design process. She says, in retrospect “I had the skills to create it but I lacked a proper workflow,” so there were a “few sleepless nights.” Morrison wanted to make something that “elevated women’s content” and was not “reductive about the complexity of the feminine experience.”

“I knew I wanted to work with other artists and writers, but I found [my] local arts community was very limited,” Morrison says, while an online magazine “could reach out to creative people on a much larger scale.” The format allows her to present work on very specific themes.

Sad Girl Review explores all aspects of being, which Morrison thinks are not tackled in popular media. “When I was younger, I really wanted to like magazines like Cosmopolitan and Vanity Fair, but I couldn’t,” she explains. The pursuit of feminine complexity is reflected in her magazine’s content, which ranges from memes, to poems about love and sex, to explorations of mental health and trauma. Melancholy, delight, boredom, and rage are explored; nothing is off the table. “I’m looking for work that does something different, has an element of surprise, and is generally approachable,” she says.

Morrison cites artist Francesca Woodman as “foundational to the concept of Sad Girl Review. She’s both the subject and object of her own photographs,” and she “chooses how you get to see her.” When Morrison looks at submissions, she says she is “keenly aware that the female-identifying people that submit are, to a greater or
Morrison finds the design process satisfying, as she says it allows her to make “shapes fit together in some new and thoughtful way.” Her own art shines in the first issue. The bright saturated hues of her unusually edited photos, which are aesthetically hard and soft at the same time, act as the backdrop for submitted poems and art. It is truly the collaboration between artists that Morrison envisioned.

The second issue of Sad Girl Review features handwritten content. Morrison lets the work stand on its own merit, with a simple design and bylines written out on kraft paper. It includes collections of photos and scans of poems, lists, notes, diary entries, art, and collages; they are all done by hand to “strike a balance between the private act of writing and the public act of display.”

Morrison feels lucky that Sad Girl Review has “resonated with writers, artists, and readers from the start. I tried to create a beautiful, girly platform that I’d feel at home in, and it turns out that other people wanted that too.” She would love to expand into print, have merchandise available for sale, and publish poetry chapbooks and zines. The theme of the current issue is failure. The theme of the next issue will be crush (both physical and emotional). The magazine is available to read on Issuu and to download from the magazine’s website, sadgirlreview.com.

The second issue of Sad Girl Review features hand-done visual and literary works.
A Community Prepared

Due for a predicted major earthquake, the BC town of Anacla draws on community strength to prepare.

The small village of Anacla lies on the west coast of Vancouver Island, on Pachena Bay, at the edge of the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve. The Huu-ay-aht First Nation has lived here for centuries, but the spectre of something ominous hangs over the village. Anacla is adjacent to the Cascadia subduction zone and, according to Earthquakes Canada, close to the predicted epicentre of BC’s next megathrust earthquake.

The last earthquake that measured over 9.0 magnitude in BC occurred in 1700; it shook the coast to its foundations and sent a tsunami as far away as coastal Japan. In 1964 Chief Louis Nookmis of the Huu-ay-aht First Nation recorded the oral history of the 1700 earthquake, which had been passed down over seven generations. He described the earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck on a winter night, as well as the loss of almost everyone in Pachena Bay.

Urban Preparedness

When asked what would happen in the event of a 9.0-magnitude earthquake in Vancouver, Ann Pacey of Dunbar Earthquake and Emergency Preparedness (DEEP), responds immediately: “Pandemonium.” She says the effects of such an earthquake would be catastrophic to buildings but even more so to infrastructure. Pacey believes that although issues persist, buildings have generally been “built to good codes” in BC in anticipation of a megathrust earthquake.

Infrastructure, however, presents larger problems. “We’ve got a lot of isolation issues,” she says, explaining that if there is a big earthquake, infrastructure, and particularly bridges, “will need to be inspected before [they] can be opened again. It could take days, it could take weeks.” That means many communities will be left to fend for themselves in the event of a major earthquake.

Further inland and on Vancouver Island, Pacey feels the outlook is somewhat better. She believes that communities that have become accustomed to dealing with BC’s rampant forest fires will be better equipped to
respond to earthquakes. Additionally, smaller towns tend to have a better sense of community connectedness, which Pacey sees as the first line of defence in any emergency scenario.

Vancouver does not have the advantages of that kind of close-knit community and the upheavals caused by Vancouver’s housing crisis can make the development of cohesiveness more difficult. Pacey says the same is true in bedroom communities on Vancouver Island and commuter towns in general, where community connections have not had a chance to develop.

Close-knit Community
Anacla, with a population of around 80 people, has the advantage of being a close-knit community, but they also have a thorough emergency preparedness strategy. Chief Councillor Robert Dennis of the Huu-ay-aht First Nation recalls when, in the late 1990s, the council considered a new community centre in Anacla. “One of our Elders got up at a community meeting and reminded us of the tsunami… that wiped out our village, the one in the 1700s. And they said to the community, ‘I don’t think we should build down there anymore. We should start building our infrastructure and our community and move it to higher ground,’” he says. According to Dennis, that reminder, combined with warnings from geologists, prompted the Huu-ay-aht First Nation to take action.

The first thing that the Elder recommended at the community meeting was building a place where people could be housed safely in the event of a tsunami. The House of Huu-ay-aht, completed in 2000, was built to be that place. Dennis describes it as “a community hall with the ability to become an evacuation center,” as it is equipped with enough emergency supplies to last everyone in Anacla three weeks. According to Dennis, specific emergency kits are allotted for each household and each is labelled with the names of the residents.

By contrast, the City of Vancouver has instituted the Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP), which focuses on individual and family preparedness. According to Pacey, this is the lowest level of emergency preparedness as it leaves the communities as a whole without a plan. Pacey is a member of another program, the Neighbourhood Emergency Assistance Team (NEAT), which trains volunteers to help professional first responders in the event of earthquakes or other disasters. According to the City of Vancouver website, both of these programs are not currently accepting volunteers. Moreover, Pacey says that so far only 600 to 700 people have been trained by NEAT. This is only a “handful of people versus a population of 700,000 permanent [residents],” Pacey says, adding that during events and work days there are “maybe a couple million people that are actually in the downtown Vancouver core area.” It is clear that 600 to 700 people is not enough to ensure everyone’s safety.
Making Headway
According to Pacey, DEEP has made great headway. They have developed working models for emergency response, equipped the Dunbar Community Centre, and even run a series of live drills. The response from the city, however, has been less than encouraging.

Coupled with the lack of opportunities for training, earthquake preparedness does not seem to be a priority for Vancouver. But it should be. The geological record and oral history of the region tell us we should be expecting another megathrust earthquake in the near future. In Anacla, where the history of the earthquake in 1700 has been passed on for centuries, the Huu-ay-aht First Nation are ready for the worst. This is a community that has taken the science and their history seriously.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARTHQUAKES IN BC
Story Nolan Nadeau
British Columbians are due for a 9.0-magnitude earthquake sometime in the not-too-distant future. According to Natural Resources Canada, the geological record of the coast indicates that 13 such earthquakes have taken place over the last 6,000 years. The period between them is irregular but varies from 200 to 600 years. This means there is roughly a 1-in-10 chance of an earthquake in the next 50 years.

Japanese historical records describe the arrival of an unexplained tsunami in 1700CE. Centuries later a link between this tsunami and a massive earthquake in BC was established in the 2005 study The Orphan Tsunami of 1700: Japanese Clues to a Parent Earthquake in North America. Wave-height estimates from Japan show that the earthquake was over 9.0 in magnitude, strong enough to send a devastating tsunami across the Pacific Ocean.

Natural Resources Canada records that one of the most damaging earthquakes in BC history was the 1946 Vancouver Island earthquake, clocking in at around 7.3 magnitude. It was felt from Prince Rupert to Portland and caused extensive property damage on Vancouver Island. However, this earthquake was minor in comparison to the events that preceded it and those forecasted in the future.
Untold Histories

BC’s K–12 curriculum now includes Indigenous perspectives and history but a collective commitment is required to foster meaningful change.

In a middle-school auditorium in Cranbrook, BC, Faye O’Neil guides students through an interactive educational activity called the Kairos Blanket Exercise. Blankets represent Indigenous land and are slowly taken away as the students role-play and re-enact history. When the activity is finished, O’Neil, an Aboriginal education coordinator and member of the Ktunaxa Nation, invites students to share their thoughts. (continued on next page)
She recalls one response she got from a ninth grader. “A student put her hand up and said, ‘we already learned this in grade seven. I’m tired of having this stuff shoved down our throats.’”

This response was not unusual prior to the implementation of BC’s new curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 in 2015, according to O’Neil. After a three-year trial that included feedback from teachers, the Ministry of Education implemented a curriculum that acknowledges the changing world and workforce. Among the many changes was the mandatory inclusion of Indigenous perspectives, culture, and history in every subject from language arts to math.

“This is untold history. This is the stuff they didn’t teach in history textbooks,” O’Neil says. “This is the truth. Now that we have the truth, how do we incorporate that into classrooms?”

First Steps
In 2007 educators began to include Indigenous perspectives in schools. The First Nations Education Steering Committee created and published the First Peoples Principles of Learning. One principle is “learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.” The Principles informed the design of English First Peoples courses and would later help shape the redesign of BC’s K–12 curriculum.

English First Peoples courses fulfill the Ministry of Education’s English requirement for Grades 10–12 and feature exclusively Indigenous content. All materials, including literature and film, are created by Indigenous peoples. Since 2008 many schools have begun to offer the course.

Elders from the Ktunaxa Nation, including O’Neil’s mother, frequently sit in on English First Peoples courses to answer students’ questions. O’Neil’s mother shares her experience as a Survivor of the Canadian Indian Residential School (IRS) system in classrooms across the Kootenays.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 2008 with a mandate of engaging in “a multi-year process to listen to Survivors, communities, and others affected by the Residential School system.” The TRC describes Canada’s residential schools as institutions that “separated Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages.”
An Erased History

In 2015 the TRC published 94 recommendations, or Calls to Action, to advance reconciliation. This included the call for the development of “culturally appropriate curricula” for Grades K–12. Prior to the development of English First Peoples 10–12 and these calls to action, there was scarce mention of the IRS system in Canadian classrooms or in society at large.

Many Canadian citizens are still unaware of the existence of residential schools in Canada though, according to the TRC, the last one closed in 1996.

“I don’t know if I was [angrier] at myself or at the system,” Darryl Penny, an elementary school teacher in Delta, says of not having known about residential schools until well into his teaching career. Penny has been a teacher for 20 years but did not learn about the existence of residential schools in Canada until 2010. He thinks that the Canadian government effectively hid or “erased” our shared history.

Penny says he wants his students to understand that they are “part of a bigger community.” He knows that Indigenous content is important but is not sure it is seen as a priority for some teachers as they adapt to the new curriculum. “Is it mandatory to teach [Indigenous content] in every subject? Yes,” Penny says. “But are all teachers incorporating it across every subject? I doubt it.”

A Shift in Perspective

Teaching certification programs in BC made the inclusion of Indigenous content mandatory in 2012. With this change, Davidson noticed a shift in how her course was received. “I wasn’t always having to defend why it was so important to learn,” Davidson says. “People at least recognized that they needed to know [this content] to engage with the new curriculum.”

Rather than question why they needed to learn it, many teachers started to ask how they could incorporate the content. Some “expressed feeling terrified of teaching

A Collective Decision

The inclusion of Indigenous content was not the only change to the updated curriculum. The many new elements reflect the ever-changing, fast-paced world that children are immersed in today, according to the government’s “BC’s New Curriculum” website. Reading, writing, and math are still the main focus, but more attention is paid to the development of useful life skills like “collaboration, critical thinking, and communications.” The flexible-learning lesson plans are designed so that students will understand larger concepts instead of merely memorizing facts. The website also says the new curriculum was developed with input from over 200 teachers nominated by the BC Teachers’ Federation, the Federation of Independent School Associations, and the First Nations Schools Association.

Sara Florence Davidson, PhD, says it is important for people to know that the curriculum was a “collective decision.” She says a common attitude she has encountered is that “Indigenous Peoples ‘made’ the curriculum change, and therefore we—as Indigenous Peoples—are responsible for providing education to teachers to help them teach this.”

Davidson is a scholar and educator of mixed Haida ancestry currently teaching at the University of the Fraser Valley. She has extensive experience helping teachers and teacher candidates bring Indigenous content, perspectives, and pedagogies into their classrooms.

“As Indigenous people, we have a choice about how we are going to engage with this,” Davidson explains. “We should [never] be pressured or directed to engage in a way that we are uncomfortable with. I choose to do this work because I believe in the importance of contributing.”

Before the curriculum change, when Davidson taught prospective teachers Indigenous education courses at the University of British Columbia, she says “there was a lot of resistance.” Many teacher candidates would ask why they had to learn Indigenous content. “A lot of my time was spent defending the course when I was actually [there] to teach the course.”
Davidson’s book can help teachers honour and understand Indigenous culture.

Changes within the curriculum may help Indigenous youth feel that they are seen.
literature by Indigenous authors” will “start transforming perspectives.”

Davidson recently spoke with a teacher who will teach the novel Indian Horse, by Indigenous author Richard Wagamese, in their English course. “Indian Horse being taught in a non-First Peoples course is really exciting,” she says. Blending Indigenous and non-Indigenous content recognizes our shared history and honours the contribution of Indigenous Peoples. As Davidson says, it is a step toward “creating partnerships and moving forward together.”

According to the TRC, for reconciliation to happen there must be “awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” The new curriculum is a small step toward healing and repairing relationships through education, but increased awareness and mutual understanding must be a priority. According to CBC’s website Beyond 94, which provides up-to-date status reports, only 10 of the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action have been fully implemented. We must make meaningful changes to create respectful relationships and address the past, present, and future.

“I have to believe that people who have accurate information and knowledge about history will change the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people because of the work that I do,” Davidson says.

Faye O’Neil acknowledges the importance of the inclusion of Indigenous history in the curriculum. “It’s in writing,” she says. “It’s there; it can’t be washed away.”

Change starts in the classroom.
The Road Home

Cities in the Pacific Northwest attempt to cope with the homelessness crisis

Story Rachel Jackson
Photography Philipp Abromeit
Taylor Vander Baaren
Joseph Zhou
The last time Amanda Jones saw her younger sister Amy was September 17, 2017. On that day “I went looking for her, combing East Hastings, which is like trying to find a needle in a haystack,” she says. “I was in the Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre and had just given up for the day. I left a message for Amy to call me and as I turned to leave, she walked through the door from the street, almost right into me. For a split second I almost didn’t recognize her.”

After spending some time together, “we made plans to meet up the following weekend. Then I hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, and we said ‘I love you.’ And that was it.” Amanda is a mother of two who lives in Nanaimo, BC, and attends Vancouver Island University. She is passionate about addressing the homelessness crisis and has “learned by personal experience the consequences of trauma and untreated mental health issues.” Her younger sister has been dealing with homelessness since 2016.

A Matter of Survival

The 2018 Vancouver Homeless Count found 2,181 people living on the streets or in shelters in the city alone, the highest count on record. The year prior, another count coordinated by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association reported the homeless population in all of Metro Vancouver to be 3,605. As the Final Report of the count states, all homeless counts underestimate the population. Not all homeless people are visible on the day of the count, either by choice or logistical inability of volunteers to be everywhere at once. Ethel Whitty, the director of Homelessness Services for the City of Vancouver and former director of the Carnegie Community Centre, attributes the number of homeless people to high rents and a lack of available housing.

Yet many choose to stay in Vancouver. “It’s a matter of survival,” Whitty says. Finding a rental is difficult without a current address and regardless, “people on income assistance have $375 a month to pay for rent. That doesn’t get you a room anywhere in the lower mainland.” At least in Vancouver people can make use of the services offered in the Downtown Eastside.

As the homelessness crisis worsens, Vancouver must look south of the border to its Pacific Northwest neighbours, Seattle and Portland. Their successes and failures could suggest new ways of coping with homelessness.

Portland City Council declared a housing emergency in 2015, following what the official ordinance describes as a “more than 30 per cent increase in average rents” since 2010. In response, the Multnomah County Chair, Deborah Kafoury, instituted no-turn-away shelters throughout the county. According to his Seattle Times article, “Portland wanted to shelter every homeless family. The plan backfired, but it offers lessons for Seattle,”
Scott Greenstone reports that there were no limitations on where people could come from to use these shelters. This resulted in the policy ending “with a blown budget, overflowing family shelters, and nearly 100 families staying in motels, with the county footing the bill.”

The 2017 Point in Time Count reported that while there are higher numbers of homeless people in Multnomah County, the number of people sleeping on the streets has “dropped nearly 12 per cent since 2015” and the “unsheltered population count is the lowest it has been since 2009.” Portland City Council voted to extend the state of emergency several times since the original declaration according to council ordinances, most recently in February 2019, to divert more funds into housing solutions.

The state of emergency spurred organizations to increase efforts. A Home For Everyone is a Portland homelessness reduction strategy that provides shelter in the form of “publicly funded year-round beds” as well as transitioning people to permanent housing. Between January 2016 and the 2017 count, more than 600 shelter beds were added, “nearly doubling” what was previously available. JOIN, an outreach program in Portland, reported on their website that they helped “895 individuals transition from homelessness to permanent housing” in 2016, including “160 families caring for 303 children.”

While these efforts are promising, they are not enough to keep up with demand. According to the City of Portland’s “Homelessness/Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program,” strategies are in place to manage the homelessness crisis until more long-term solutions are reached. It’s a matter of time and resources.

The All Home King County’s “Strategic Plan,” a 10-year plan to end homelessness, successfully helped almost 40,000 people out of homelessness from 2005 to 2015. The election of socialist Kshama Sawant to city council in 2013 may have helped Seattle’s housing situation. In 2014 Seattle was among the first US cities to commit to the goal of a $15US minimum wage. With incremental increases, the city projects that by 2021 all employees will earn a minimum of $15US per hour, according to Seattle’s Minimum Wage Ordinance. Yet Seattle and the surrounding King County found 12,112 homeless in their 2018 homeless count, with 52 per cent living unsheltered.

In May 2018 a head tax on employees was passed that would “raise at least $45 million over five years” for supportive infrastructure for the homeless population. Eric M. Johnson reports for Reuters that the tax was repealed less than a month later due to pushback from large corporations, in his article “Seattle City Council repeals ‘head tax’ weeks after enactment.”

A Place to Call Home

Sheltering people is not enough; it is not a permanent solution. To fully transition out of homelessness, one needs a place to call home.

Whitty thinks ‘home’ is a matter of autonomy. To have your own space, “your own bathroom, to have your own kitchen, to provide for yourself, to not be dependent on others to provide you meals, for instance. Just to be able to make your own cup of tea in Carnegie Community Centre provides many services to the residents of the Downtown Eastside.
“… to have your own kitchen, to provide for yourself, to not be dependent on others to provide you meals, for instance. Just to be able to make your own cup of tea in the morning. These are really important things for a person to feel like they can get back on their feet and start to live a life of dignity.”

Anne Roberts, retired Vancouver city councilor and journalist, ran with Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE) in the 2018 City Council election. She thinks that the housing discussion should focus on “the plight of tenants, renters, and homeless people,” as so many are “right on the edge of not being able to afford their housing.” Roberts believes that housing should be a government issue, and the current system focuses too much on profit margins rather than creating the affordable housing solutions Vancouver desperately needs. “I do think we need to set up a public system so that enough housing can be created,” she says. “It’s a human right … it should not be a charity.”

Until there is a significant change in government policies, programs like Carnegie Centre Outreach continue to do the best they can to help individuals get their lives back on track.

Whitty says that Carnegie Community Centre helps roughly 4,000 people a year from the Metro Vancouver area. Whitty says that many of Carnegie’s clients are on the edge of homelessness and are “seeking support with income assistance, or their [assistance] application or their papers or they can’t pay their rent that month.” About half of those people are new clients, suggesting that for many this is a temporary situation, and for others it is a long-term struggle.

Carnegie Community Centre receives funding from municipal and provincial agencies. Whitty says their biggest barrier is housing or lack thereof. When Carnegie Centre Outreach first started their housing initiative in 2006, they “could get someone off the street in one day,” but now it might take more than a month.

“You can’t solve homelessness one by one, however that one by one is the most important thing … to those folks who are sitting in front of you,” Whitty says.

Moving Forward

Having seen her sister struggle, Jones feels as though the system is “not geared to help [people] back up,” and that Canada needs change. Although the situation is desperate and many people are hard to house, Whitty says that “homelessness is pretty fluid” and that of the almost 2,200 homeless counted in Vancouver in 2018, half had been homeless for less than a year. The 2017 count found about the same number of people, meaning that “half the people that were counted last year aren’t homeless this year.” If there is anything, there is hope.

From her time in politics, Anne Roberts finds that “people don’t want to talk about taxes,” but they are willing to pay for services that benefit them and the community when asked. She suggests putting pressure on the government for change. She says to “let government know that that is your priority and that’s what you support, that’s what you want done. I think that kind of pressure can really achieve results.”

*Following our interview with Ethel Whitty, she left her position as Director of Homelessness Services for the City of Vancouver in December of 2018. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.*
A Better Measure of Success

Three Vancouver women entrepreneurs give back through business

Jackie-Rae Avery, co-owner of Bandidas Taqueria, had a vision to create a community hub. She wanted it to be an inclusive, welcoming space for the people who, in many ways, helped open and get her restaurant running. When Avery and her business partner Aiyana Kane were denied loans from the bank, friends and community members pitched in with donations, investment offers, and general help. “People helped paint, demo, run errands, brought food, everything,” she remembers. Notably, when their front window was smashed just days before opening, the community collected donations to have it fixed. Avery was touched, as she believed they had already used up all their favours. “In the beginning we always felt we needed to give back because the community was giving so much to us,” says Avery, “and it still feels the same way.”

Bandidas opened just over a decade ago in January 2009, at a time when banks were not lending as freely to female business owners as they were to male business owners. Rejected by the traditional business route, women entrepreneurs had to find alternatives—and a few Vancouver women may have redefined success in the process.

Barriers to Success

A Statistics Canada report, “A Comparison of the Performance of Female-Owned and Male-Owned Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises,” found that in 2011, female-owned businesses were significantly less likely to be
authorized debt financing than male-owned businesses, and the interest rate for authorized debt financing was higher for women than men. Consequently the number of businesses owned by women continue to be a fraction of those owned by men. Specifically, the same report shows that in 2014 women owned 15.7 per cent of enterprises, compared to 64.6 per cent owned by men (the other 19.7 per cent being co-owned by men and women). This is despite the fact that women have consistently made up over half of university business programs since 1992, according to the sixth edition of Statistics Canada’s “Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report.” These financial barriers are a hindrance to female entrepreneurship and help explain why women like Avery have had to rely on alternative support from their communities to open a business.

Community Engagement
While community investment may be necessary for many women to cover start-up costs, it can also help build a market of supporters-turned-customers, as it did for Stephanie Taylor, owner of West Coast Dog Walking. Before starting her company, Taylor founded a volunteer project and soon-to-be registered charity, West Coast Pet Project. The organization rescues animals from high-kill shelters, and then fosters and rehomes them within the greater Vancouver area. “I already had this reputation of ‘dog person’ in the community,” Taylor says, “so people trusted me.” Typically, the people who rescue dogs from West Coast Pet Project will later hire West Coast Dog Walking for their walking and boarding needs. This built-in clientele allowed Taylor to make a living off her long-time passion.

Prior to starting her business, Taylor had found herself disillusioned with working for companies with corporate missions and
values she simply did not believe in. The need for an emergency brain surgery in May of 2015 inspired her to finally take the leap and become an entrepreneur: “I thought, I don’t want to live like this anymore. When I’m healed and recovered, I just want to do what I want to do.” That is exactly what she did, without the need to supplement her income with a part-time job or side hustle. Taylor credits her immediate success to her sincere passion for her work, as well as her prior involvement and relationships within her community. She values her former experience in customer service jobs over her traditional business school training, as she says working face-to-face with people every day undoubtedly prepared her most for operating a successful business.

Similarly Avery and Kane were deeply engaged with their community prior to opening Bandidas. They were both active members of the East Vancouver community as part of the East Van Social Cycling Club, The Carnival Band on Commercial Drive, and as local teachers. Their existing community became their eager customers when they opened the restaurant, resulting in the lucky problem of being too busy for their small staff. Avery recalls that the customers stepped up in a big way: “People would even get up from their tables and help serve or do dishes on some of those early, busy nights.”

Bandidas was able to turn a profit in less than a year, which allowed Avery and Kane to give back sooner than they expected. They prioritize hosting numerous community events and fundraisers and donate significant amounts of money to two main causes: environmental action in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and social justice. When asked why these causes are important to her, Avery says “it’s just the right thing to do as a business in the community. That is how healthy communities are created and run and give back what we’ve received.”

Value-based Business

Like Avery and Taylor, women are most likely to own businesses in the service industry; this is in contrast with the male-dominated goods producing industries, according to Statistics Canada report “Women-owned Enterprises in Canada.” Service-based businesses are more reliant on face-to-face interactions with customers, which presents more opportunity for relationships and community building. At the same time, women-owned businesses are typically less profitable, according to the same report. A common explanation is that women statistically have less technical education in areas such as engineering, math or computer technologies, which are historically more profitable sectors. However, this narrative minimizes the possibility that women are choosing to be community focused. It diminishes the notion that profit is not, and perhaps should not be, the main driver for their business.

The idea of creating a business without growth and profit at the forefront might seem radical. Tessa Jordan, PhD and department head of Sustainable Business Leadership at BCIT, says that giving back and ensuring that you contribute to—rather than simply profit off—your community is characteristic of value-based business and not traditional profit-based business. Dr. Jordan says that we cannot continue with a growth-based economy. “We live on a finite planet,” she says, “businesses need to work on closing their loop so that waste products become an input—for the business in question,
or another business.” To her the connection between environmental and social values is unbreakable: a sustainable business is one that works within planetary limits, is socially just, and ensures that everyone involved has their basic needs met.

Jordan believes companies need to adopt cooperative and social-enterprise business models that actively measure social and environmental costs. She hopes that business programs evolve and meaningfully incorporate these models into their curriculum, as the business world has been slow to adopt them. While there are relatively few sustainability-focused business programs offered in BC, “the tendency is for these programs to be more academic or research based,” she says. The goal of BCIT’s Sustainable Business Leadership program is to provide hands-on training that prepares graduates (historically just over 60 per cent women) to initiate and develop social and environmental values successfully into the diverse businesses they work for and with. The program hosts numerous guest speakers and connects students directly with mentors through their Capstone Project, allowing students to see that a real community exists and successfully runs value-based sustainable businesses.

Jordan hopes that students will realize that “if you can’t find a way to live your values in an existing organization, you [instead] might build something from the ground up.” Program graduate Kaya Dorey did exactly that when she created Novel Supply Co.

A Better Standard

Novel Supply Co., which Dorey describes as “conscious apparel for the West Coast urban adventurer,” was borne out of frustration for a lack of sustainable options. After doing a research project on textile waste, she was shocked to learn how little businesses and consumers like her were considering product ‘end of life,’ and how much waste was being created as a result. “I was pissed off,” Dorey says. She echoes Jordan in stating that BCIT’s program was the only option she could find that included practical (versus theoretical) sustainability business training. Just as she struggled to find a school that shared her values, it proved even harder to find a company to work for that was “doing it all the way” in sustainability. Even after establishing her business, she still fights to ensure she is meeting her own standards.

“You have to be vocal about your values,” she says, as they are not yet standard in the industry. “I literally have to remind [my manufacturer] every time to not throw away my fabric scraps.” She explains that the only established solution for textile waste offered in Canada currently is down-cycling, where large machines turn fabric scraps into insulation and stuffing for chairs and other products; however, smaller designers typically do not create enough waste to be accepted. While waiting for the industry to catch up is incredibly frustrating, Dorey has been able to partner with other small, like-minded organizations to come up with creative solutions in the meantime. For example, she has partnered with Abel Wear,
Dorey says it’s important to be vocal about your values.

Unconventional Approaches
One thing value-based businesses have in common is their unconventional approach to growth. Dorey is only interested in growth that is sustainable, which to her means Novel Supply Co. is unlikely to become a multinational brand. Instead she wants to focus on the growth of the sustainability movement. “I want to inspire other brands,” she says, “because it is going to take a lot of collaboration and teamwork to make real change, which is kind of the opposite of competition and what traditional business usually brings to mind.” For similar reasons, Avery has struggled with the decision of whether to open more Bandidas Taqueria locations: “Being small is great for local communities, but if you are a business that is value-based and running on integrity, expanding could have a bigger impact.”

Within three years Taylor’s West Coast Dog Walking has seen significant traditional success in that it has grown its walking territory, acquired another business and partner, expanded to three trucks, hired three employees and is in search of two more. The next goal is to continue at this size and hire someone to take over day-to-day business operations, which will allow Taylor to reinvest her time and profit into an upcoming documentary and awareness campaign. She plans to film her rescue work in Mexico, where she has already formed connections with other women and dog rescues. When asked if giving back negatively

a self-proclaimed “social enterprise non-profit” in Vancouver. Dorey sends her textile scraps to Abel Wear, where they are used to teach women with barriers to employment how to sew. These women are then matched to local sewing jobs, typically at sustainable start-ups. Partnerships like this give Dorey hope that a value-based business community is growing.

Bandidas Taqueria regularly hosts live music and board game nights.
Dorey says Novel Supply Co. is conscious apparel for the urban adventurer.

affects her profit, Taylor says it “takes up a lot of my time, which in turn affects my income directly [as] a business owner. But it’s ultimately what I want to do.”

Dorey has also had to give up a certain amount of personal profit to align her business with her values. “Initially, as you’re trying to pioneer this movement, it is more expensive,” she says. Though she is hopeful that as consumers demand manufacturers to be more sustainable, the cost will go down: “It will become more accessible if we all commit to it.” So if profit growth is not the primary measure of success in a value-based business, what is?

For Dorey, Taylor, and Avery, the ability to use their profits to benefit their community is what drives them. While all of their businesses are different, they each operate to make their community better, beyond the product or service they sell. As Jordan says, to evolve beyond a growth-based economy businesses need to consider their social and environmental costs. Entrepreneurs need to reinvest in the community they are a part of, rather than simply profit. Perhaps a business’ ability to give back is a worthier measure of success.

In 2017 Dorey was recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme as one of six Young Champions of the Earth for her work on Novel Supply Co. When asked what the greatest impact this recognition had on her, she notes how it has connected her to a larger community of innovative and brave individuals changing the industry. “As much as I’m alone in my day-to-day business, I am not alone in this movement.” And to her, that feels like a success.
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I hope you will join us on Saturday, June 15 for Community Day presented by RBC Royal Bank. Come celebrate our past, how far we’ve come, and the incredible community of Langarans who have been part of our first 49 years. We have a lot to celebrate, and so much to look forward to Beyond 49.

Dr. Lane Trotter
President & CEO, Langara College

Since its launch last October, Beyond 49 has allowed the Langara College Foundation to reconnect and celebrate with former students, staff, and faculty. To commemorate our 49th year on West 49th Ave., we created the Beyond 49 Fund to support student initiatives and build a stronger future for Langara College. The Fund will allow us to create new scholarships and bursaries and support other priority projects for the College in three areas: student support, enhancing academic innovation, and career readiness. To date, we’ve raised over $1.5 million for student athletes, volunteers, emerging artists, and women in science, along with important initiatives including mental health, sustainability, and research.

The support of our community helps make education possible for everyone. I invite you to learn more about how you can contribute and make a difference for students in their educational journey at Langara and Beyond 49.

Moira Gookstetter
Executive Director, Langara College Foundation

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1905
Langara’s roots trace back to the King Edward High School, located at Oak and West 12th Ave. King Edward was Vancouver’s first and only secondary school until 1925.

1965
A new campus is in the works as VSB purchases 20 acres of land from the Canadian Pacific Railway to build the new VCC Langara campus.
Look how far we’ve come.

2019 marks two important anniversaries for Langara College: our 49th year of operations on West 49th Ave., and our 25th year as an independent public institution. Such milestones call for a celebration. We are marking our 49th anniversary with an integrated celebration, alumni engagement, and fundraising campaign – Beyond 49 – which celebrate all that we have achieved in our first 49 years. It will strengthen the College for the future by reconnecting with our alumni, and by raising funds for student scholarships and important College initiatives. Launched in October 2018, Beyond 49 celebrates nearly five decades of high quality, accessible, post-secondary education.

Over its history, Langara has grown and changed in many ways. In 1970, our students, staff, and faculty participated in ‘The Great Trek’, a walk from our humble beginnings on Oak and West 12th Ave. to our current location. Since then, Langara College’s campus has transformed into a thriving community that makes a difference locally and globally. Our alumni form a global community that is over 100,000 strong. Among them are award-winning scientists, authors, politicians, actors, artists, and journalists. Being a Langaran means that you are part of an extended community that exists far beyond the borders of our campus.

While much has changed in the past 49 years, one important thing has remained the same - our commitment to our students and their success. Today we serve more than 22,000 students per annum, and we offer more than 1,900 courses in 130 programs. Langara’s students continue to excel, both in their education, and in their lives post-graduation.

Beyond 49 is an opportunity to celebrate, connect, and contribute. Read on and find out how we’ll be honouring 49 Langarans this fall; discover how a retired instructor continues to support students through a scholarship; and learn how award-winning journalist Simi Sara got her start at Langara. Be sure to visit the Beyond 49 website to share your own story, and bring friends and family to join us at Community Day presented by RBC Royal Bank on Saturday June 15. You are invited to be part of our year-long celebration of Langara’s triumphs and community.

1970
Langara’s journey on 49th begins. The VCC Langara campus opens at a cost of $5.3 million for the building and another $1.5 million for furniture and fittings (about $15 per square foot).

October 1970
To celebrate the opening of the new campus, students, teachers, and administrators walk or drive from King Edward Centre to VCC Langara, a historical event coined ‘The Great Trek’.
Honouring our best 49.

In honour of our 49th year, Langara College has created a special anniversary award to highlight 49 inspirational people within our community. From founders to changemakers and visionaries, the 49 Langarans will be recognized as those who have had the greatest impact on Langara, their profession, or in the community. Award-winning journalist and 2013 Outstanding Alumni Award recipient Simi Sara leads the selection committee.

“I’m honoured to chair the 49 Langarans selection committee. During my work with the Langara College Foundation, it has been inspiring to see how many people, in so many fields, have accomplished so much from their start at Langara. It is time for Langara and its stellar graduates to receive the recognition they deserve for their hard work, their generosity, and for the outstanding examples they set out in the world.”

Nominees are divided into three categories: Founder, Visionary, or Change Maker. This fall, we’ll celebrate and recognize these award-winning 49 Langarans at a reception, alongside Langara Emeriti and past Outstanding Alumni Award recipients.

Building a stronger future.

Over the past 49 years, Langara has helped generations of students forge a brighter future through education. In support of the next generation, the Beyond 49 campaign aims to raise $2.5 million to support initiatives under three pillars: student support, technology and innovation, and teaching and learning.

To date, Beyond 49 has raised over $1.5 million for students, projects, and scholarships. The Sustainability Club led the installation of solar panels on the Science and Technology building. We created a new scholarship for student athletes in the name of former coach Kevin Hanson. Our VOLT student volunteers have increased access to leadership training. The 49 Women in Science fund breaks down barriers for young women pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Our students face new challenges everyday. Beyond 49 will help us support them during their studies, prepare them for a future beyond our doors, and launch innovative teaching and learning methods. You can make a difference by donating to some of our exciting projects. Contribute to Beyond 49 and your support today will help students thrive for years to come.

1973
A fire destroys VCC King Edward Centre. A low stone wall from the original King Edward site still stands today outside VGH on Oak and West 12th Ave. as a reminder of its place in history.

1981
VCC Langara establishes the Co-op Education program, the first of its kind in BC. The program continues today, providing practical experience to help students launch their careers.
Join the party.

We can’t celebrate an anniversary without a party and everyone is invited. It’s time to reconnect and celebrate. On Saturday, June 15, we’re inviting the community to join a party 49 years in the making. Come and enjoy the day with us!

Community Day presented by RBC Royal Bank will be a free, family-friendly summer festival. Whether you are a foodie, music-lover, life-long learner, neighbour, or a Langaran returning to campus, we have something for everyone. This one-day party will be full of live music, entertainment, prizes, cultural displays, special alumni programming, food trucks, a kids zone, and more.

Help us celebrate the past, present, and future of the College as we throw the largest celebration in Langara’s 49-year history. You won’t want to miss it.

Learn more.
beyond49.langara.ca/community-day

Presenting Partner:

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1994
Langara becomes an independent public college, separate from VCC.

1998 & 1999
The Langara Falcons men’s basketball team is crowned back-to-back CCAA national champions.

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11:00 AM–5:00 PM
Langara College Main Campus
100 West 49th Ave.

- Multiple stages and live entertainment
- Games, prizes, and giveaways
- Tours, workshops, and demonstrations
- Mini reunions and alumni zone
- Food trucks, and beer and wine garden
- Easy access by public transit, bike, and car share

Let us know you’re coming. RSVP to our Facebook event.
Our community: meet your fellow Langarans.

MICHAEL SHARZER
Michael has fond memories of his first impressions when he joined Langara as an instructor in 1980. “Right away, I got the sense that people thought of themselves as a community. There has been, and still are, so many wonderful people at Langara.”

He taught Organizational Behaviour and Business Presentation Skills in the business department until his retirement in 2001. He played a key role in the creation of the employee development program, and is now a member of the Langara retirees group.

“I sometimes run into my former students, and a number of them say to me, ‘Mr. Sharzer, I hated your course, but now that I’m out in the world, I appreciate what you did’. That’s the best feeling you get as an instructor.”

Now Michael gives back to Langara by sponsoring an annual scholarship for a business student in Presentation Skills. “It’s very important to me. I wanted to contribute something that would reinforce my belief that this skill was important. I love going to the ceremony, meeting the students; and they’re always so thankful.”

CHARLENE TAYLOR
Charlene is a trailblazer. She is the first Indigenous person in British Columbia, and the first Indigenous woman in Canada, to earn the Chartered Accountant (CA) designation. In 2011, she received the prestigious Fellow Chartered Accountant (FCA) designation.

“Attending Langara was a valuable bridge between secondary and post-secondary education. It helped me become a more independent learner,” said Charlene. “It provided exposure to new learning, thinking, and teaching styles which helped me meet my goals and aspirations.”

Charlene, a proud member of the Heiltsuk Nation, was recognized with an Outstanding Alumni Award in 2018, an experience she was thankful to share with some of her family who also attended Langara. “They are also proud members of the Langara community. To me this is critical because we have a responsibility to share our knowledge with our youth. They are our future leaders.”

2007
The campus continues to grow as Langara opens the LEED® Gold Certified Library building.

2016
Langara is given the name snaweyəł leləm by the Musqueam people, which means “house of teachings” in the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ language. Langara is the first public post-secondary institution in BC to receive this honour.
Simi Sara

Simi looks back on her time at Langara as a significant time in her career - and her life. “When I enrolled in the Journalism program in the fall of 1991 I felt as though I’d finally found a place that fit me and a place to study the subjects I was passionate about. I’d been at a large post-secondary institution before that, but with the smaller class sizes and more personal learning, Langara is where I felt at home.”

“From the moment I typed out my first story and then seeing my name in print below it as a reporter in The Voice, I knew that Langara would help me to learn the skills and be a part of an industry that, until then, I’d only dreamed of. Once I got out into that world I learned that students from Langara earned respect in newsrooms everywhere, that we came equipped with skills that were needed, and were quick to learn and adapt.”

Twenty-five years later, Simi knows that she can still count on that learning environment whenever she comes across a Langara Journalism student. “To be able to continue to be associated with the school, working with the Langara College Foundation, is a privilege.”

Lisa Yeung

Lisa gets first-hand research experience in the biology lab, thanks in part to a research grant awarded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). The project involves designing bioinformatics and biochemistry tools that support the craft brewing industry in BC, and is a collaboration with local breweries, including Parallel 49 Brewing.

“I’m doing more of my own experiments,” said Yeung, who also credits her biology instructor, Ji Yang. “He motivates my curiosity, and asks me to explain why things happen.”

The project, led by biology instructors Dave Anderson and Ji Yang, and chemistry instructor Kelly Sveinson, was awarded $200,000 in funding last November.

“These funds allow us to deliver advanced training to our students, as well as provide technology and access to the skills of our faculty, to an industry that is of growing importance to the economy of our region,” said Sveinson. “It’s a pleasure to show our students how their college education can be applied to real challenges.”

2016

Langara opens the Science & Technology Building. The building received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Gold status in 2017 as well as the Illumination Merit Award.

2018

A house post is raised to welcome all visitors to the traditional unceded territory of the Musqueam People on which Langara resides.
Once a student. Always a Langaran.

Whether you’re a current or former student or employee – you’re a Langaran. Share your memories, reconnect with classmates and instructors, and join our 49th anniversary celebration.

Learn more.
beyond49.langara.ca

Contribute to our future Beyond 49.

As Langara celebrates its 49th year, we are looking to the future. A future where every student has the resources they need to achieve success and become outstanding in their own way. Help us build a stronger future for Langara College and contribute to campus fundraising initiatives that will support generations of Langara students Beyond 49.

Learn more.
beyond49.langara.ca/contribute
For people like Charlie Marchant, a green-travel blogger based in the UK, travel is more than just a break from everyday routine. Marchant travels as a way to “learn about local cultures, support local communities, eat locally sourced food, and contribute to preserving the environment and protecting wildlife.”

Having grown up in an environmentally conscientious family, sustainable travel was an obvious choice for Marchant in adulthood. “I’ve always believed in taking care of the planet,” she says. “I grew up in a family who didn’t waste food and who walked and cycled instead of driving.”

For local communities, tourism can provide a means to economic gain; however, tourism’s benefits can be outweighed by its hidden costs. Dr. Tsung Hung Lee and Dr. Fen-Hauh Jan, researchers and experts on ecotourism, have found that that there is no guarantee of equitable distribution of tourism revenue. In their study titled *Can community-based tourism contribute to sustainable development? Evidence from residents’ perceptions of sustainability*, Lee and Jan describe how tourism can harm culture, economy, and the environment. Marchant echoes this in her blog, where she

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**Travelling in a New Direction**

Community-based tourism offers travellers an authentic experience while preserving culture and the environment

*Story* Natasha Brasnett
*Photography* Philip Dearden
describes the cultural loss caused when fast-food chains and other international corporations enter communities. These large companies often benefit from the established tourism industry, driving local businesses out and taking money from the local economy.

Changing the Industry

Although tourism can negatively impact local communities, it does not need to. Community-based tourism (CBT) is one alternative model that aims to address the negative impacts of mass tourism.

Mass tourism often operates from a top-down approach, according to The Bottom-up Approach of Community-Based Ethnic Tourism: A Case Study in Chiang Rai by Polladach Theerapappisit. Theerapappisit says this means that the planning and implementation of tourist activities is driven by governmental policies, agents, and legislation. These policy-makers typically do not take a grassroots approach: “destination communities are literally sold as part of the tourist product, and they are often expected to conform to the tourist’s image of the idealised community,” Theerapappisit says. Comparatively, community-based tourism involves “engaging more with communities … trying to build capacity at the base level,” explains Dr. Philip Dearden, a geography professor at the University of Victoria. Dearden has worked with several communities in Thailand on CBT projects. CBT ensures that community members are the primary stakeholders and beneficiaries of the tourism programs. This can allow the community to become more self-reliant and resilient in terms of finance, natural resources, and culture.

Pansita Sasirawuth is a communications executive of Local Alike, a Southeast Asian online marketplace for CBT trips. She says “tourism has become more mutually beneficial—where tourists are given opportunities to experience real communities and ways of life, while communities directly benefit from tourists in terms of income [and] capacity building.” Community members offer accommodation, act as tour guides for visitors, and allow visitors to participate in local activities.

CBT in Thailand

An example of a successful CBT model is the Koh Pitak community in Thailand, described by Dearden in the chapter he cowrote, “Koh Pitak: A Community-based Environment and Tourism Initiative in Thailand,” in Governing the Coastal Commons. A collaborative decision-making process between community members was led by the community’s Headman. He had a vision for a local tourism industry that the community could support and that would benefit the community in return. They initiated a popular fishery and giant clam conservation tourism group, and the success of this program helped repay debts accrued during a fishing shortage in the 1980s-90s.

According to Dearden, for CBT to be successful, the carrying capacity of the community would be assessed first. Carrying capacity refers to a community’s limits or the relative costs it can withstand; it is a measure of the number of tourists they can have, while still maintaining a good tourism experience and a healthy community. Dearden explains three components of carrying capacity: social, physical, and environmental. Social carrying capacity is how tourism impacts the community, its culture, and way of life;
physical capacity refers to the number of people that can physically fit into the community; and environmental capacity considers the natural resources used, as well as waste and sewage management and disposal. Once a community’s carrying capacity is measured, Dearden says, recommendations are made on how the community can set their limits.

If a community’s limits are respected, their cultural identity and environment are preserved. A common characteristic of successful CBT projects is “a great deal of heterogeneity,” Dearden says, which means “they’re not all the same.”

Sasirawuth says that “tourism should contribute to maintaining [local] culture.” Marchant aims to do just that. “We can all have an impact on the lives of others, their culture, wildlife, and the environment,” she says, “and we can choose whether to make that impact a positive or a negative one.”

Community-based tourism ensures that travel experiences abroad can enrich both travellers and the communities they visit. Community-based tourism’s principles of resilience, empowerment, and sustainability bring a fresh take on tourism and serve as a reminder of how connected we are to each other.
The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) reports that Indigenous Peoples in Canada are disproportionately affected by drinking water advisories compared to Canadians not living on reserve land.

In 2015 the Federal Government of Canada pledged to lift all long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations reserves by March 2021. The following information is reported by Indigenous Services Canada as of April 10, 2019.

*Visit sac-isc.gc.ca for the most up-to-date information.*
A storied tradition.

CELEBRATING THREE DECADES OF PACIFIC RIM MAGAZINE

Pacific Rim Magazine has a proud 30-year tradition of thoughtful, provocative, and informative story-telling and design. As Langara celebrates its 49th year, we want to recognize the incredible work of our publishing students over the past three decades – we are proud to call you alumni.

Join us on Saturday, June 15 and celebrate our proud history of publishing and Langara’s 49th anniversary at Community Day presented by RBC Royal Bank. We can’t wait to reconnect.

Langara Alumni & Community Engagement
www.langara.ca/alumni | alumni@langara.ca
A rooftop garden in Vancouver provides community space for tenants.

Rooftop gardens are popping up in cities around the world. With today’s industrial farming practices and increased urbanization cutting into wild landscapes, city dwellers and urban planners now look to rooftop gardens to help preserve our pollinators, increase access to fresh produce, improve the environment, and reconnect the community.

A Home for Pollinators

Rooftop gardens provide a haven for pollinators, a set of species that are rapidly disappearing due to loss of habitat and increased chemical use in agriculture.

On the Rise

Green roofs are on the rise thanks to the benefits they provide to both the environment and communities.

Story Melissa Alves
Photography Taylor Vander Baaren
Illustrations Rachel Jackson
While bees are the most well-known, the term “pollinator” encompasses many species of birds, bats, butterflies, and beetles. According to Pollinator Partnership Canada (P2C), an organization dedicated to the health of pollinating species, pollinators play an important role in agriculture; they are responsible for “one out of every three bites of food” we consume, making their protection imperative for our future. P2C credits pollinators with generating 217 billion dollars for the global economy annually, with somewhere between 1.2 to 5.4 billion of those dollars generated by bees alone.

A Unique Opportunity

Vicki Wojcik, research director at P2C, says that urban landscapes present a unique opportunity to build pollinator habitats, ensuring their reproduction and survival. However, the new habitats must provide specific conditions, particularly for bees. Wojcik says that as we learn more about how pollinators interact with urban areas, we can better ensure that rooftop gardens have qualities that will promote pollinator use. For example, she says that bees and other insect pollinators are unlikely to recognize a rooftop garden above nine stories as viable habitat. Therefore, skyscrapers would not provide adequate habitat, but we can look to shorter or tiered buildings for opportunities to increase pollinator use.

Rooftops are also a largely untapped resource for community farming. Organizations like The Association for Vertical Farming have sprouted up in response to what they recognize as “the demand for safe and fresh food, as well as the need for city dwellers to reconnect with food systems in their local communities.” Vertical farming is the practice of planting crops in stacked shelving units indoors, which allows efficient use of space, control of the environment and, according to Andrew Tarantola of Engadget, “drastically reduces the prevalence of pests…and the amount of water and nutrients required by as much as 90 per cent.” However, indoor vertical farms come with significant energy costs, as lighting is generally required for 9 to 16 hours daily. Rooftop gardens have the advantage of natural sunlight and can offer some of the benefits of indoor vertical gardens without the associated energy use and costs.

Rooftop gardens have also been found to effectively capture storm water, which decreases urban runoff, or water that would typically be absorbed in natural landscapes. A study conducted by The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in 2009 found that “total runoff from green roofs was about 50 per cent less” compared to asphalt roofs.

According to the National Gardening Association, urban runoff “not only floods homes and buildings, it also carries toxins directly to rivers, streams, and lakes.” These toxins can include oil, pesticides, viruses, and heavy metals, as found by USEPA. By preventing these toxins from reaching bodies of water, rooftop gardens can provide some protection for sensitive aquatic life.

A further environmental benefit is the decrease of indoor temperatures in buildings with rooftop gardens. Studies conducted by USEPA found that green roofs provide insulation for the building, and the surface temperature of green roofs can be up to 4° C cooler than regular roofs, which “can reduce building energy use by 0.7 per cent.” Lower energy use equates to lower greenhouse gas emissions from air conditioning units.

Community Connections

While rooftop gardens are positive for the environment, publicly accessible green spaces also improve community life by bringing people together. The Vancouver Foundation’s 2017 “Connect & Engage” survey asked locals how they were participating in community life; 58 per cent referenced visiting public spaces such as “their local library, community centre, or recreation centre.” The survey showed that use of public spaces creates local networks, empowers people from various backgrounds, and provides a way for community concerns to be addressed. Accessible rooftop gardens that are open to the public can serve as one of these spaces. The rooftop gardens at the Vancouver Public Library (VPL)
Central branch opened in September 2018. Carol Nelson, the director of planning and communications at the VPL, says that the community has embraced the new garden. She says it is “providing [access to] the kind of space that one usually only finds in very exclusive environments, like a hotel.”

Green roofs are beginning to catch on in cities. According to Roberta Cruger of Treehugger, 3.1 million square feet of green roofs were installed in the US in 2008 alone. Cities like Toronto have made green roofs mandatory for new building developments, and according to Will Koblensky of the Torontoist, the Green Roof by-law has resulted in the creation of 500 new green roofs. Pollinators are reaping the benefits of their new urban habitats and, in turn, locals are gaining access to fresh vegetables and herbs. These gardens are just what cities need to bridge the gap between urban and natural environments, reconnect residents to nature, and protect our future.
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Ad designed by Langara Publishing student Aline Cavalheiro
In 2015 Ancora was established in downtown Vancouver and recently expanded to a second location in West Vancouver’s Ambleside neighbourhood. Both locations serve a fusion of Peruvian and Japanese fare, known as Nikkei cuisine, and offer sustainably sourced seafood in partnership with Oceanwise.

We went to the flagship location that overlooks False Creek. The restaurant has two levels of seating, ensuring everyone has a view of the small boats navigating the inlet. We were seated immediately. Our server was attentive but gave us plenty of space. He provided us with information about dishes and guided us through our evening.

We began with the Albacore Tuna Ceviche, served with ginger, nori, spring onions, Peruvian yellow chili pepper, and sesame leche de tigre. Peruvian ceviche is usually served with whitefish, but the substitution of albacore tuna and nori is a nod to Japanese cuisine and keeps the ingredients local. The tuna was supple, flavourful, and complemented well by the leche de tigre sauce. A spoon was provided in case we wanted to finish off the last of the sauce—we used the spoon. In Peru leche de tigre is often used as a hangover cure. It delivers a spicy, tart shock to the system. The combination of flavours is not common in Western cuisine, and we could not get enough of it.

Next we ordered the Yucas Bravas. This traditional Peruvian dish can occasionally feel weighty due to the root’s natural consistency, but at Ancora the yuca is predominantly crispy with a soft, buttery centre. They are paired with a delicious huancaina aioli, and we polished them off.

While Peruvian fare is something of a novelty in Vancouver, Japanese cuisine is more familiar. Ancora’s version of the Spider Roll is prepared with masago, soft-shell crab, and asparagus for an interesting twist. This dish is up against stiff competition in a city of world-class sushi restaurants, but Ancora’s reimagining of the roll is enough to distinguish it.

Ancora shines brightest when they interpret a traditional recipe from either Peru or Japan and blend the two cuisines. The Grilled Octopus Anticucho takes the bold, smoky flavour of Peruvian anticucho, typically made with cow heart, and pairs it with grilled octopus. The dish is served with delectably smooth smoked potato espuma that complements the anticucho nicely.

If you are looking for exceptional Peruvian or Japanese fare, Ancora shakes up traditional recipes for an inventive fusion menu. Combined with the amazing service and waterfront view, Ancora provides a truly unique dining experience.
Sing Sing Beer Bar

Sing Sing Beer Bar is one of Mount Pleasant’s newest and most lively additions. With lights dimmed, music up, drinks flowing, and people bustling, this late-night comfort food spot fits in perfectly with the cool shops and eateries that make up Main Street. We went to Sing Sing on one of the first nights it was open, excited to try a beer bar that showcases both pizza and pho in a fusion of East-meets-West flavours.

As we walked in, we were enticed by the bright neon “Sing Sing” sign illuminating the storefront. We admired the floor-to-ceiling windows that provide ample viewing opportunities from inside the large, open space. A communal dining arrangement creates a laidback feel and is the perfect backdrop to visit with friends all day, as they are open from 11:30am to 1am.

We ordered the Sesame Avocado Slaw, a reinvention of traditional coleslaw; it combines crispy vegetables with crunchy taro and a zesty sambal dressing, giving the slaw a slight sweetness. We also sampled the Kimchi Grilled Cheese, which pairs creamy mozzarella cheese with tangy savoy cabbage and spicy mayo, creating a beautifully balanced bite.

Sing Sing has daily specials and the day we visited it was half-priced pizza Monday (regular-priced pizza ranges from $13 to $15). Naturally, we had to order pizza. The standout slice for us was the Pesto Pizza, which came topped with basil leaves, chunks of parmesan, roasted shrimp, and was generously garnished with fresh arugula. The crust was coated with toasted sesame seeds, adding a pleasant crunch.

To ensure we had the full Sing Sing experience, we ordered the Phở Gà Sing Sing: a heartwarming medley of roasted chicken, basil sprouts, and quail eggs. The broth was salty and savoury with a touch of basil that deepened the flavour. A hint of star anise added a kick of licorice-like sweetness. Pho and pizza were a surprisingly perfect pairing and satisfied our appetite for comfort food.

Sing Sing offers an ample selection of local draught beer with 20 rotating taps. The choices change frequently so beer-lovers will have something new to try each visit. Cocktail options showcase fusion flavours with fun drinks like the Saigon Sour and the Ginbucha. In addition to satisfying thirsty customers, Sing Sing caters to a variety of dietary preferences and allergies with vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free options.

Sing Sing delivers delicious food in a laidback atmosphere. The impressive menu, variety of drinks, and amazing daily specials make this a must-visit spot. On Main Street, where funky shops and cool eateries are plentiful, Sing Sing Beer Bar fits right in.
Cơm Vietnamese is a modern, family-owned restaurant located in Richmond, BC. Open since December 2018, it is trendy but approachable—suited to their family friendly sharing menu. A neon sign that reads Cơm (rice in Vietnamese) hangs above the door, which opens into a rounded room with impressively high ceilings. The modern booths and minimalist furniture contrast with colourful floral patterns on the walls and light fixtures. It is an impressive interior, and we wondered if the food would live up to the atmosphere.

To start we ordered two house cocktails that add fresh spins on classic drinks. The Tropical Stormy is a passionfruit-infused take on the rum-based Dark ‘n’ Stormy: refreshing, perfectly spiced with ginger, and not too sweet. The Whisky Sweet and Sour offers a softer edge to the classic Whisky Sour with a touch of lemongrass. Both drinks get two thumbs up from us. For those not interested in cocktails, the drink menu is innovative and extensive, including many non-alcoholic options.
For an appetizer we ordered the Bì Cuốn, a vermicelli pork and lettuce wrap dusted with roasted rice powder. It was tasty, fresh, and came with a side of fish sauce.

We were pleasantly surprised by the Papaya Salad, which stood out as the star of the night. The strips of unripe papaya create a crisp noodle-like base, and the dressing adds a tangy burst of flavour. Topped with fresh prawns, pork loin, and peanuts, it is a hearty salad and highly recommended for those looking for something a little different.

For mains we shared the Vermicelli Bowl Special with chargrilled chicken, pork, and beef, as well as the Cari Chay on rice. The Vermicelli Bowl is a standard crowd-pleaser on most Vietnamese menus and Com’s version did not disappoint. The Cari Chay is a vegetarian curry with tofu, mushrooms, taro, and a hint of sweet coconut. It is flavourful and filling enough to satisfy even non-vegetarians, and its richness helped balance some of the other fresh and savoury options we ordered.

We decided on the Taro Pudding for dessert. Playing with contrast, it was both sweet and salty with warm taro served in a bowl of cold coconut milk, making for a lovely and surprising treat.

The food definitely lived up to the atmosphere at Com Vietnamese and the service was quick and attentive. We were able to sample a variety of dishes and look forward to spending another evening trying everything we missed. We would recommend sharing with friends and family at this sophisticated yet casual haunt.

The Vermicelli Bowl is a crowd-pleaser.
Prologue
After winning the Battle of Asculum, the Greek King Pyrrhus is rumoured to have said, “if we are victorious in one more battle with the Romans, we shall be utterly ruined.” Some victories are not worth winning. While this was certainly the case for poor Pyrrhus and his ill-fated Italian campaign, it is equally applicable to the victors of eating challenges.

Giga Dragon Challenge
In the West End of Vancouver, Ramen Takanotsume challenges customers to face the Giga Dragon. The challenge is to eat the equivalent of five regular bowls of ramen, three hard boiled eggs, five pork slices, and a smattering of garnishes, all served in a vessel better suited to a garden party salad than a bowl of soup for one. As if the dish wasn’t daunting enough, contestants have only thirty minutes to finish it. Should you fail the challenge, the cost is $50—there is no charge if you are successful. Contestants were selected from the Pacific Rim Magazine (PRM) staff, each picked for their superior eating abilities: Maho, veteran of a thousand bowls; William, “Broth Born”; Dmitri, autonomous eating machine; and myself, relatively well-fed student.

Thinning the Herd
Before any of us could face the Giga Dragon, there needed to be a thinning of the herd. A test was devised to separate the mere heroes from the legends. An enormous supply of packaged ramen noodles was purchased and a rotating team of ramen experts (students) were enlisted to prepare them in the PRM production room. Before the eyes of our peers we were to consume as much as we could stomach in thirty minutes; the two to outlast the others would move on to the Giga Dragon challenge. I’ll spare you the details but suffice to say that Dmitri and William were defeated by a phenomenon known in competitive eating circles as a “reversal of fortune.” With our friends fallen but not forgotten, Maho and I braced ourselves for the greater challenge: the mighty Giga Dragon.
The Final Challenge

At Ramen Takanotsume, we sat outside on a patio in the crisp spring air and prepared for the trial to come. By the time we saw the Giga Dragon up close, we had begun to envy our fallen comrades. We stared into the bowls before us, a timer was set, and our trial had begun.

I approached the eating challenge with a mechanical aptitude born of sibling rivalry at the dinner table: fork to mouth, chew, swallow, repeat. It was this quiet drum beat that carried me through piles of noodles, bite-by-bite, until I looked down to find the bowl half consumed.

Before me, suspended in delicious miso broth, were more noodles than I had ever eaten in a single sitting. With hope dying in my heart, I glanced up at Maho to find my forlorn expression reflected back at me. Minutes later we had to concede defeat, though our hosts kindly assured us that we had eaten more than most.

Lessons Learned

Despite the prodigious size of our meals, both the miso and shio broths we tried were rich and flavourful and the toppings were exceptionally tasty. However, I can’t help but wonder: had we finished the bowl victoriously, would we have considered the price paid worth it? For myself it is enough to have fought and lost, knowing that I will never experience the bitterness of a Pyrrhic victory over my body’s natural limitations.

PHEW!!
FOOD STREET

With over 200 restaurants covering a mere three blocks, Alexandra Road is a must-visit for lovers of authentic Asian cuisine

Story Dmitri Chimich
Photography Melissa Alves
Luca Camaiani

1 Leisure Tea & Coffee is a homey space decorated with stacks of charming teacups and dishes. They serve Taiwanese coffee, bubble tea, and sweet soups.
2 Leisure Tea & Coffee offers an extensive dessert selection. Their homemade waffle cookies pair deliciously with their Winter Melon Tea.
3 Lanterns light up a beautiful mural on the exterior of restaurant Xiaolongkan Chinese Fondue.
4 Cocoru Beer & Chicken is known for their crunchy Korean fried chicken, slathered in a sweet yet spicy sauce.
5 Bingsoo is a decadent Korean shaved-ice dessert with toppings like sweet red beans and condensed milk. Snowy Village’s first Canadian location sits on Alexandra Road.
6 Take a stroll in the evening on Alexandra Road to take in the enchanting aromas and bustling energy of the street.
48 Years of excellence and now we are inviting you to join our team. MPA Society is a non-profit and Registered Charitable organization founded in 1971 by people facing the challenges of mental illness.

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Each drink is specially hand-crafted with fresh and local ingredients, giving our customers a taste they will never forget.

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