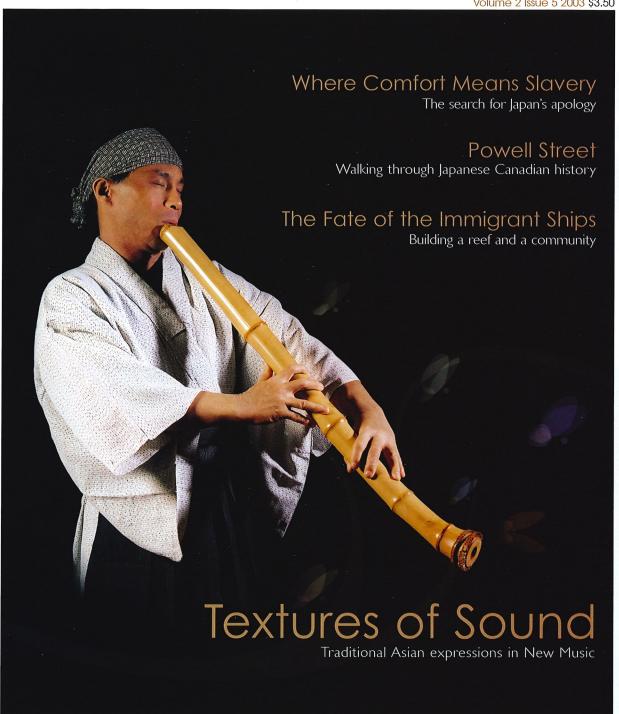
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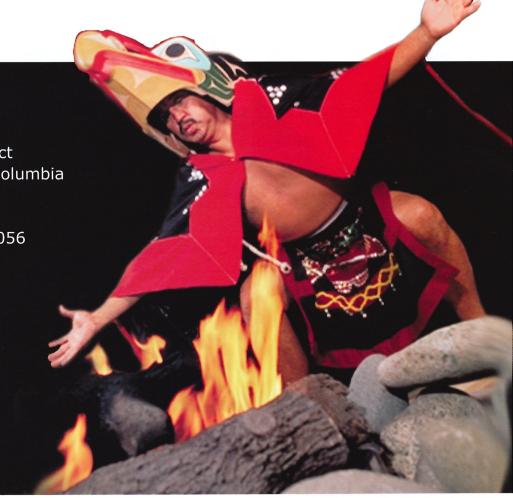


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President's Message

When students at Langara College begin work on *Pacific Rim Magazine* they look for stories about their world and their community. This year, when they looked beyond their classroom, they found controversy. The United Nations was arguing about the situation in Iraq. Closer to home, people squabbled about Vancouver's bid for the Olympics.

Both issues provoked two very different activities: democratic decision making and aggressive, undisciplined behaviour. At Langara, the responses to issues focus on democracy.

When people don't agree with things in a democracy, they have the right to make their views known, but not by being aggressive and destructive. Rather, the way to make things work better is through discussion and learning to work within the system to make a difference.

At Langara, we guide students toward doing that. We're not just an institution that teaches publishing or economics or how to excel on a test. We demonstrate and encourage more conscious thought about life skills and education beyond 2 + 2 = 4.

In addition to career skills and textbook learning, we teach essential abilities. These include such things as critical thinking, problem solving, listening skills, conflict resolution, and valuing diversity. These abilities help people to achieve balance and to cope with the controversies in the world. At Langara, we recognize our duty to create educated citizens who have a responsibility to the broader community. Such people have a positive rather than a negative view of everything. They can make things happen.

I hope all Langara students and all *Pacific Rim Magazine* readers will set their sights on making things happen in a responsible, positive way. Together, we can work to make a better community and a better world.

Linda Holmes, President Langara College

Publisher's Message

In 1989, the first issue of *Pacific Rim Magazine* appeared in Vancouver. Expo '86 had recently drawn world attention to this city. Also at that time, Vancouver's position as the closest major Canadian city to Hong Kong—which was soon to come under Chinese rule—excited interest in the Pacific Rim region.

That interest blossomed into *Pacific Rim Magazine*. Back then, faculty, staff, and students at Langara College volunteered to write, edit, design, and produce the magazine. They sought stories that illuminated the cultural, societal, and business connections between Canada and the Asia Pacific.

Over the years, readership grew, and Langara College came up with a new idea. In 1996, the college created the *Publishing: Techniques & Technologies Program*. The program trains students to be graphic designers, production specialists, editors, and publishers. *Pacific Rim Magazine* became the major spring project of the program.

Since 1997, the magazine has been produced entirely by Langara students. The Publishing students get help from Marketing students, Library Technician students and Professional Photo Imaging students. As well, many faculty and staff at the college pitch in. Such collaboration is remarkable in the magazine industry in Canada—and the results are more than remarkable. The art and photography in this magazine capture readers' eyes and enrich their understanding of the world. The stories are entertaining and often riveting.

This issue, the seventh produced by the Publishing program, will take you into the brutal world of Korean comfort women. It will lead you into rusted ships that testify to the desperate journey of immigrants. It will tell you tales of lucky charms—amulets, figurines, and words reputed to bring good fortune in Japan.

May good fortune spread to you as you enjoy this 15th anniversary issue. And *omedetai* (Japanese for "congratulations") to Langara College, for being the birthplace of the Publishing program and this magazine.

Editors' Message

It has been said that conflict arises when the pen confronts the blank page, that vast expanse of empty space. But where there is conflict, there can also be resolution. As with every magazine, we started with valleys of white, all 64 pages of it, with the job of resolving the conflicts of pen and space with the words and art that would capture the essence of this year's *Pacific Rim Magazine*.

As we meditated upon each article, it soon became clear that alongside the chaos and pain of the material world, writers, perhaps this year more than ever, sought out the peace and healing of the spiritual. Here, the horrors of internment, war, and desperate immigration intertwine with the soothing balance of mind, body, and spirit.

In this issue, while communities pull together to heal pain, artists find ways of healing on the global canvas. Musicians search the depths of sound to bring us closer to Mother Nature, as massage therapists and a gardener call upon the goddess of creation and universal energy to heal through the senses of touch and sight. The seemingly conflicting forces of light and dark, life and death, and yin and yang resonate in these pages, finding their resolution in the simple but universal paths to peace, compassion, and mutual understanding.

The conflicts of the pen and page, however, have been minor as war has overshadowed our production period this year. If only world leaders would take the time to contemplate these notions of healing as deeply as our writers and designers have, perhaps we would find ourselves at peace more often than war. May this year's issue help all of us find a path to peace, a way to the meditative empty space so much needed to open our minds, free our bodies, and heal our spirits.

Troy Germaine Taylor, Executive Editor Neil Amsler, Managing Editor Theresa Borsman, Senior Editor

Elizabeth Rains, Publisher



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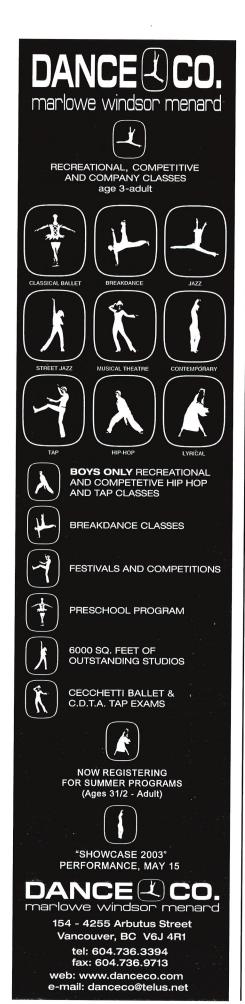
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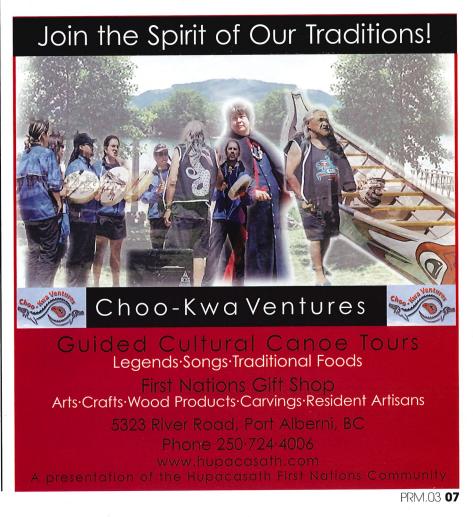
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Alcvin Ramos playing the shakuhachi, photographed by Bill Klompas.







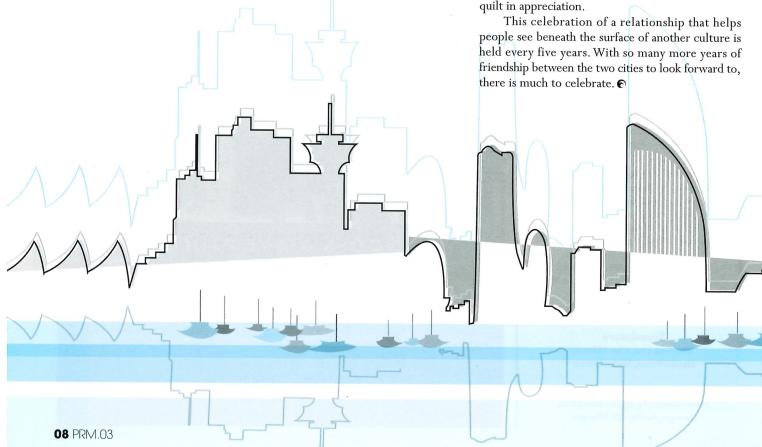
Sister Cities Promoting Peace

By Marianne Birminaham

As a way of promoting peace, many countries began forming sister-city relationships after World War II. These alliances made it easier to provide relief to allied communities after the war and, more recently, have promoted student and economic exchanges that help increase mutual understanding. Vancouver's relationship with Yokohama, one of Japan's busiest port cities, began in 1965.

In 1992, the Yokohama-Vancouver Sister City Internship Program was created by the Yokohama Private School Board and Douglas College. For seven weeks every summer, the program sends students from the University of British Columbia, Douglas College, and Simon Fraser University to work in Yokohama.

To mark the 35th anniversary of Vancouver's sister-city relationship with Yokohama, Mayor Takahide visited Vancouver in 2000. He participated in several official events, including a commemoration ceremony. Takahide met with Vancouver Mayor Philip Owen and gave a speech entitled Making Yokohama a Base for Business in Asia. He also presented the City of Vancouver with a Japanese doll dressed in a traditional silk kimono. Owen presented the City of Yokohama with a traditional





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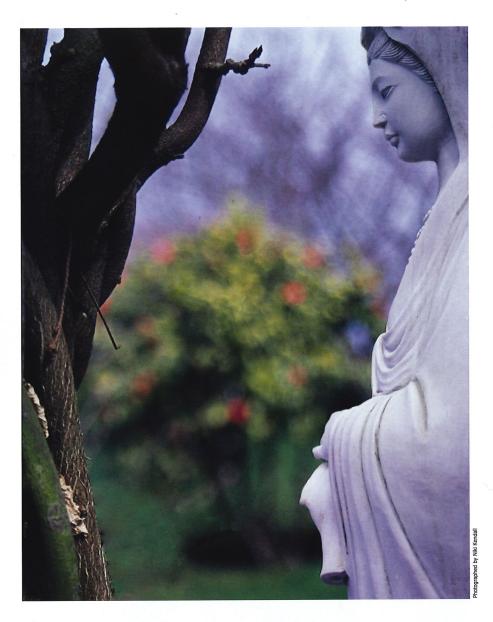
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the secret of the temple garden

By Tom Chavez

Looking east, I faced the morning sun rising over a misty horizon of valley farmland. Standing before the Guan Yin Temple with its sweeping orange tiled roof, I watched as nuns filed silently down the Temple steps, lighting incense bundles in large sand-filled bronze urns. The Temple, surrounded by gardens, seemed to float over the foggy Fraser River flatlands. The perfumed morning air, farmed landscape, and winged roof became an illusory pause in reality. For a moment, I was on the delta of the Yangtze River, a broom-carrying monk from a thousand-year-old scroll painting. Moments later, I was again the gardener of the Temple grounds, beginning my day by sweeping the stairs.

Fifteen years later, when I returned to the mystery of the Temple's name-sake—Guan Yin—she was still there, a lithe character of grace and composure. The marble statue rests atop a carved lotus

flower near one of the Temple's many outdoor shrines. Holding a vase turned earthward, symbolic of the magic dew of compassion she sprinkles over humanity, Guan Yin gently spreads heavenly water, her left hand poised at mid-chest while holding a startling green willow twig.

Guan Yin, the mother of mercy and the benevolent goddess of pre-Buddhist China, has provided solace to those who sought her since time immemorial. This goddess of the people was incorporated into the Buddhist celestial hierarchy as the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. This Sanskrit name means "lord who looks down with compassion." Although her Buddhist form is now gender-neutral, the original spirit of Guan Yin remains.

The Chinese words *GuanYin* roughly translate as "watching" and "sound" or "listening." An omnipresence of everyday life, this divine being watches and listens

over our hardships and common discomforts. Buddhist philosophy defines life as suffering—birth, life, sickness, and death—with the transient nature of our being underscoring each phase. Serving humanity as a mother nurtures her children, Guan Yin's role is to intercede, offering relief from that suffering. The many representations of this deity reflect the feminine roots of the goddess, Guan Yin, whether she is in flowing white garments, reclining on lotus blooms or moonlit water, surrounded by clinging children, or as the Bodhisattva of a thousand hands and a thousand eyes.

I left the Temple grounds on yet another mist-shrouded day. I had sought out Guan Yin when the need for spiritual relief overtook my daily life. I know, once again, I will return in search of the comfort, in search of the compassion of the gentle Guan Yin.



r Watanaka photograhed by Leanne Pedersen



Powell Street Walking Through History By Lisa McIntosh

"Until World War II, Powell Street was the urban and commercial base for the entire Japanese Canadian population scattered around the province of British Columbia. . . . Its history is in many ways the history of Japanese Canadian development from a handful of immigrants to a recognized part of multicultural Canada."

From Memories of Our Past: A Brief History and Walking Tour of Powell Street by Audrey Kobayashi

Touring Vancouver's Powell Street area by foot reveals stories not reflected in the new history of the city's glass towers.

Look and smell closely. Underneath the awnings and cedar shingles, between the false storefronts and stucco façades, the Powell Street area bustles with activity. Warm, aromatic steam oozes from Hon's kitchen. Doors fly open to reveal bags of rice the size of Jacuzzis. Whirring sounds of industry mix with conversation and float down from second story businesses. Pass by the Japanese Canadian owned Sunrise Market, and an array of produce spills colour onto the street. These are the smells, sounds, and sights of Powell Street.

Powell Street is one of the oldest, most historically fertile neighbourhoods in Vancouver—Japanese Canadian history is seeded in its very ground. From 1890 until its temporary wartime uprooting in 1942, Powell Street was home to the burgeoning Japanese Canadian community that provided labour to the Hastings Sawmill, once located where the Port of Vancouver now stands. During this era, shops and services grew along Powell Street to meet the needs of the growing Japanese population. By 1908, the street had taken on a permanent character, its residents fully committed to life as Canadians.

As the neighbourhood grew, the buildings in the area began to grow as well. Japanese Canadians adapted the rows of Victorian homes left behind by their European predecessors, constructing business façades to reflect contemporary Canadian business ideals. They built onto the backs of their houses to incorporate the



varying needs of their families and community. Even today, the peaked roofs of the Victorian homes are still visible from the alley; the variety of stucco, cement, and shingle add-ons make the buildings look like organic entities. Like these houses, the Powell Street area, constrained by neighbours on all sides, had to grow from within. A single lot had to contain a cluster of activities, including businesses to support the needs of the community, residences to

house the growing families, and gardens to feed them.

A collage of its past, both historically and architecturally, the Powell Street area is more than just a geographic location. It holds the collective memory of the first Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver and the story of their struggle for recognition. However, as Takeo Yamashiro, Executive Director of the Japanese Community Volunteers' Association (Tonari Gumi

A collage of its past, both historically and architecturally, the Powell Street area is more than just a geographic location.



Association), has pointed out, community is more than just location—connections with people make a neighbourhood.

Even when Japanese Canadians were uprooted from their Powell Street neighbourhood and interned during World War II, they continued to be a community. In the work camps, they formed *tonari gumi*, or "neighbourhood work groups," to survive. Yamashiro described them as "life brigades" because Japanese Canadians used community support as a strategy to survive internment, both spiritually and physically.

According to Daien Ide, Education Research Assistant at the Japanese Canadian National Museum, during the years following internment, the community felt a sense of guilt about their heritage. For those born in Canada, internment symbolized their removal from their own country's history.

Yamashiro explained that the Japanese Canadians who chose (and could afford) to return to Vancouver's Powell Street area after the war "no longer had a life there, only history." Overwhelmed by the daunting task of starting their lives over again after the Canadian Government and its War Measures Act confiscated most of their property, Japanese Canadians found support in tonari gumi, which provided opportunities to improve their quality of life and affirm their cultural heritage.

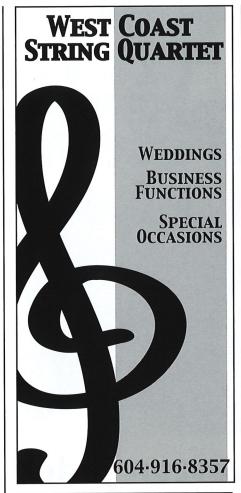
In 1973, the concept of tonari gumi established itself formally in the community with the formation of the Tonari Gumi Association. Initially locating itself on Powell Street to help reclaim the community, the association began with the goal of improving the lives of Vancouver's *Issei*, or "first generation Japanese Canadians," who returned to Vancouver after internment.

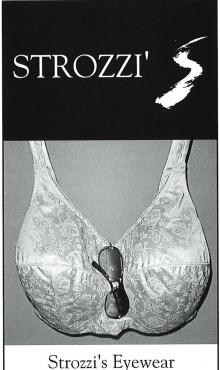
Yamashiro explained that the organization took the name to pay homage to Issei heritage. The term also symbolizes the Japanese Canadian community's durability. Comparing the Issei generation to ours today, Yamashiro noted, "Our lives are too easy. The Issei had cultural hardships, but strong spiritual lives. These days we have professional doctors, but the seniors had to know themselves. They focused on the basics—exercise, walking, balancing emotion with stress."

The Association continues to base many of its practices on the Issei basics, remembering the past, but consciously evolving from it. Takeo explains that Tonari Gumi does not follow rigid guidelines. "Development evolves from within our culture," he stated. "Participants come to us with feedback." In 1988, the Canadian government offered a formal apology for Canada's treatment of Japanese Canadians during the war. More than just monetary remuneration, the Canadian government's Redress Package marked Japanese Canadians' place in Canadian history and returned a sense of pride to community members.

To honour and mark the history of the Powell Street area, the Tonari Gumi Association helped establish the Powell Street Festival in 1977. Intended to break stereotypical assumptions about Japanese Canadians, the festival celebrated the centennial of Manzo Nagano, the first Japanese person to establish himself in New Westminster. The festival features dance, music, theatre, exhibits, sumo matches, martial arts, crafts, and foods. Held annually in early August, the Powell Street Festival continues to celebrate all things Japanese Canadian. The theme for the 2003 Powell Street Festival is Powell Street Paths: Old Routes, New Direction.

The Powell Street area is still very much a neighbourhood to its growing and changing community, now struggling with poverty and a lack of affordable housing. Powell Street residents have always cared about their neighbourhood, or more accurately, they have always cared about the people who make up their community. Scouting out the architectural markers of Japanese Canadians' history on Powell Street reminds us that history must be weighed against present concerns—it's the interdependence, well-being, and efforts of the people in a community that help neighbourhoods like Powell Street endure. Even if the area changes, its legacy of community will remain in the collective memory of all Canadians.





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Steveston Judo Club Celebrates 50 years of Success

By Kiran Dhanoa

Jigoro Kano finally reached his limit one day in late 19th century Japan. Humiliated because he was unable to defend himself, Kano poured over literature about combat techniques and physical fitness,

Five foot two and often bullied by local ruffians,

poured over literature about combat techniques and physical fitness, taking what he liked from Jujitsu and integrating other techniques and elements such as mental discipline. The next time he met a bullish opponent, he had him on the ground in seconds. The new sport he developed in 1882 is now called Judo.

Bringing Kano's newly developed sport with them, the Japanese people settled in the township of Steveston, now a part of the City of Richmond, BC. Beginning as a fishing village, the town initially attracted settlers from Japan in the late 1870s. Despite discrimination from those around them, the Japanese immigrants, like so many newcomers, endeavored to make their homes in Canada. The Judo Club they developed began as a section of the Steveston Seinen Kai, or "youth group," in the 1920s, but was disbanded in 1940 when Canada's War Measures Act forced Japanese Canadians out of Vancouver's Lower Mainland and into internment camps.

In 1952, 80 members of the Judo Club returned to Steveston to rebuild. With a \$15,000 donation from the Japanese Citizenship Association to build the Steveston Community Centre, the Judo Club eventually found a permanent home. According to Judo Club President Alan Sakai, this donation created "a special association within the Steveston community which wouldn't be there if it were a stand-alone club down the street." The beautiful *dojo* or

"practice hall," designed by architect Arnaulf H. Petzel, is the only dojo built outside of Japan.

Part of the Steveston Community Centre, the volunteer-run club makes its home in the Steveston Martial Arts Centre. Currently boasting 150 members as well as many *Ko-en-kai* or "Booster Club" members, the Judo Club's strong foundation of coaching and instruction gives it an international reputation for excellence. Over the past 50 years, thousands of people in Steveston and Richmond have been introduced to Judo, with numerous members becoming national champions, and one representing Canada at the Olympics.

This year, the club is celebrating its 50th anniversary with reunion events, tournaments, a photographic exhibition, and the production of a documentary film, which will showcase the history of the Steveston Judo Club as well as the contributions Japanese Canadians have made to Canada. In honour of the Club's sustained commitment to the study and teaching of Judo, a restored calligraphy painting of Kano's Judo Code of Ethics, originally presented to the club during his 1938 visit to Vancouver, will be exhibited at the Martial Arts Centre.

In his 1934 speech in Athens, Greece, Kano stated, "As long as a person wishes to be a member of the community, he must deem it his duty to keep society in being and do his part to prevent its disintegration." Highlighting Kano's sentiment is another way the Steveston Judo Club plans to proudly celebrate its 50th anniversary.

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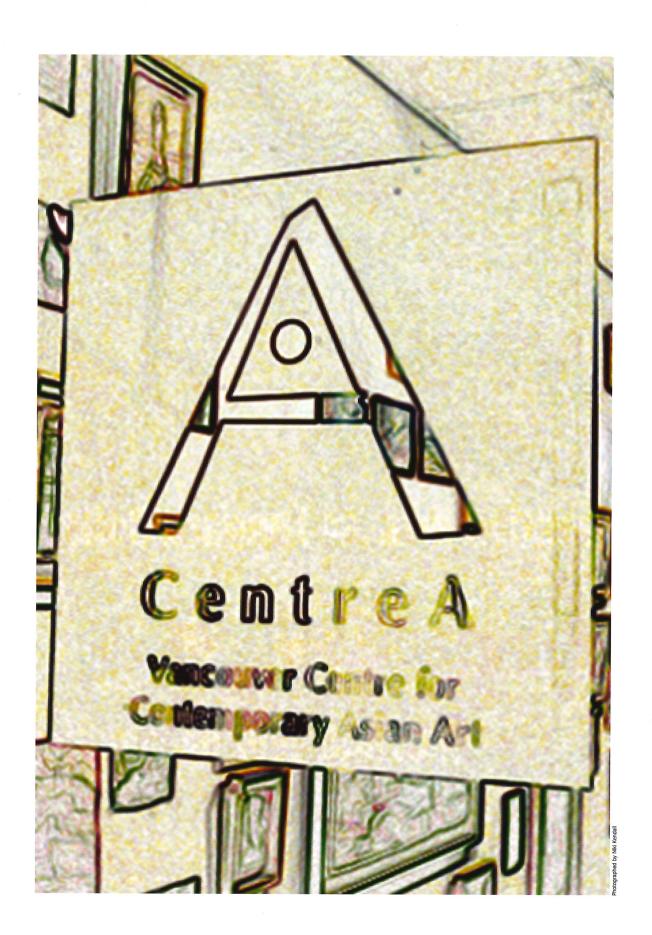


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GLOBAL ART TAKES CENTRE STAGE

By Chris Bradshaw

THREE CANADIAN ARTISTS EXPLORE IMMIGRANT CULTURE AND THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

A low, guttural rumble shakes the ground beneath your feet. It's not an earthquake but the sound of Canada's cultural centre shifting from Toronto to the West Coast.

The shift is already in progress if Hank Bull has anything to say about it. Bull is the Executive Director of Centre A—the Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art—based in Vancouver. With Asian economies ascending on the world stage in the past decade, a new generation of artists has emerged to challenge the dominance of traditional Western values in the production of art.

The shift began with a seminal Chinese exhibition titled *Jaingnan*, or "South of the [Yangtze] River," in 1998, bringing 25 artists and another 25 scholars together from all over the world to celebrate the modern and contemporary art of the region. Twelve Vancouver galleries participated in the project, hosting a major international symposium focusing on Chinese art in the 20th century.

The exhibit energized local art mavens, with Bull using the momentum to pool resources around the concept of Centre A. With the financial assistance of private donors, the gallery opened its doors in July 2000. Since then, the Centre has produced over 20 exhibitions, two international symposiums, and a number of performance events.

One of the ways Centre A demonstrates its creative agenda is through the use of themes, which help raise funds and focus public attention on emerging trends. This year's theme is *Transculturation and Globalization*, the focal point for a unique group exhibit of nine emerging Asian Canadian artists showing from May 9 to June 8, 2003 at Centre A and online at www.ccca.ca.

Produced in collaboration with the South Asian Visual Arts Collective and funded by a grant from the Canada Council's New Media division, the project included an open call for artists from across Canada. Nine artists from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Ontario were chosen for the project coordinated by Centre A curator, Sadira Rodrigues, new media artist Sylvia Grace Borda, and UBC assistant professor and artist Gu Xiong.





Desire For Sale (Billboard Proposal) by Pravin Pillay

"We decided to have three components to the project," said Rodrigues, "the first being a workshop in conjunction with the *Locating Asia* symposium. Then there would be a six-month period in which the artists would create proposals for projects. Then, of course, the third phase is the creation of work and then the exhibition." Among the artists chosen for the exhibit are Neena Arora, Shelly Bahl, and Pravin Pillay.

Neena Arora is a visual artist exploring the definition and boundaries of public space using video and digital imagery. Arora, who possesses dual citizenship, expressed how she was struck by the effect of recent world events on American culture. "As the piece is progressing, I feel more drawn to that idea of freedom in space and what freedom is now," she said, "because after 9/11, things have changed. I think even with technology and the Internet, privacy becomes an issue. It seems that at a time when we are discussing ideas of globalization, the world is getting smaller, not larger."

Arora also talked about the difficulties American immigrants face in publicly claiming their native culture in this charged environment. "I guess on one level, intellectually maybe, things haven't changed. But what people would not have said in the past about differences, they're not afraid to say now."

Shelly Bahl is an artist who has served as a curatorial resident in contemporary art at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Around the year 2000, her work shifted from installation-based multimedia projects to a series of brightly coloured paintings on paper, available for viewing at www.ccca.ca/artists/.

"The works you see there are very bright, almost like comic book paintings and have a strong influence from Indian miniature paintings based on narratives from that time," Bahl said. "What's happening in some of my newer videos, settling on the arts as a focus for his creative muse.

The focus of Pravin's project is an archival photo of his family as they emigrated from their native India to South Africa, where he was born. He had seen

treasured family memento. It represented an archetypal image of cultural colonialism passed down from generation to generation of immigrant families around the world.

as well as a couple of new works on paper, is that the narratives are not really based in any sort of recognizable time."

One of Bahl's current narratives follows a classical Indian dancer as the woman wanders the streets of New York performing her dance piece in an urban space rather than on a traditional stage.

"I'm really interested in what happens when visual culture is transmitted and available all over the place, when people start to combine these references and lose track of where they originated from, or when we label a particular cultural form as being Asian or Western, and what happens when those things no longer really exist."

Pravin Pillay, whose portfolio includes large-scale earth-based works, performance, and photo-conceptual multimedia installations, explored various careers with the federal government, oil companies, and First Nations groups before the photo before, but his recent experience at the symposium infused the picture with new significance.

"I looked at this picture and it occurred to me that all the men wore suits with British style collars and big curly mustaches. The women had saris but they wore Edwardian type blouses with high collars and sleeves right down to the wrists."

Pravin soon realized the photograph was much more than a treasured family memento. It represented an archetypal image of cultural colonialism passed down from generation to generation of immigrant families around the world.

"So they were taken into South Africa, where they became the colonial face to native South Africans. And here they were, being colonized themselves and now presenting a kind of fiction, because this is what they now believed was upright and proper civilization. Once

20 PRM.03 continued on page 52

Imagine expanses of empty space, a haven of silence, a place to rest. Imagine empty space, both evocative and tranquil, providing a framework for your life.

Empty space, expressed in the Japanese words Yohaku no bi, or "extra white," is space intentionally left blank, and originally referred to the untouched areas in ink wash paintings. Dating back to the Sung Dynasty, when the Zen-inspired aesthetic of monochromatic ink wash paintings spread to Japan, Yohaku was an important concept in the arts during the Heian period, prevailing even today in modern Japan.

The Paths to HAKU

Amid the busy-ness of our daily lives, Yohaku is a pause, a space in which to breathe, to contemplate, and to rest.

By Jo Ann Kronquist

Empty space, or Yohaku, refers to the integral tenet of Zen philosophy, reducing things to their simplest essence to facilitate meditation and contemplation. The ways this mental repose is sought and achieved are as personal and varied as the people practicing them. For three Vancouverites, empty space has become a part of their daily lives, leading to a more peaceful, relaxed way of living.

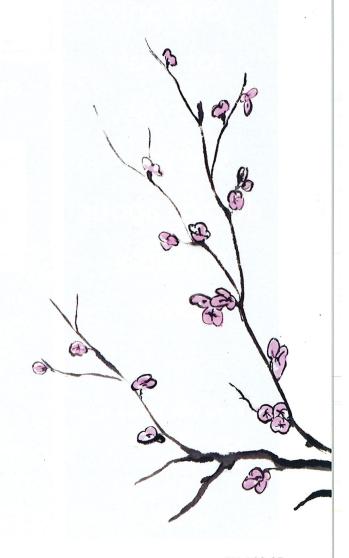
According to Ayako Sakaino, the path to empty space is found through *Cha no yu*, which means "the way of tea." Trained in Japan, Sakaino conducts classes in her transformed garage, now a beautiful, traditional Japanese teahouse. A pathway bordered with greenery leads through two gates along the side of the house to the tearoom. As you pass through each gate, the sounds of traffic and the busy-ness of 16th Avenue become more distant. For Sakaino, walking along the path acts as a transition from the outside to the inside, a process intended to help calm your mind and enable you to leave your troubles outside.

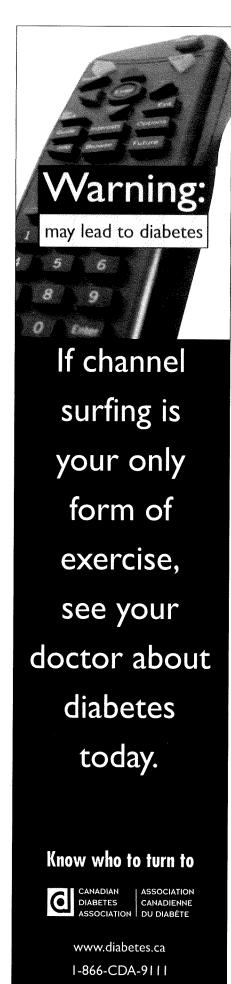
Once inside the tearoom, you are ready to fully partake in the tea ceremony. The room reinforces the sense of quiet initiated on the pathway. With tatami mats covering the floor, the tearoom evokes a sense of serenity with its earthy tones, use of natural materials, and soft lighting.

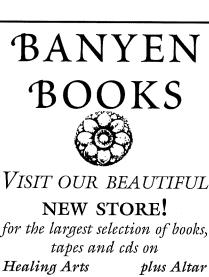
The ritual of the tea ceremony stimulates each of the five senses. The taste of the sweets accompanying the green tea, the hissing of the kettle echoing the sounds of the pine wind, the earthy fragrance of the incense, the quiet colours and textures of the tearoom, and the designs on the lacquerware all serve to heighten each sense. By engaging the senses, thoughts become focused on the present experience, allowing participants to be in the moment.

As Sakaino performs the rituals of the tea ceremony, she consciously empties her mind of thoughts to allow for full concentration on the movements of the way of tea, prescribed in a ballet-like sequence. The ceremony becomes a meditative experience for Sakaino, bringing peace of mind and the ability to work out solutions to life's problems. She acknowledges the way of tea is not for everyone, for we all must find our own path.

For Dr. Tim Yeomans, a general practitioner for 25 years, the path to empty space and meditation led him from traditional medicine, through a wooden archway and meandering gardens, to the Tzu Chi Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.





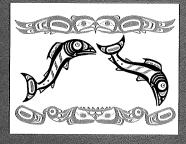


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Working with a health care team at the Institute, including acupuncturists, chiropractors, naturopaths, registered dieticians, massage therapists, and psychologists, Yeomans teaches classes about the benefits of being present in the moment and how this reduces the impact of stress on the body.

According to Yeomans, coping in our modern world is a radical change from



our past. Before the advent of agriculture, he explained, people had a more intimate relationship with the land. Rituals and a huge body of knowledge about the natural world reinforced this connection, only to be broken with the rise of agriculture. Instead of being part of the land, humans separated themselves by controlling it.

"We are always on a fast, hot clip to who knows where," said Yeomans when talking about society's incessant busy-ness. According to Yeomans, stress increases our cortisol levels. If the levels remain high, our immune systems will not be able to heal our bodies properly. Emptying the mind through meditation focuses on our state of being, lowering cortisol levels and giving the body a chance to heal itself. To help guide clients down this pathway, The Tzu Chi Institute offers meditation and yoga classes.

A sidewalk down a quiet street is the path leading to the calming presence of Carolyn McManus, a yoga instructor for the past ten years. Trained in the Astanga, Iyengar, and Sivananda styles, McManus explained how the physical part of yoga, the asanas, or "poses," prepare the body for meditation. According to McManus, meditation is an act of volition, an act of consciously emptying your mind of thoughts and being present with the breath, or by using controlled breathing techniques.

"Although everyone is moving in the same direction," said McManus, "ninetynine percent of the people buy into our way of life by rushing around and not taking the time to tune in." The stress path, as McManus has named it, is not our true nature. When slowing down the mind

Cwhere Comfort Means Slavery By Troy Germaine Taylor



Kidnapped and subjected to sexual slavery during WWII, the Comfort Women are still searching for an apology. Their struggle continues.

When sixteen-year-old Lee Ok Soon arrived in China, her clothing was covered in filth and blood. Told she could work off the debt for the clean clothes she received, Lee Ok Soon, on the bare concrete floor where she slept, worked hard servicing 30 to 40 military men a day. For three years, her vagina was raw and red with pain, and her body ached from endless beatings. Venereal disease haunted her constantly while the military doctors, also known for raping their patients, pumped her full of toxic injections known as 606. Every day, she wished she were dead.

It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of girls and women were abducted during World War II and transported to Japanese military stations throughout Southeast Asia. Those left living carry a pain too brutal to imagine. Some of the women have grown to fear and hate men. Some are haunted by recurring nightmares. Still others have been unable to reach orgasm or any type of physical pleasure in their relationships. Having lived in fear of ostracization most of their lives, the former comfort women have had to suffer out their lives in silence—until now.

In the busy city of Seoul, Dr. Yun Chung Ok, former president of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (the Korean Council), works diligently at preparing for the next conference on the euphemistically named "comfort women."

Having just barely escaped abduction by the Japanese when she was 17, Yun has spent most of her life fighting for both an apology to, and compensation for, the victims of the sexual slavery forced on the girls and women who were taken from, not only Korea, but also the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia (and Holland), China, and even Japan. Monuments to the unknown soldier dot the planet everywhere, but nowhere can be found a monument to the unknown comfort woman, a fact Yun intends to change.

After repeated attempts to attain justice for the 136 former comfort women left living and the estimated 400,000 dead, Yun has finally got the

reason we brought the Japanese Emperor to court was not because we wanted revenge, but because we wanted justice. Without this justice, world peace is not possible. In Japan, many people have no knowledge their Emperor was convicted—they deny everything. They are really good at denying the truth, and they are really good at minimizing the truth, and they are really good at destroying the truth." This year in Tokyo, an international meeting about what should happen after the trial was held. Although Yun and others handed the verdict from the 2000 Tribunal to the Japanese Foreign Minister, they have heard nothing from the Japanese government since.

And they should realize this should never, ever happen again."

The Japanese government has argued to the United Nations and the Tribunals' judges that it has, in fact, apologized and offered compensation under what it calls the Asian Women's Fund, money raised from the private sector. However, the 2000 Tribunal's judgement rejects the Japanese government's attempt to placate the victims with a hollow apology and money from outside sources. The judges called upon author Yoshimi Yoshiaki, professor of Modern Japanese History at Chuo University in Tokyo, to interpret Japan's apology made, not to the victims, but to their countries' government officials.

"They couldn't run away. They hardly had time to

conviction for which she has long been fighting. With the help of many other organizations worldwide, Yun worked for years to set up the Women's International War Crimes Tribunals on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery. Held in Tokyo in 2000, and later in The Hague in 2001, the Tribunals' panel of international judges listened to the testimonies of over 75 survivors. Finding Japanese officials guilty of "both individual and superior responsibility for the rapes and sexual slavery committed as part of the comfort system," the Tribunal convicted, in absentia, the seemingly invincible Emperor Hirohito, along with 11 others.

Having based the Tribunals on Bertrand Russell's model initiated during the Vietnam War, Yun emphasized, "The

Indeed, silence is all the Japanese government has offered so far. In Tokyo, Ms Nishino Rumiko, a prominent Japanese author and human rights activist, echoed Yun's concerns. "For the last 10 years," she said, "women from South Korea, China, The Philippines, and Holland submitted cases to the court against the Japanese government, but most of them were dismissed. The most important thing we are asking for in this Tribunal is an apology from the Japanese government. The second thing we want is for them to admit that they did it, that it was wrong, that it was a crime. And we want reparations, but the money without the apology means nothing. For the victims, it is important that the assailants admit the crime, acknowledge their remorse, and apologize to the victims.

In their apology, the Japanese government uses the word owabi, loosely translated into English as "apology." For Professor Yoshimi, however, owabi is only "slightly more weighty than an 'excuse me' offered when one bumps shoulders with someone on the subway." In transcripts from the Tribunals, the judges state, "Many survivors rejected the offered grant of the [Asian Women's] Fund on two grounds: it was not accompanied by a genuine apology, and the funds came from private and not governmental sources. We note that the survivors' position is confirmed by the conclusion of the UN Special Rapporteur that the Fund is 'a clear statement denying any legal responsibility." To add even more insult to injury, the Japanese government has repeatedly allowed its

officials to refer to the abducted and imprisoned sexual slaves as "volunteers."

Meanwhile, Lee Ok Soon, now 76, still suffers from the forced sexual slavery of her teens. Living in a specially designed nursing home exclusive to former Korean comfort women, she told of the ostracization she still experiences. "I have two brothers and two sisters who are younger than me," she said. "My brothers come to visit me quite often-now they knowbut back in 1996 when I was first reunited with them, I didn't tell them any details. Now, they feel sorry for me and spend time with me and counsel me, but my two sisters are very different. They feel quite ashamed of me and say that it was all my fault. They won't visit me at all."

and now, stating, "In Japan, they have a theory of two kinds of women, the clean kind and the dirty kind. The clean kinds include wives and sisters—and the men have to protect them. The dirty kinds are any women out there, including comfort women. They can use these dirty women, and there's no guilty feeling whatsoever. Even now, many Japanese men share the same view. In the 2000 Tribunal, there were two former Japanese soldiers who actually had sex with these comfort women. They actually said that when they had sex with them, they didn't have any guilty feelings. In fact, they felt pretty good

out their clothes on."

Although Lee married in China and never revealed her past to her husband for fear of rejection, her pain and suffering from the three years in the comfort station haunted her for the next 55 years. "I got so many injections of 606 that I was unable to have children, but my husband came with a son and a daughter. He didn't know," she explained. "There was no way I could marry anyone if I revealed what happened to me, so nobody, including my step-children, knew." Because of the 606 and the endless sexual brutality in the comfort stations, Lee, prior to her husband's death, was finally stripped of her reproductive organs in a battle with ovarian cancer.

Ms Kim Yun Ok, president of the Korean Council, unequivocally described the Japanese attitude toward women then





S O U N D

Intercultural musicians, with roots in traditional Asian music, are composing new and innovative works for a growing Western audience.

By Ann Goncalves

With the soft, agile fingers of her right hand, she caresses and plucks the strings stretching across the top of the instrument. The strings, at least 20 of them, are each held up by a bridge. Below the bridge, her left hand stretches, firmly gripping and bending the strings and the pitch. The harsh sounds tremble and ache. The blur of her racing fingers creates lightly falling rain, then a storm of sound, and finally a sweep into the twilight.

He holds a different musical instrument. It is a large piece of bamboo. His face is intense and shaking, blowing out vibrations. His fingers meld and flutter. Reflections of the many voices of nature sound out—frayed and gusty winds, sweet and breathy whispers, penetrating shrills and drones.

Vancouver's strong ties to the Pacific Rim

produce a local music scene rich with international music. Mei Han and Alcvin Ramos are two intercultural musicians who create innovative personal compositions influenced by their extensive knowledge of traditional Asian music. They count themselves among a field of artists who create New Music—a contemporary mix of musical styles and traditions.

These New Music experimentalists, like the Avant Garde musicians before them, take music to the next level—a divergent path that challenges and rewards the Western ear with deep expression and subtle nuance.



Each note has its own life and meaning expressed in different tones.

Traditional kinds of music in China and Japan have existed for over 2,000 years. Interpretation of this music depends on the performer's personal experience and understanding of the traditions. Mei Han, an authority on the zheng (or "Chinese long zither") and performer of traditional Chinese and contemporary music, has trained since the age of ten and received her first Master's degree from the Musical Research Institute at the Chinese Arts Academy in Beijing. Han explained that, in China, a conservatorytrained musician has to know Western music theory. "It's very ironic," she said. "Most Chinese musicians don't know Chinese music. They know better about Western music."

Han's two Master's degrees in Ethnomusicology benefit her work, helping her feel more grounded and rooted in traditional music. "It's very funny," laughed Han. "Although I'd say I was a traditional performer, my expression of traditional pieces was shallow. But now, it's deep. I'm trying to go even deeper."

For Alcvin Ramos, playing his shaku-hachi, or "Japanese bamboo flute," which is best appreciated as a solo instrument, is a spiritual practice. "The way you learn traditional shakuhachi is so different from the way you learn Western music," stressed Ramos. "To understand it deeply, you have to go into the culture." Before Ramos performs a piece, he describes its historic and poetic background to help people grasp the music.

Ramos studied only traditional Japanese music but was raised in contemporary Western culture. He believes that in order to appreciate music from different cultures, it helps to recognize that each culture listens to sound in unique ways. The shakuhachi makes use of many notes that do not fall within the pentatonic tuning of Western music.

John Oliver, new music composer and performer, noted in an e-mail that, in working with Tokyo musicians Kazuhisa Uchihashi and Yahuhiro Otani, he found they shared a common desire to create quieter listening space in the music. Traditional Japanese music aesthetics express natural sounds and space not usually heard in Western music.

To the Chinese, sound and music have a relationship with expression in poetry and philosophy. Each note has its own life and meaning expressed in different tones. The tonal colours, in contrast to Western music, denote the relationship between sound, silence, and nature. It is a spiritual relationship corresponding with other Asian music traditions.

Westerners are becoming more interested in traditional Asian music as they hear its parallel with contemporary music. Many contemporary musicians from diverse cultural backgrounds have also discovered the beauty and elaborate expression of traditional instruments. Jazz great John Coltrane travelled to Japan to learn how to play the shakuhachi and deepen the spiritual quality of his music.

Minimalist composer John Cage also visited Japan, inspiring the completely silent piece "4 minutes and 33 seconds." He was known to use the Chinese *I Ching* in his music, art, and daily life.

Local musicians like Mei Han similarly find riches in Asian traditional forms. Before Han came to Canada, she was a strict traditionalist, unfamiliar with the concept of New Music. Today, Han is an accomplished improvisational artist, exploring new directions for the zheng and combining traditional with contemporary work that shares the common ground of freedom and expression. "The theory of the 2000-year-old Chinese music clearly states, again and again, about this musical expression—it should be free," emphasized Han. "The breath of music is the breath of nature, the breath of air." This same freedom guides New Music.

Han collaborated with Randy Raine-Reusch, an improvisational composer and artist specializing in world instruments, to release the album *Distant Wind*. Together, they try to create new works that maintain the spirit and aesthetics of traditional Chinese music. Another gratifying aspect Han finds in New Music is creating new sounds from the zheng by using anything she can get her hands on to make the sounds she wants.

The Fate of the Immigrant Ships



They came, but never left. The immigrant ships find a permanent home in Port Alberni.

By Fiona de Monyé

The rusted hulls miserably creaked together, lending voice to the ghostly ships as they drifted towards the end of their journey. A few broken shards of glass hung where windows once had been. Covered with rust, the boats' colour was difficult to discern. Two of them listed sideways while another had holes rusted right through the rails. Frayed and grimy ropes snaked haphazardly across the decks as doors pulled crookedly at hinges.

These infamous vessels—so horrific in appearance they made onlookers gasp—brought 599 desperate Chinese immigrants to Canada in search of a new life in 1999. Since then, a large number of the immigrants have been sent home, and the ships have been seized, but not forgotten.

Never claimed by their Chinese owners, the boats became the property of the Federal Crown Assets Department and languished in place until Brooke George, president of the Port Alberni Reef Society, made a proposal to the Canadian government to purchase the ships. George said it was an invaluable opportunity to preserve something that had played such an important role in the lives of some of Canada's newest immigrants. The federal government agreed to sell George the vessels—but only as a package—so he bought all four derelict boats for \$1,000 Cdn.

Society and many local divers led the way, spending innumerable hours doing the hard physical labour. The Dragonfly Youth Team also offered their time and were helped by other volunteers and people who fulfilled their community service requirements by working on the boats.

Volunteers had to remove all hydrocarbons, fuel, oil, grease, and soot, as well as any wood or wires from the ships. The ships were then gutted, meaning the engine, ballast and piping were removed, and excess fuel was sold to the local McLean's Mill Steam Train.

Brooke George and fellow Reef

boats were finally ready to be sunk. Preparations were made to sink two of the boats in Underwood Cove, just off China Creek Marina in Port Alberni, and the third at Seachart in Barclay Sound.

Sinking the boats was a complex process, with the frailty of the boats being a major concern. In fact, the rustiest boat was in such poor condition that, according to Shane Morrow, "you probably could have put your fist through the hull bottom." Morrow proved to be correct, as the whole front of the bow caved in when the crew attempted to tow the ship. They eventually managed to tow two

These infamous



Society member Sven Juthens, a local diver, were so devoted to the project they each spent \$5,000 of their own money to help fix up the ships. In addition, the Federal Government provided \$75,000 in funding for this unique project, and the National Sportsman Fund donated another \$10,000.

Locals came daily to watch the progress or to get a second look at the haunting boats. Word about the project got out, and divers from all over Vancouver Island came to observe. People were even interested in venturing onto the ships. Eager to comply, the Reef Society conducted tours of the ships by donation. Although the tours were quite disturbing to some people, for many, understanding the past of the ships was important. Shane Morrow commented, "People came off crying, just like they'd been to a concentration camp." Steve Cyr, a local diver, agreed that knowing the ships were used to carry immigrants across the ocean will make diving to them a more meaningful experience.

After being moored in Port Alberni's Harbour Quay for just over a year, the

vessels—so horrific
in appearance they
made onlookers gasp—
brought 599 desperate
Chinese immigrants
to Canada in search
of a new life.

ships to the designated location of Underwood Cove, where they tried mooring them with two 1,800 kilogram blocks per ship. This was not enough for one of the boats, which began to sink too fast and was "lost at sea" more than 90 metres offshore. The sinking of the second boat was more successful, and is now the only artificial reef in North America that can be reached from land. The third boat, sunk in Seachart a little later, is a shallow reef and easily accessed from a nearby vacation lodge.

During their time above water, the ships provided insight into the plight of the Chinese refugees while unifying an entire community, who were proud to be involved with such an important part of Canadian history. Now on the ocean floor, they serve as permanent markers of the immigrants' desperate journey, continuing to interest and educate tourists and locals alike. The boats will always represent an important part of British Columbia and Canada's history. Thanks to the residents of Port Alberni, and seemingly guided by fate, the ships have found their final resting place. §

Three of the four ships were slated to be sunk as artificial reefs, while the fourth, a Korean fishing vessel, was in good enough condition to keep afloat. The diving community in Port Alberni was excited about this new project, unaware of how involved it would become in the complex project. Before any of the ships could be sunk, they had to meet Environment Canada's cleaning regulations, which, according to Paul Blake, director of the sinking preparation, "are the most stringent regulations in the world to build an artificial reef." The federal government spent \$100,000 on decontamination, including the removal of 55 tons of garbage, feces, and vomit, and blasted them with chemical steam to eliminate biological contaminants. After this process, George had the ships towed into Port Alberni, where they were destined to change many more people's lives.

When the ships arrived in the quiet logging town, they still required thousands of hours of work. Fortunately, several volunteers were more than willing to help. Members of the Alberni Reef



Sayonara Français?

With the growing number of Pacific Rim investors in BC, it isn't surprising that BC high school students, required to study a second language for graduation, are choosing Asian languages over the more traditional choice of French. Geographically (and perhaps with their long-term career goals in mind), it may make more sense, but in officially bilingual Canada, some worry the trend has a price.

French has always played a vital role in Canadian history and politics. In several Canadian provinces, including Ontario, New Brunswick, and Quebec, French speakers make up the majority, with French remaining the number one second language taught in high schools across the country. But with the growing demand for Asian languages in its schools, the BC Ministry of Education has had to relocate funds to fulfill these needs, creating worries that even the highly popular French immersion programs are taking a back seat to the trend toward Asian languages.

When Kim Lockhart, a French Immersion teacher with a Master's of Educational Administration, moved from Quebec City to Vancouver in May 1996, she found a surprising demand for French Immersion teachers. However, according to Lockhart, over the last three years the demand for those positions has decreased significantly. Lockhart believes the growing

interest in Asian languages shouldn't be at the expense of French programs. "French should be mandatory," said Lockhart. "It's not that other languages aren't important, but they should be in addition to French."

Until recently it seemed the province agreed. BC has been among the top provinces to promote French immersion, which many believe helps bridge the divide between Western and Eastern Canada.

Shannon Joba is a high school Japanese teacher. Her students come from diverse backgrounds. She's thrilled with how many students have taken an interest in her class, and for her part, feels there should be more of a push for Asian languages. Joba suggests European languages may be challenging for many students who come from Asian backgrounds, stating, "The majority of my students are internationals and have some basic understanding of Asian languages and culture. French is too foreign to them; therefore, they feel more comfortable studying a familiar language."

In Ms Joba's grade 11 class, several students voiced their reasons for studying Japanese instead of French. The majority of the class believed Japanese would be easier to learn and would offer more employment opportunities in Vancouver. One student said, "I don't like French. I took it one year and it was difficult. The sounds, the grammar—Japanese is more

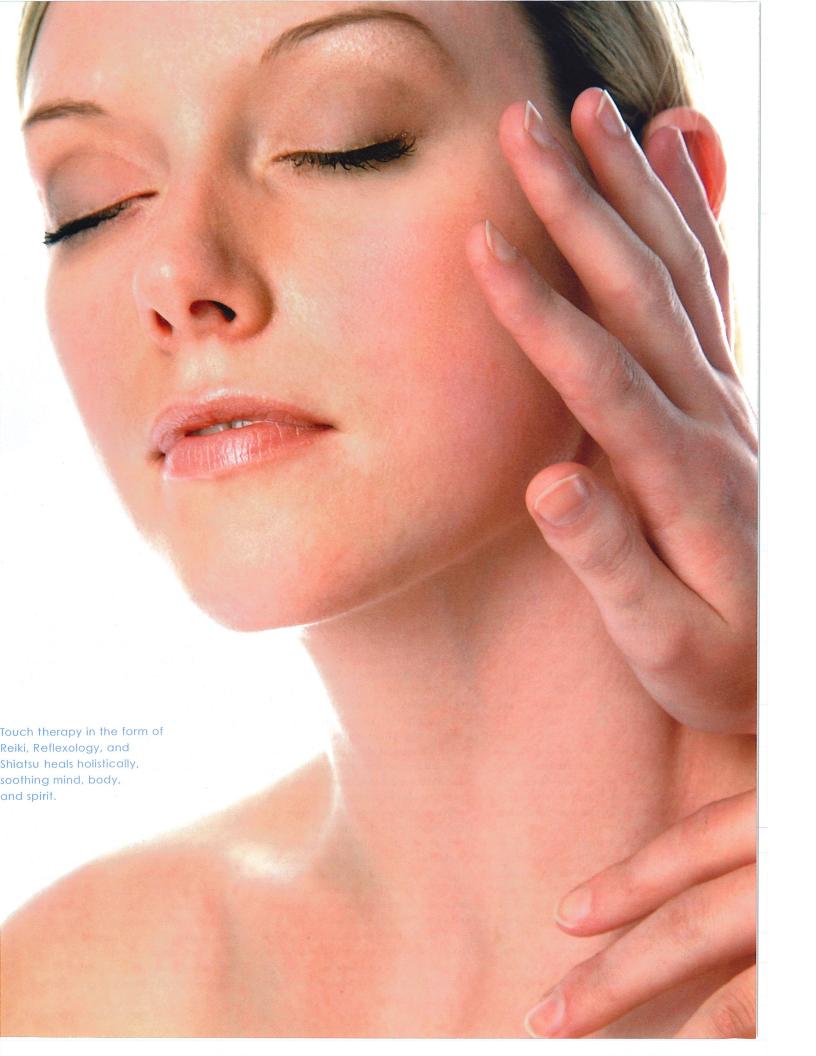
familiar." Some students, however, were sorry they chose Japanese over French. "Japanese is part of my culture. I'm half Japanese," said one student. "I thought it would be easy, but it's not!"

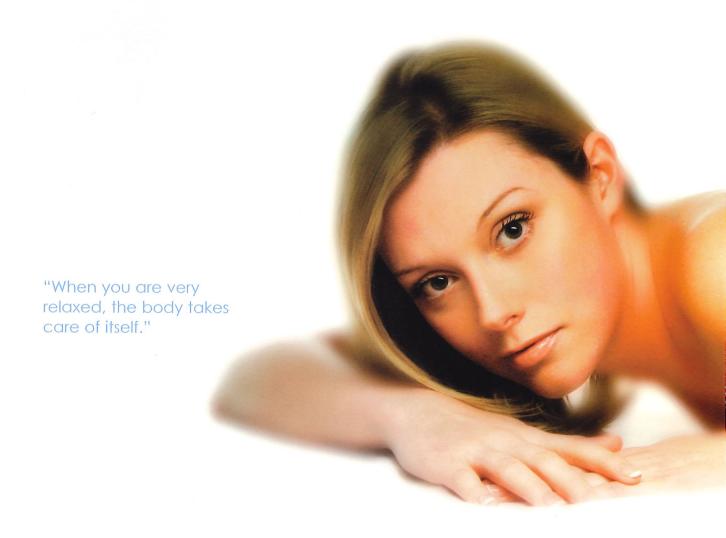
Unfortunately, all of this debate may be moot—and the language popularity contest within high schools may not be the biggest issue at hand. The BC Ministry of Education has proposed a new outline to review graduation requirements for the province. If this proposed review is passed, students will not be required to study secondary languages beyond grade ten, leaving many to wonder if students will pursue further study of second languages through their senior high school years.

Julie Nishi is the Japanese representative for the BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages, a specialist association of the BC Teachers Federation. Although her focus is Japanese, Nishi encourages support in any and all languages. "All language teachers should be aware of what happens within the Ministry of Education because change affects us all."

It seems the future of language study in BC is unknown. No one knows if the popularity of Mandarin and Japanese will continue to grow in BC, or if French will make a comeback, but if all language study is cut back, the question becomes a larger one, and Canada's westernmost province could have a language debate all its own.

the power of touch





The outside world has suddenly become silent. Inside, wearing only a comfy robe, I easily forget all my worries and relax into my own breathing. Chimes and bells magically jingle in the background. I lie on my back, wrapped in a generous, down-stuffed comforter, safe and warm in my very own cocoon. I am preparing for some touch therapy.

A place where we can relax and rejuvenate, the spa provides a refuge from our busy lives and the stress that can wear down our immune systems, resulting in disease. Touch therapies, such as Shiatsu, Reflexology, and Reiki, offered at many Vancouver spas, provide much needed relief.

Although these treatments are often thought to have come from Japan, they actually originated in China. In ancient times, Chinese physicians discovered that by applying pressure to certain areas of the body they could calm both psychological and physical conditions such as depression, insomnia, muscular tension, and pain. These early researchers learned that pressure combined with human touch

can stimulate the body's natural healing powers. Think back to the last time you stubbed your toe or hit your head. What did you automatically do to stop the hurt? No doubt, you instinctively moved your hand to place pressure on the injury.

In her role as Reiki practitioner, Angie Tham describes herself as a vessel of healing universal energy to be passed along to the client during treatment. Entering a state of absolute relaxation, I can hear Tham regulate her breathing with mine. Without actually touching my face, Tham's hands radiate surprising warmth. Applying strong yet gentle pressure, her hands move from the crown of my head down to my neck, firmly gripping my shoulders before slowly gliding over the length of each arm. My stomach, hips, and legs get the same treatment. Grounded throughout, I feel a sensation of well-being. My aches and pains dissolve.

"We, the Reiki practitioner," explains Tham, "allow for a universal energy to enter us. We can use that energy to help others. When you are very relaxed the body takes care of itself. I perform the Reiki that allows the universal energy to go through me to you." Since the Reiki practitioner must regularly have Reiki done to herself, Tham joins others trained in the technique to perform Reiki on each other twice a month.

By the time Tham moves to my feet, I have decided I'm never leaving this room. She begins moulding each foot one at a time. Shifting from Reiki to Reflexology, Tham begins to apply pressure to very particular areas, massaging the sides of each foot, the toes, heel, ball of the foot, and arch.

Reflexology, performed on the feet only, uses acupressure to free the flow of energy in the body. "When we are ill, it is often because we have too much energy in a particular place," Tham explains. "For example, one could have blockages in the heart or in the stomach and this causes pain, making a person worried and tense. This only makes the problem worse. Relaxation is the key to getting better. The body always strives to get well, but



healing zones

By Fiona McLean & Troy Germaine Taylor

Reflexology is a healing technique that concentrates on specific pressure points, otherwise known as reflex points, of the body. However, Reflexology applies pressure solely to the feet and hands of the receiver rather than the

entire body.

Discovered in Egyptian
wall paintings from as early
as 2330 BC, Reflexology
likely originated around
4000 BC, close to the
same time as acupuncture.
According to The Book of
Massage by Lucinda Lidell, further
developments and techniques were
developed in the 20th century by therapist
Eunice Ingham, who found that the feet
were the most responsive to this treatment. Reflexology practitioners believe
that the body's energy flow can become
blocked. Specific areas on the hands and

feet correspond to certain organs, glands, and other parts of the body. Manipulation and massage of these points frees the energy flow, restoring balance and harmony to the receiver.

While there are several theories behind Reflexology practice, the Zone theory, followed by the International Institute

of Reflexology, focuses on the ten zones in the body paralleled

> by the five zones in each foot or hand. Where there are tender spots in the hand or foot, there will most likely be pain or tension in the corresponding parts of the body.

Reflexology can be especially beneficial in stress-related problems, helping to alleviate the

body from holding negative emotional patterns that can lead to chronic pain. With the inside of the foot closely correlating to the spine in both the number of bones and curves, the treatment is especially beneficial for back problems. ©





the ancient therapy

By Fiona McLean

Shiatsu massage is an ancient healing therapy, which, according to *The Book of Massage* by Lucinda Lidell, originated from traditional Chinese medicine and Japanese massage techniques. Literally translated, *shiatsu* means "finger-pressure" in Japanese, although Shiatsu practitioners use their thumbs, elbows, feet, and palms to apply pressure to the receiver's body.

Different types of Shiatsu include the Zen, Macrobiotic, and Healing schools, all based on the principal of Ki, "a vital universal force" flowing throughout the body in 24 connected channels called meridians. Each meridian is linked to an organ and encompasses its functions. For example, the Liver Meridian relates to not only the liver but also the nails, muscles and tendons, eyes, and the emotion of anger.

Ki should run freely through the body along the meridians, but can stop flowing due to emotional stress, an excessive lifestyle, or injury. The ki then becomes blocked (*jitsu*) or deficient (*kyo*).

Jitsu or Kyo can lead to physical symptoms such as back pain and headaches, or may manifest itself in psychological and emotional disturbances such as depression.

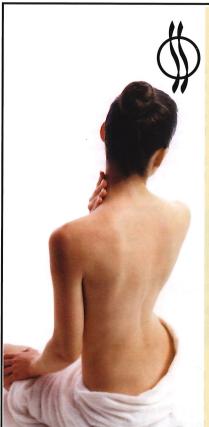
Rather than focusing on these specific symptoms, Shiatsu is holistic. Practitioners work on the whole body to encourage a person's ki into a more balanced state through various tools and techniques.

A person's ki can be targeted at specific areas called *tsubos* along the meridians. Tsubos are pressure points that cause muscles to relax or contract when massaged. Shiatsu practitioners place gentle pressure on the receiver's tsubos and meridians to balance the body's energy and promote well-being. They also manipulate the receiver's joints and incorporate stretching and controlled breathing into a session, which lasts about an hour.

To give Shiatsu effectively, practitioners must have good ki of their own. Ki can be preserved through a moderate lifestyle, with particular attention paid to breathing, diet, and exercise. A practitioner should be relaxed yet controlled when applying pressure, with their energy flowing from the *hara*, or "abdomen." The hara, located just below the navel, is believed to house a person's vital spirit.

After a Shiatsu session, receivers should be relaxed and feel an increased vitality running through their bodies.





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On the Waterfront

By Neil Amsler

The Port of Vancouver's status as one of North America's busiest ports depends on the outcome of the Marine Act Review.

Vancouver's stunning North Shore mountains, sandy beaches, and pristine parks bring visitors from all over the globe. On the surface, tourism appears to be the economic engine driving the city, but at the water's edge, behind the postcard vistas and dramatic skyline, lies Vancouver's true economic workhorse, the Port of Vancouver.

Gantry cranes that look like skeletons of giant giraffes hoist 20- and 40-foot cargo containers onto ocean liners coming from all over the Pacific Rim—China, Japan, and South Korea. Twenty-four hours, seven days a week, trucks and trains come and go with trailers, reefers, and boxcars filled with the goods that keep the money flowing. The buzz of high-tech forklifts and constant crackle of intercoms drown out the cries of Vancouver's ubiquitous seagulls. Tourism may get all the glory, but the port is the city's crown jewel.

In many ways, the Port of Vancouver is the little port that could. Smaller than many of its West Coast rivals, the Port of

Vancouver competes at a world-class level. In 2001, it shipped just under 73 million tonnes, a greater volume of goods than any other port in North America. Last year, over a million containers alone passed through the port. The numbers are impressive, but Vancouver's Port Authority and other business groups argue that unless changes are made to the Canada Marine Act, trade will go elsewhere. The Port Authority now has the opportunity to make its case at the Canada Marine Act Review and has identified key areas the federal government needs to address.

When the Canada Marine Act became law in 1998, it commercialized 19 of Canada's ports and established the port authorities to manage them. The goal was modernization, to create self-sufficient entities that could compete on the world market. The Port of Vancouver has, so far, been successful in that venture, but Robert Wilds of the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council thinks the federal government could do more to help. "The initial Marine Act was a good piece







of legislation," he said. "It did a lot of good things, made a lot of changes that were required. Now it is time to fine-tune it."

The fine-tuning is now under way with a review mandated to take place five years after the original Canada Marine Act received royal ascent. Transport Minister David Collenette began the process, appointing a four-member panel that held public hearings across Canada between September and November 2002. The panel has received submissions from port authorities, industry, port users, and other stakeholders. A final report will be completed by June 2003, with any amendments enacted by late 2003.

An agent of the federal government, Vancouver's Port Authority is made up of nine members selected by government and industry, including former British Columbia Premier Mike Harcourt. It presides over 233 kms of coastline and manages 460 hectares of partly unused land.

As the Canada Marine Act stands now, money made from the sale of port land must be sent to Ottawa where it is used as general revenue. Kevin Little, vice-president of business development at the Port of Vancouver, believes money generated from the sale of port land would be better spent facilitating trade, spurring more economic growth. "If we sell the land, the only reason we'd sell it is because it's not useful for long-term port use, and we have a couple of pieces like that," said Little. "If [the federal government] doesn't trust us to invest it wisely, then put it in a fund and that money can only be spent on port infrastructure."

The Port Authority fears its infrastructure will not keep up with the demands of the ever-expanding world markets, and business will go elsewhere. Currently, the port's main competition comes from the Port of Seattle. According to Little, capital for infrastructure at Seattle's port is raised through the sale of tax-exempt bonds. Furthermore, it is a taxing authority. Every house within the county pays an annual port tax, used to pay off the interest on the bonds. "Essentially, it costs them nothing to build their infrastructure," said Little.

Though the Port of Vancouver isn't likely to become a taxing authority, it would like to issue tax-free bonds. It's one way to raise capital that rewards the investor. "You can't invest in our infrastructure. As a Canadian, I would very much like to be able to," Little added.

Vancouver Board of Trade's chief economist, Dave Park, agrees with the

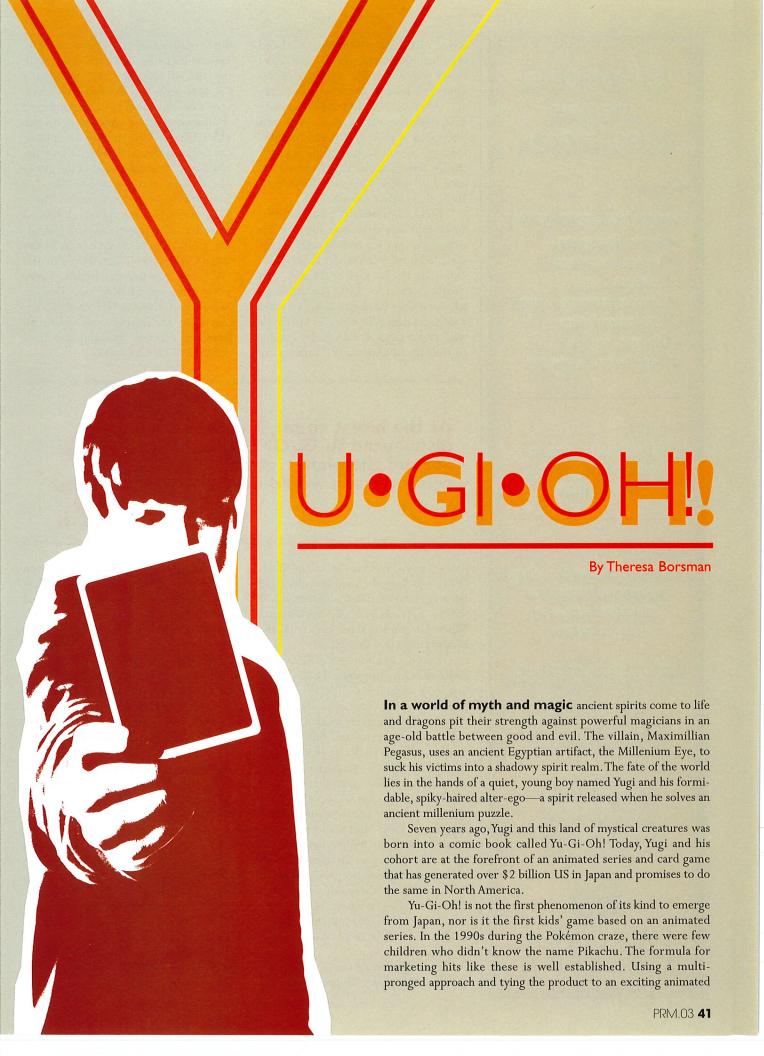
Vancouver Port Authority's position on the Marine Act. Park believes leaving the port to pick up the tab for property taxes on land the federal government owns is just another way the Marine Act erodes Vancouver's competitive position. The port pays \$5.5 million Cdn in property taxes to surrounding municipalities each year. "They're paying taxes or their tenants are paying taxes; whereas, in the States, they would be receiving taxes, so you have a real tilt to the playing field."

The playing field is a competitive one, especially in the cruise ship business, which generated \$177 million Cdn in wages, \$228 million in GDP, and \$508 million in economic input for Vancouver in 2001. Recently, the Port of Vancouver spent \$90 million trying to keep pace with the growing cruise ship business by upgrading its Canada Place terminal and turning five berths into three to accommodate larger cruise ships.

But only so much can be done. The Marine Act restricts how much ports can borrow from commercial lenders. The Port of Vancouver is capped at \$225 million Cdn. Park would like this kind of legislated disadvantage removed from the act, believing there are very real consequences to the policy. "The Port of

continued on page 56





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series, Yu-Gi-Oh! wields the tried and true technique with panache, and adds a clever difference. The animated series shows kids how to use new cards as they are released—sometimes the only comprehensive explanation. With this integrated marketing ploy and complex strategy, it's not surprising the game is already more popular than its predecessors. But unlike the games before it, Yu-Gi-Oh! might be here to stay.

Created by Kazuki Takahashi in 1996, Yu-Gi-Oh! was an instant hit in Japan when Konami Corporation released the animated version and card game in 2000. The same can be said of its release in North America in 2001. The animated television show that began airing two days a week on Kids WB! now airs six days a week thanks to popular demand. An eight-year-old fan who watches the cartoon five

duel, with 8,000 life points and pits various cards against each other with the aim of lowering the opponent's points to zero. The strategies, however, vary and depend on the cards and card combinations used. According to the official Yu-Gi-Oh! rulebook, a player can instantly win a duel by holding the rare five-card combination of the pieces of "Exodia, the Forbidden One," a particularly powerful monster. These types of combinations provide an added incentive to buy more and newer Yu-Gi-Oh! packs. The strategy works. At the latest count, if you distributed Yu-Gi-Oh! cards around the planet, every other person would have one. Trenton has over 300 Yu-Gi-Oh! cards and is searching for a rare and powerful Egyptian god card. "Everyone at school wants one," he exclaimed.

At the latest count, if you distributed Yu-Gi-Oh! cards around the planet, every other person would have one.



times a week, Trenton Dyck explained, "I like watching the monsters duel and learning about the different monsters and their attack points. The Blue Eyes Ultimate White Dragon has three heads and the Mythic Dragon has four heads!"

Sam Kassam, manager of Gem Mint Collectibles in Kingsgate Mall, echoes Trenton's enthusiasm. "It's the hottest product since Pokémon in the 1990s," said Kassam, who noted a correlation between the animated series and initial sales. Attributing Yu-Gi-Oh!'s continuing success to the game itself, he pointed out that it's the strategy of the game that makes it interesting. The flocks of people attending official Duelist tournaments every Saturday at Gem Mint Collectibles and other gaming shops in Vancouver seem to agree. Gem Mint gets anywhere from 40 to 100 participants per week, some of them even adults. "Everybody who touches this game really gets into it," Kassam said. The beauty of it is adults rarely do as well as kids. One tournament champion was six years old.

The objective of the game is fairly simple. Each player begins a round, or

Five expansion decks have been released in Canada, providing endless opportunities to customize the deck and come up with new strategies. This provides endless revenue for Upper Deck Entertainment, the North American distributor of Yu-Gi-Oh! cards. A ninepack of cards costs between six and seven dollars. When you consider roughly ten percent of the Japanese cards have been translated and printed to date in North America, the potential windfall is staggering, not to mention the revenue generated by other Yu-Gi-Oh! products such as video games. Konami has released games on several platforms, including Playstation, Gameboy Advance, and Nintendo.

Yu-Gi-Oh! and its latest marketing ploy is the successful culmination of a series of Japanese card games featuring battling monsters with epic storylines. You could say that Yu-Gi-Oh! is the newest, most streetwise, kid on the block. The card game made the top of Trenton's Christmas list for 2002, and if Yu-Gi-Oh!'s success in Japan is any indication, it will remain at the top of his list next year, too.



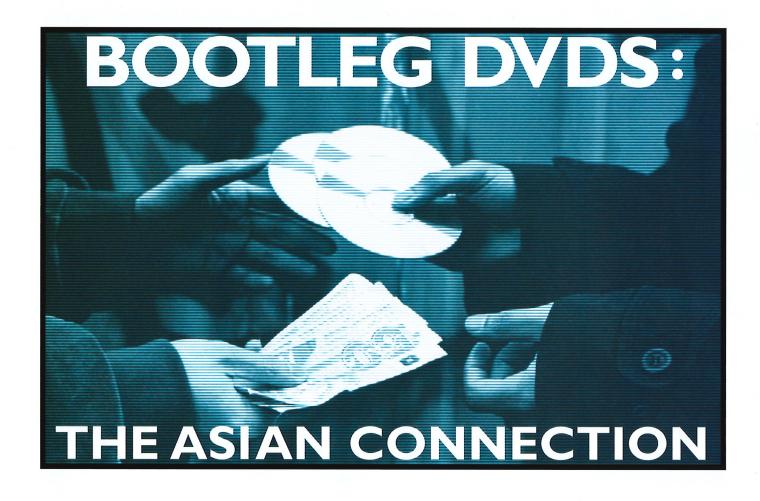
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As mass quantities of bootlegged DVDs make their way across the Pacific, Vancouver police attempt to stifle a thriving black market.

By Ed Brisson

A camera moves through a Japanese

bathhouse. As it passes each person, they look over their shoulders with suspicion and disdain. The camera rests on two men, both covered with Yakuza-style tattoos. One turns to the camera, runs his fingers through his hair and says, "Thank you." The scene cuts to a smoke-filled Chinese gambling house. Tired and desperate looking patrons are hunched over their tables. The camera zooms in on a tough looking woman flanked by bodyguards. She turns and says, "Thank you." On a pier, in the dead of night, men with guns are running toward a boat, loading boxes on it before it leaves. One turns to the camera. "Thank you." Fade out.

Fade in. A flurry of DVDs and money changes hands. The subtitles read, "Without your help, how could piracy be so profitable? Keep away from pirated goods. Don't finance crime."

This anti-piracy commercial, paid for by the Government of Hong Kong, is one of the many measures being taken, in conjunction with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), to curb the growing problem of film piracy in the Asia-Pacific region. The problem, however, is not just specific to Asia. As mass quantities of Asian films are pirated and sold in North America, DVD piracy has become a growing concern in Canada, especially Vancouver.

Video piracy affects not only film-makers but also the general population. According to Jim Sweeney, an anti-piracy investigator for the Toronto branch of the Canadian Motion Picture Distribution Association (CMPDA), the movie industry adds hidden costs into the price of film tickets and DVDs to recoup losses. Since only 20 to 40 percent of motion pictures regain their costs at the box office, most

films rely on the revenue generated through DVD and video sales to make their money back.

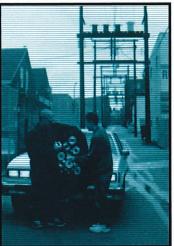
According to Sweeney, if piracy jeopardizes a studio's ability to fund future productions, thousands of Canadian jobs may be affected as well. In Canada, the film industry employs over 130,000 people, most of whom live and work in Vancouver, the Hollywood North of the film industry.

In February of 2002, Vancouver police, assisted by the CMPDA, raided stores in Vancouver's Chinatown. Over \$150,000 Cdn of counterfeit DVDs and video games were seized, making it the largest pirated DVD bust in Canadian history.

The investigation started as an inquiry into stolen goods sold at Vancouver's two flea markets. While checking merchant tables, police officers noticed sellers offering thousands of DVD films still playing in









movie theatres. The ensuing investigation revealed that several stores in the Chinatown area were offering similar films on DVD.

In September 2002, RCMP officers raided the Richmond Night Market after receiving several complaints of merchants offering counterfeit DVDs. Two booths were shut down, with Richmond RCMP recommending six individuals be charged under the Copyright Act of Canada.

According to the MPAA official website, the US motion picture industry loses more than \$3 billion US per year because of the world-wide pirating

blank CDs. If Customs officers are not notified that the items are anything other than claimed, they let them through, with the duty charged on each disc amounting to a few pennies.

A sure sign of a bootleg is the three-sided cardboard sleeve style of packaging. While the sleeve may look attractive, the major seven US film studios do not use this type of packaging. Other things to look for are Asian and English characters appearing together on the sleeve. If the discs were authentic Asian imports, they would typically have

admit the situation is out of control. Although it is difficult to account for just how much money the DVD bootlegging industry generates in Vancouver, Fisher estimates at least \$10 million worth of illegal materials are sold in Vancouver per year.

In addition to working closely with the CMPDA, Vancouver City police are also collaborating with MPAA affiliates in Asia, who are concerned about mass quantities of Asian films being pirated and sold in North America. Fisher admits that when it comes to

Vancouver sees a greater number of pirated films than other Canadian cities because it is a major shipping port and has minimal policing.

of American films. Since 2000, they have launched over 60,000 investigations into piracy, resulting in more than 18,000 raids.

The maximum fine for selling pirated media is one million dollars or a maximum prison term of five years. A 1985 amendment to the Copyright Act of Canada demands all copies of pirated films, music, games, or clothing, including any materials used to produce the counterfeit material, be returned to the copyright owner or destroyed.

Vancouver sees a greater number of pirated films than other Canadian cities because it is a major shipping port and has minimal policing. The discs are shipped as only Asian characters. Plot synopses having little to do with the films are another clue.

The two stores under investigation were shut down for a couple of days while police rifled through the stock, seizing the pirated discs. In all, nearly 200 counts of copyright infringement charges were laid against the stores and their operators. "This is just one more way criminals are making money," said Fisher. "It's rare that you will find someone involved in counterfeit media who isn't active in some other form of criminal activity."

However, after all the attempts to stifle the sale of bootlegged DVDs, the market still thrives. Police officers Asian films, they don't know enough to pursue an investigation. Up till now, only the seven major Hollywood studios have filed complaints, and without a complaint, the police do not have the ability to make an inquiry. Now, with the involvement of Asian MPAA affiliates and a greater awareness of copyright violations, police hope to be able to investigate further.

However, manufacturers of the pirated material hardly seem worried. The problem is on the rise in both Toronto and Montreal while some bootleggers have even been smug enough to include the Hong Kong anti-piracy commercial on many of their bootlegged discs.



CRIME & PUNISHMENT SINGLAPORE

hotographed by Karen Copple

MANY CONSIDER SINGAPORE A SAFE AND CLEAN TOURIST DESTINATION, BUT EVERY FEW YEARS, ITS LEGAL SYSTEM MAKES HEADLINES.

On a two-day stopover in Singapore,

Renee Posnikoff went through the familiar paces of clearing customs. Upon arriving at the customs desk, Posnikoff was asked if she had any chewing gum. She produced five packs from her luggage, all of which were instantly taken away. Luckily, Posnikoff turned in the chewing gum when given the chance. Had she been caught with it inside the country, she could have faced fines up to \$8,600 Cdn and sentenced up to a year in jail. The leaflet customs officials handed her warned of other civic violations with heavy fines such as spitting, littering, or dropping cigarette butts on the street.

Considered one of the cleanest, greenest cities in the world, Singapore is a popular tourist destination, receiving over eight million visitors a year. At just 700 sq. kms, Singapore has an annual GDP that competes with leading nations of Europe. This gives it the world's fourth most competitive economy, placing it ahead of the United States. The city-state also boasts a high standard of living, low unemployment, and a literacy rate of 98 percent. Singapore has 12 times the population of Vancouver but just half the crime rate.

With statistics like these, it's no wonder Singapore attracts so many visitors. However, travellers planning to visit the self-proclaimed "Garden City of Asia" should be aware of the country's strict laws and severe penalties.

Carla Arial has travelled all over the world and considers Singapore the cleanest country she's ever visited. Despite the strict enforcement of laws, Arial didn't notice a strong police presence. Of the officers she did see, most were on foot and simply giving people directions. Although she didn't know it was illegal at the time, Arial admitted to jaywalking in Singapore. Had she been caught, she could have faced a fine of \$83 Cdn. But like most tourists, Arial enjoyed her stay in Singapore and managed to keep out of trouble.

Some visitors, however, are not so fortunate. According to Dan Mysak of the Canadian High Commission in Singapore, each year around 80,000 Canadians visit Singapore, with approximately two encountering legal problems. The offences these Canadians are alleged to have committed usually relate to fraud, people smuggling, or drug possession.

In Singapore, these offences are subject to much more severe penalties than in Canada.

One of the more recent drug possession cases involving a Canadian occurred in 1996. Associated Press reported Singaporean police found eight kilograms of marijuana in a house where Ronald McCulloch was staying. A resident of Singapore since 1979, McCulloch faced two trafficking charges, each carrying the death penalty, the mandatory sentence for

Singapore has 12 times the population of Vancouver but just half the Crime rate

anyone convicted of drug trafficking, murder, or kidnapping. McCulloch was lucky. Instead of death, he received nine years imprisonment after arranging a plea bargain with the prosecution.

Had McCulloch been convicted of trafficking and sentenced to death, he would have become the second Westerner to be executed for violating Singapore's drug laws. The first was Johannes Van Damme, a Dutch businessman found in possession of 4.2 kilograms of heroin.

Although Singapore does not hand out the death penalty randomly, Amnesty International states that Singapore has one of the world's highest rates of execution relative to its population. Reuters journalist Amy Tan reported that the Singaporean government has hanged 340 people between 1991 and 2001. According to the Think Center, a Singaporean civil rights group, 70 percent of those executions were for drug offences. By comparison, Canada executed 710 people between 1867 and 1962 before the death penalty was abolished in 1976.

For those lucky enough to escape hanging, caning may be the punishment prescribed for roughly 30 crimes in Singapore, including attempted murder, armed robbery, immigration offences, and vandalism. Secretary General of the Singapore Democrats and former political prisoner, Dr. Chee Soon Juan spent five weeks in a Singapore prison for refusing to pay a fine he received for violating a law restricting public gatherings.

In an open letter written in November 2002, Dr. Chee relates his experience of life in prison and what he learned about the practice of caning, stating, "Caning in Singapore is a barbaric act where trained personnel slash a six-foot-long, one-inchthick cane across the hapless victim's buttocks. The individual's ankles are strapped onto a heavy metal frame, and they bend forward where their wrists are similarly locked, with only their naked backsides exposed."

To most Canadians, Singapore's legal system might seem unusually severe, but Singaporeans are divided on the issue. Vasuge Karthigesu, a fifth generation Singaporean, moved to Canada in 1991. When asked about the laws and punishments of her homeland, Karthigesu expressed reservations about the death penalty, saying she believes there is always a chance the wrongly convicted could be hanged. She does not, however, oppose caning.

Karthigesu still returns to Singapore every few years. During her last visit two years ago, she noticed a change. "The city was slightly dirtier," she said. "The government might be relaxing the rules a little bit." Karthigesu said she generally feels safer in Singapore, but admits she would not return to live there.

Many travellers believe Singapore is a great place to visit as long as the laws are respected. Anyone interested in visiting Singapore should thoroughly peruse websites and travel brochures outlining what tourists need to know about the country. Canadians can review the status of any country on the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website where information on travel warnings, general conditions, local laws, and customs is available. ©



VICARIOUS VOYAGES ACROSS ASIA















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Visa

Entry into China usually involves a threestage process: inspection of your passport, visa and other travel documents, completion of a health questionnaire, and customs inspection. You may be fined or expelled if you arrive in China without a visa. Forms may be obtained from China's Consulate General in Vancouver.

Transportation

Modes of transportation include buses, trains, subways, and taxis. Bikes, motorcycles, and pedicabs are other means of exploring the city. Although buses are frequent and inexpensive, taxis and trains are more convenient.

Climate

Weather conditions vary from region to region. Generally, monsoons usher in cold, dry air in the winter and warm, moist air in the summer.

Tips & Tipping

Tipping is not expected, but it shows appreciation for good service. Hotels and restaurants may add a service charge to your bill. Small, inexpensive gifts may be given to those who have been helpful.

Bargaining is acceptable in shops, street stalls, and hotels, but not in large stores. Check with a local tour operator to find out what is appropriate. .

Many taxi drivers are not fluent in English. Ask a hotel staff member to write down the address of your destination in Chinese.

Etiquette

Chinese offer their surname first and their given name second. When initially greeting someone, bow slightly and nod. Handshakes are acceptable, but allow your Chinese counterpart to initiate the handshake.

Contacts

Consulate General, Republic of China 3380 Granville Street Vancouver, BC V6H 3K3 www.chineseconsulatevancouver.org

Taiwan

22.5 million 💲 New Taiwan Dollar (NTD) 👚 Taipei



Visa: For visits longer than 14 days, a visa and onward ticket valid for two months is needed.

Transportation: Taipei's rapid transit system (MRT) is safe, reliable, and convenient. Taxi, train, bus, rental car, and domestic planes are other ways to travel around Taiwan.

Climate: Subtropical. Summers are hot and humid (May to September). Winters are mild (December to February).

Tips & Tipping: Tipping is not common— 10% is added to bills in most restaurants and hotels.

Asking questions is considered a friendly gesture and laughter is a polite way to lighten an awkward situation.

Contacts: Taipei Economic & Cultural Office 2008-925 West Georgia Street Vancouver, BC V6C3L2 www.roc-taiwan-van.com

Hong Kong

7.3 million \$ Hong Kong Dollars (HKD) 👚 Hong Kong



Visas: Canadians may visit for three months without a visa provided they have a passport valid for one month beyond their return date, an onward ticket, and adequate funds.

Transportation: Public transport systems include two high capacity railways, trams, buses, minibuses, taxis, and ferries. For more information visit: www.info.gov.hk/td.

Climate: Sub-tropical with temperate weather for nearly half the year. About 90% of the rainfall occurs between April and September. May to August is hot and humid.

Tips & Tipping: Most restaurants add a 10% service charge, but it is polite to include an additional tip.

Business cards should have a Cantonese translation on the reverse side. Take cards with both hands, study, and put away carefully. Wear full business attire at all times, even on the hottest of days.

Contacts: Hong Kong-Canada **Business Association** 1740-1050 West Pender Street Vancouver, BC V6E 3S7 www.hkcba.com



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Visa

Canadian citizens require a Canadian passport valid for at least six months beyond the date of departure and an onward or return ticket. However, visas are not required for stays up to three months.

Transportation

Small rivercraft provide a practical means of travelling around—even in towns. Two train lines provide passenger service. One links Singapore to Thailand, and the other to Kota Bharu. The "Express Rakyat" runs from Singapore to Butterworth, and continues to Thailand. Shared and normal taxis are a fast means of inter-town travel. Taxi

coupons providing fixed prices to specific destinations can be purchased at the Kuala Lumpur railway station and the airport.

Climate

Though tropical, temperatures are usually between 20 to 30°C. Humidity is usually 90%. In the east, the rainy season runs from November to February. The west coast's wettest month is August.

Tips & Tipping

Tipping isn't expected in Malaysia. A 10% service charge may be added to your hotel and restaurant bills.

Touching your hand to your chest is a sign

of respect. A relaxed wrist and gentle touch should be adopted when shaking hands.

Etiquette

Suits or safari suits are acceptable for business meetings.

Business visitors should remember that a large percentage of the Malay population is Muslim. Religious customs should be respected.

Contacts

Consulate General, Malaysia 1805-111 West Georgia Street Vancouver, BC V6E 4M3 (604) 685-9550



Thailand





\$ Thai Baht (THB)



Visa

Canadian passport holders do not require a visa for tourism for a stay of 30 days or less. A visa is required if you are on business or staying longer than 30 days. All Canadians must have passports valid for at least six months after date of entry into Thailand.

Transportation

Buses leave at regular intervals. Taxis are 300 to 400 Baht plus a highway toll. Thai Airways Limousine Service cost 650 Baht (drivers do not speak English). Trains are inexpensive, but extremely uncomfortable.

Climate

Thailand is tropical. From mid-May to September it is rainy, warm, cloudy southwest monsoon season. From November to mid-March it is dry and cool-northeast monsoon season. The southern isthmus is always hot and humid.

Tips & Tipping

Tipping is not a usual practice in Thailand, although it is becoming more common. Most hotels and restaurants add a 10% service charge to the bill. Taxi drivers do not require a tip, but the gesture is appreciated.

Etiquette

Buddha images are considered sacred. Never climb on, point a foot at, or touch the head of a Buddha statue. Never pose for a photo in front of a Buddha.

Contact

Royal Thai Consulate General 1040 Burrard Street Vancouver, BC V6Z 2R9 www.thaicongenvancouver.org

Photos: Page 48

China: Ella Pedersen Malaysia: 1,4-Leanne Pedersen; 2,3,5-Rob Seebacher Thaliand: 6-James Nicholas; 7-Rebecca Kovacs Indonesia: 1-6-Leanne Pedersen SouthKorea: 7,8-Rebecca Kovacs

Visa

A visa is not required if your stay is less than 60 days. Travellers need a passport valid for six months and must have a ticket to leave the country.

Transportation

Airport bus service is available to the five city zones. Registered taxis and minibuses have yellow license plates. Pirate taxis (with black license plates) tend to operate at airports, supermarkets, and in city centres.

Climate

Tropical with drier weather occurring June to September. Rainier weather is common from October to April. Temperatures range from 21 to 33° C.

Tips & Tipping

Tipping is not customary, but it is appreciated for special service. Tourist guides and baggage porters will expect a tip. Hotels usually add a 10% service charge. Tipping taxi drivers is not mandatory; however, round the fare up to the next RP 500.

Etiquette

Using your left hand is not socially accepted. Greetings, eating, etc. should be conducted with your right hand.

Clothing is usually informal due to the humid climate. Short and long pants are suitable for men. A jacket and tie are required for formal occasions. For women, dresses, long pants, and blouses are proper attire. Shorts and tank tops should only be worn at the beach.

Bargaining is customary in small shops and markets. It is in good faith to smile when bargaining.

Contacts

Consulate General, Republic of Indonesia 1630 Alberni Street Vancouver, BC V6G 1A6 www.indonesiavancouver.org



South Korea









Visa

Canadian citizens do not require a visa for tourism, visiting, or business (without employment activity) for a stay of 90 days or less. Permission to stay for 90 days or less will be given at the time of entry.

Transportation

Long-distance share taxis ("bullet taxis") travel between major cities. In Seoul, a onezone subway ticket is less than a taxi fare. A high-speed train service runs the length of the country. Timetables and fares are available online at www.korail.go.kr. Ferries connect South Korea with China and Japan.

Climate

Temperate. Spring and autumn are mild and the best times to visit, as summer coincides with the rainy season extending from the end of June until August. Winters are cold and dry.

Tips & Tipping

Tipping is not customary. A 10% service charge is added to all hotel bills.

Korean society is based on Confucian tenets. Confucianism encourages devotion and respect for parents, family, friends, and those in positions of authority. Many Koreans attribute their country's modern success to this attitude.

Etiquette

Words of greeting and thanks are very important to Koreans. They are said with a bow of the head.

Entertainment is usually lavish and Koreans may be offended if hospitality is refused. Remove your shoes before entering a home. Talking too much during a meal is considered impolite.

Contacts

Consulate General, Republic of Korea 1600-1090 West Georgia Street Vancouver, BC V6E 3V7 www.kcvan.org

Where Comfort Means Slavery Continued from page 25

home with their wives. Some fell in love with comfort women, not knowing what the women were really going through. Now those two Japanese men realize what really happened to those women—how hard it was for them, but back then, they didn't think about it at all."

Robbed of their sexual autonomy and basic human freedoms, the comfort women found no comfort at all in Japan's sex slave system, nor do they find any comfort today in the Japanese government's unflinching denial of guilt. "For these girls, it was just like being in jail," Nishino stressed. "They couldn't run away. They hardly had time to put their clothes on. If they were sick or tried to say no, they got beaten. The Japanese government thinks the comfort women issue is over. They thought it was over at the time of the San Francisco Peace Treaty after the war. Until the women receive a sincere apology from the Japanese government, it will not be over. The women will not stop fighting."

For Kim, the Japanese government definitely feels remorse for losing the war, but feels nothing for the lifelong misery it caused the comfort women. She laments, "Imagineimagine your daughter-your 13-year-old daughter, spending her time in a small hole, sent away—a million miles away from home—she doesn't have enough food, she can hardly eat, and she has to be raped by 50 soldiers daily." One would think such a horror would be enough to provoke a wholehearted apology from Japan. Yet, still to this day, even Japanese textbooks conceal the realities of the pain it spread throughout Southeast Asia. Kim hopes the Japanese and Korean language history books she is involved in writing will change things.

In addition to the apology and compensation, the Korean Council and the organizations supporting it are also seeking a memorial and museum in both Korea and Japan to remember

the horrors the Japanese government persists in denying and the women whose lives were uprooted and destroyed by wartime rape. "Because so many of these women have died," Kim stated, "I want the cremated ashes of the survivors placed in the memorial. I have travelled to Germany and have seen the gas chambers left intact to educate the young. This is really such an important thing to have."

However, for Lee Ok Soon, no memorial, museum, or compensation will ever assuage her anger at the Japanese. When asked if she thought she could ever forgive them, her only answer was, "Forgiveness comes after the apology." Whether that apology is ever made depends on Japan, and the responsibility its government and people are willing to accept. 6

Global Art Takes Centre Stage Continued from page 20

that occurs, there is a kind of dissolution of memory [that takes place]. They become a kind of advertising billboard, a kind of walking, talking advertisement for this new way.

To illustrate his point, Pravin decided to make his own billboard. He scanned the photo and e-mailed it to his relatives around the world, asking them to rescan it and e-mail it back to him. Each time the photo jumped in and out of the Internet, the image degenerated. Pravin fed the final degenerated image into a computer processor, converting it into text.

Pravin plans to print the final image in billboard format to be displayed in the exhibition hall. When viewers draw close to the piece, the image will break down, and the text will emerge.

"What I've found is that everybody seems to have the same kind of photo somewhere in their history—the family analogue of the immigrant picture. It references the questions, 'Am I still subject to that? Where am I taking my identity from today?""

While the debate over Canada's shifting

cultural centre may be moot, Centre A's Transculturation and Globalization exhibit undoubtedly offers a powerful view of contemporary immigrant culture within the global village.

Centre A is located at 849 Homer Street in Vancouver. The Transculturation and Globalization exhibit remains on view until June 8. 6

Paths to Yohaku Continued from page 22

through the breath during meditation, we discover the space between thoughts, helping clear our minds of emotions and other issues of daily living.

McManus tells her students when they are in a difficult asana to concentrate on the breath and, when faced with unpleasant situations outside of class, to apply this technique. Slowing down your mind with the breath provides empty space between the thoughts, allowing one time to respond rather than react

Consciously making empty space in our minds helps free us from ruminating about problems or worries. It's like peeling away the layers, explained McManus, and letting your true nature come through. The more we practice yoga and meditation, the more it shifts our way of seeing things, guiding us on the path to our truer selves of compassion, inner peace, and self-acceptance.

There is a Zen saying, "Many colours blind your vision." Creating empty space, or Yohaku, in our lives is like re-visualizing the world as a Sung Dynasty monochromatic ink wash painting. If all the extraneous matter is removed for a moment—be it the chatter in one's head, the ethos of hard work, or the busy-ness of daily living-paradoxically, the new-found peacefulness provides space to create a greater sense of fullness in our lives.

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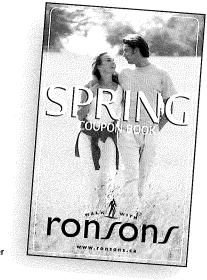
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In third century China an ancient tradition began when Qu Yuan, a poet philosopher well-loved by the people, leapt into the Mi Lo River while clutching a heavy rock to protest against the corrupt Chou regime. He had been an advisor to the king when a misunderstanding between them had resulted in Qu's banishment to the countryside, where he composed elegant poetry extolling the virtues of honesty and reform in a political state. Local fishermen quickly took to their boats, hoping to save his body from fish and river dragons while banging gongs and drums and throwing packets of rice into the river to scare them away.

The re-enactment of this event has become known as the Dragon Boat Race Festival, taking place annually all over the world. Beginning with the steady low beat of palms against tautly drawn skins, the intensity of the race grows with the splashing of oars as they slice into water. Spray assaults the paddlers as they rush forth into the melee. Soon the cheers of thousands of spectators erupt as the leader crosses the finish line. However, the ornately carved, vibrantly coloured boats now race for hope of a different kind, raising funds for an impressive list of charities, including the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

In January 2000, Evelyn Adshead, a 49-year-old mother of two from Nanaimo, BC, was told she had breast cancer. "I was really in a depressive state," she said of the months following her diagnosis. "It was like a bolt of lightning. Nobody in my family had had breast cancer before." She began treatment in Victoria in May of that year, undergoing a mastectomy and chemotherapy. Eight months later, she joined the Angels Abreast Dragon Boat Team.

Formed in 1999, in the community of Nanaimo, the team consists of breast cancer survivors who provide emotional and physical support to each other by working to raise awareness of the disease. The crew and volunteers work together to raise funds to support the team, organizing fundraising events such as garage sales, beer and burger nights, and auctions. For the team, recreation

and fun—not competitiveness—is what matters. "I had
a pretty hard time going through
cancer," Adshead confessed. "Dragon
boat racing has changed my life big time.
I felt that for the first time [since the cancer] I was
really useful." According to Adshead, hope has become
a strong motivator for the team, creating unity
between the members, a bond that has
developed into meaningful relationships. "We don't have to cave in to
cancer," she said. "We can fight it a
little at a time."

The Angels Abreast team will be hosting the upcoming three-day Dragon Boat Festival this year, with over 40 teams attending. "The goal is to spread the word on how important it is to get healthy and stay healthy," explained Lydia Niamath, breast cancer survivor and director and co-founder of Angels Abreast. "What we're fighting for is a cure—at one given point you

have so many people together fighting the dragon," she said, emphasizing the goal of the Nanaimo festival taking place July 11 to 13, 2003. The event promises to involve the whole community with music, children's entertainment, a dinner, and events for specialized teams.

Celebrating hope and the triumph of the spirit, the Dragon Boat races salute the challenge of overcoming adversity with tradition and community. The events stand vigilant in the face of the most daunting challenges, despite the most overwhelming odds. Today, all across the country, people are teaming up to raise hope and do their part to keep the dragons at bay. The positive energy created from these events has kept the spirit of hope alive. Qu Yuan would definitely be proud.



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PING·PONG

By Fiona McLean

In the early 1880s, bored British army officers carved corks from wine bottles into balls and began hitting them over a row of books, using cigar lids as paddles. First called "Whiff Whaff," it soon changed to "Flim Flam" and then "Gossima." Eventually, the cork ball was replaced with a bouncy celluloid ball that made a distinct *ping* and *pong* sound when it was hit. Not only a new game but a new name was born.

From the ping pong parlours of New York to the Olympics, ping pong has been played by millions across the globe, eventually becoming a world-renowned sport called table tennis.

When thinking about table tennis, many Canadians think of batting an elusive, little white ball back and forth in basements or youth clubs. But forget the stereotypes of rec rooms, leisure suits, and sweatbands—there's more to this game than it's given credit for.

Table tennis was officially recognized as an Olympic sport in 1988. It is played by over 250 million people worldwide and considered by most players to be the number one participation sport in the world, even above soccer. It's especially popular in Southeast Asian countries and Eastern Europe, where it's treated with the same respect Canadians give hockey.

Table tennis is a challenging, complex sport requiring dexterity and talent. Some world class players put up to 9,000 rpm of spin on a ball during a match, with a hard hit ball travelling up to 144 km/h.

In addition, table tennis is psychologically challenging, for players must make split second decisions and take calculated risks. A game of 11 points lasts only about 10 minutes, so players must strategize and move in an instant. "The pace is so fast," said Danny Lau. "You have to remember what happened two seconds prior. You have to remember everything from the start right up to the end, otherwise you may lose the point."

Table tennis is as much a physical game as a mental one. "It's good exercise," attested Lau. "In the first two years I played, I lost 15 pounds. It's very physically demanding—you bend down and pick up the ball and bend down and pick up the ball. That helps to reduce your waistline!"

Because it's not necessary to be big or strong to play, competitors on the small side have the advantage. This means everyone, young and old, men and women, has equal opportunity. Danny Lau didn't start playing until he was 57. Even world-class players are older than the average athlete. Vancouver's Johnny Huang was almost 40 when he played for Canada during the Sidney Olympic Games.

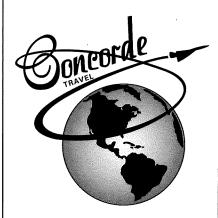
Like any sport with its own superstars, table tennis has fanatics, many of whom, including Lau, congregate at the Bridgeport Club in Richmond. At 1,260 square metres with over

20 tables, Bridgeport is Vancouver's table tennis mecca, the epicenter of the largely unrecognized table tennis subculture of Vancouver.

Compared with all the ice rinks, tennis courts and gymnasiums around town, Vancouver's table tennis facilities

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On the Waterfront Continued from page 40

Seattle is able to offer a major cruise line a deal they couldn't refuse because they had the money to do so," Park lamented. "They are taking away a significant piece of our cruise ship business next year by offering really attractive rates for berthing and subsidized office space." According to the Port of Vancouver's web site, Seattle is assessing a new five-berth terminal likely to draw from Vancouver's business.

In a speech given to the Vancouver Board of Trade on October 24, 2002, Captain Gordon Houston, president and chief executive officer of the Port of Vancouver, spoke about the ramifications of maintaining the status quo. He said the port will come up some \$500 million short of generating the \$1 billion it needs to meet its growth targets for 2020. Houston would like to see the federal government view Canada's ports as economic generators rather than revenue generators, referring to the annual stipend the Port Authority pays to the federal government, averaging five percent of gross revenue.

The stipend is seen as more money becoming available for the infrastructure, which could facilitate more trade. Kevin Little stressed these changes are to the benefit of their employees, their customers, and the Canadian economy as a whole. By meeting their growth targets by 2020, the Port Authority predicts the creation of 20,000 new jobs, adding \$2.2 billion in wages and another \$3 billion to the GDP.

To the politicians in Ottawa who will ultimately decide the future competitive position of Canada's ports, Little said, "Remove the shackles, take the hand cuffs off, allow us to create an environment that attracts private sector investment. You've got to provide the infrastructure, the terminals, the back up, the access, and if you don't, you leave them no choice but to go somewhere else. You can't stand still. If you don't grow, then you lose what you have."

Textures of Sound Continued from page 28

New Music breaks with classical Western compositions, going against what we perceive music to be while following the path of traditional Asian music. Ramos believes when you take different forms of music from diverse cultures and mix them together, innovative New Music is created. Similarly, for Oliver, "One of the most exciting aspects of working interculturally is bringing together the collective memory of the musicians and seeing how new music can be forged."

Intercultural New Music thrives in progressive and culturally diverse communities. When living in China, Han had a limited view and knowledge of music. Now living in Vancouver, Han has expanded her musical range. Ramos, on the other hand, grew up in a multicultural environment, allowing him to

find new ways of expressing himself. "Different and interesting things are happening here for me," said Ramos, "like mixing with the Indian sitar or with Korean players. I probably wouldn't have as much opportunity for intercultural mixing if I was living in Japan."

Han's performance at Vancouver's New Music Festival this past October was significant. She performed three new works, one of her most challenging projects to date, and felt proud of breaking new ground by not repeating the repertoire people have played for generations before her. For Han, this is the importance of having your own voice. "I can find freedom in traditional music now, but I couldn't before," Han explained. "When I go back to reinterpret traditional music, I find the freedom. This freedom is what I get from playing contemporary music."

Alcvin Ramos will be performing at the Tonari Gumi Japanese Community Volunteer services, 511 East Broadway, Vancouver, on May 17th and 31st at 1pm. Admission by donation. For more information call 604-904-2069 or e-mail ramos@telus.net. For further listings check www.bamboo-in.com/al.html.

Mei Han will be playing at the Van Dusen Flower and Garden Show at Van Dusen Gardens, 5251 Oak St., Vancouver on June 13th at 2pm and 4pm and on June 14th at 5pm. For more information on upcoming performances check www.orchidensemble.com/ and www.asza.com/r3activ.shtml.

Otherwise Known as Ping Pong Continued from page **55**

seem unjustly meagre in comparison, as does support for the game. "The sponsors don't do anything about table tennis," said Lau. "You go to London Drugs, for example, and say, 'I have a hockey team. I need sponsorship.' It's no problem. If you said, 'Oh, I have a table tennis club, I need sponsorship,' they say, 'What is table tennis?'" Without funding for tournaments and facilities, talented kids often drop the sport at a young age because there's no future in the game. In China, it's much easier to succeed as a table tennis player. "You are guaranteed a job as a coach or a player in China if you are recognized, and paid handsomely for it," Lau said. "The salary is similar to a doctor's."

Lau's solution is to get kids involved early in the sport and to introduce it into high schools where he feels kids will be hooked once they try it. However, he finds himself caught in a paradox. The sport cannot secure funding because it's not popular, but table tennis will never become popular without more financial support. He feels Canada will lose out on potential world champions and Olympic athletes as a result.

Although table tennis may never take the place of hockey in Canada, 250 million people enjoy the sport around the world. Lau hopes more people will give it a chance and get involved by playing recreationally, competitively, and in the basement or at Bridgeport. But whatever you do, Lau pleaded, be sure you don't call it ping pong.

Blue Water Café & Raw Bar









1095 Hamilton Street Vancouver, BC 604-688-8078 Monday-Sunday 11:30-12:00

By Leah Wahl

With such a vast selection of seafood restaurants to choose from in Vancouver, it can be a challenge to find a place that can appease even the most finicky palate. Look no further.

Nestled amid the brickwork of Yaletown, the Blue Water Café & Raw Bar is a seafood lover's dream come true. The restaurant's interior is larger than its discrete exterior suggests, and it successfully combines a sophisticated environment with rustic elements. Pockets of exposed brick and original beams enhance the rich wood detailing of the restaurant, and the crisp white table linens accentuate their signature blue glasses. As we enter through a revolving door, we are met by tanks brimming with Nova Scotia lobster and enticing aromas that emanate from the open kitchen at the far end of the room. With our coats checked, we glide past the long wooden bar that is loaded with every type of liquor imaginable. At the far end of the bar is the fully stocked

sushi and oyster bar, which is encased in a mosaic of clean white tiles, with a canopy of rich blue tiles that gives the impression of being underwater. With luxurious leather seating along the perimeter and plenty of tables throughout, there isn't a bad seat in the house. Each table has its own unique vantage point, whether it's the nightly performance of the chefs dancing along the grills, or taking in the clever craftsmanship of local architect, Werner Forster.

It's a Saturday night and the house is almost full. We are seated at our table and the first objective is, of course, the martini menu. The list is plentiful and they all look scrumptious, so we look to our server for suggestions. After a few probing questions to determine our preferences, he suggests the Red Dragon, a tangy mix of Razberi Stoli, Red Passion Alizé and frozen raspberry garnish—the perfect start to a decadent evening.

The smartest item on the menu is the Blue Water Tower. This three-tier selection of seafood on ice is the best way to satisfy any seafood craving. The Tower is an impressive display of oysters, prawns, marinated mussels, local tuna sashimi, squid, grilled scallops, chilled one pound lobster, wild salmon and California sushi rolls. We eventually decide on what to have for dinner and prepare ourselves for the challenge of choosing our wine. There are plenty of well-trained servers to assist us in this process. The wine selection at Blue Water is enviable, with a strong selection of BC, Pacific Northwest, and California wines. They also have an extensive collection of old world wines, all at competitive prices, giving burgeoning connoisseurs the opportunity to experience what Burgundy or Tuscany has to offer.

As if all that food and drink was not enough to fill our bellies, the assortment of desserts is designed to finish the job. Since we love chocolate, we are in luck. Blue Water spoils us with the Assiette of Chocolate for Two—an assortment of chocolates including a warm Belgian chocolate cake that oozes from the heart, a chocolate mousse cake, and white chocolate crème brûlée, an exquisite finale to a lavish meal.

Although the menu boasts a vast array of oceanic delicacies and other meat dishes, they also have an enticing vegetarian menu for non-meat eaters. The bulk of Blue Water's menu is dedicated to their passion—seafood. With so much selection, you might want to fast all day, just to save your appetite for, well, everything.

Guu With Garlic







1698 Robson Street Vancouver, BC 604-685-8678 Monday-Sunday 5:30-12:00

By Kiran Dhanoa

Step inside the minimalist but stylish Guu With Garlic to find a busy, warmly lit room. As you enter, you'll be met with greetings, shouted in Japanese, from around the room.

There are two dining areas in the restaurant. There's the jam-packed main room where you can sit at the counter or at one of several thick, polished wood benches. A young staff member directs us into the other room—a nook decorated in traditional Japanese paper lanterns, tiny dressers and rice paper windows. We sit on mats at a low table and look at the menu.

The waiter arrives to take our drink orders and quickly returns to serve them. When it comes time to order our meal, we point to the items we want from the menu—the names are written in Japanese—but the descriptions are in English. Throughout the order he yells out our choices towards the kitchen, and

servers bring some of the cold dishes before we're done pointing our way through the menu.

As we wait for the hot items, we try the Boiled Soybeans Seasoned with Garlic and the Marinated Eggplant with Enoki Mushrooms. The bean pods are a tough chew, and we soon realize that the extra bowl is where we're supposed to spit out the shells. The peas pop out of the pods with a gentle bite, but I can't resist chewing the shells until they're thread-

servers bring some of the cold dishes before we're done pointing our way through the menu.

bare to get as much of the salty, garlicky flavour. The marinated eggplant has a natural sweetness that is a welcome contrast to the soybeans and other salty dishes that arrive soon.

The Japanese Rice with Mountain Plants is served in a golden mound and

it's flecked with bits of mysterious mountain plants—mushrooms and garlic were all I could recognize. It's flavourful, earthy and chewy. The Japanese Style Stew with Tofu was my favourite dish. The tofu's fried skin is pleasantly chewy while the inside is tender. An especially intense amber-coloured miso soup base, along with fresh green onions made the stew a comforting yet intoxicating experience. The cucumber sticks served with spicy miso dip are fresh and crisp. Though the dip had the sweetness of ketchup, the miso and spices gave it a smoky yet tangy flavour.

The odd dish of the night was the Fried Rice Cakes Served in Mushroom Sauce. The rice cakes are interesting—their gooey, yet tough, melted cheese-like consistency is a texture new to my palate. The dish isn't quite a lost cause thanks to the fabulous mushrooms—at least four different kinds—that accompany in a thick and savoury sauce.

If you have not experienced Japanese cuisine beyond sushi, then let the college-aged Japanese customers vouch for Guu With Garlic. It is the place to experience inexpensive, good quality, authentic Japanese meals. •

hotographed by Cindy Myte

Bo Kong



3068 Main Street Vancouver, BC 604-876-3088 Monday-Friday 11:00-9:00 Saturday-Sunday 11:00-9:30

By Fiona McLean

Since Bo Kong is a Buddhist restaurant, they don't serve meat or alcohol. It's pretty much all tofu, tea, and vegetables. But don't be dissuaded from eating there if you're not a bean-curd-loving teetotaler. A quick look around the bustling restaurant reveals a diverse collection of diners who come to enjoy Bo Kong's vegetarian Chinese food, especially its meat-like bean curd dishes.

At first glance, the menu at Bo Kong can be daunting—it's hefty and full of cuisine with puzzling names like Vegetables with Basic Gluten and Crispy Bean Curd Skin. Fortunately, photographs accompany many of the dishes, making it easier to order. Like the menu, the dishes are huge, so it pays to go with a group—that way, you can order a larger variety and share.

Immediately after we sat down, a fragrant pot of tea arrived at our table and was constantly re-filled throughout our meal. Our food came shortly after ordering. We started with a big bowl of Hot & Sour Soup, a thick soup filled with pieces of tofu and vegetables. It was delicious, especially on a rainy Vancouver Sunday. If you're not feeling adventurous enough, there are plenty of other soups you may want to try, including Wonton or Vegetables and Corn.

We were brought a tub of rice to accompany our dishes—which followed in quick succession. A favourite of ours was the Sweet & Sour Pineapple Delight, consisting of pineapples, peppers, and chunks of tofu that could have substituted for chicken in taste and texture, all covered in a thick, sweet-tasting sauce. Another addictive dish we tried was the Bean Curd with Black Bean Sauce—flattened tofu rolled-up and topped with vegetables and full of flavour.

As a non-vegetarian, the tofu, even when disguised in delicious sauces and cooked to perfection, didn't taste too much like meat to me, but a vegetarian at the table said it worked for him—especially in our favourite dish, the Vegetarian Cutlet with Orange Sauce, served complete with fresh orange slices. The cutlet certainly looked like pork and, to some, tasted better. Our last dish, Colourful Vegetarian Chop Suey, was also enjoyable—fresh veggies and tofu with sweet, toasted cashews on top—and even better when we started digging into its taro nest basket.

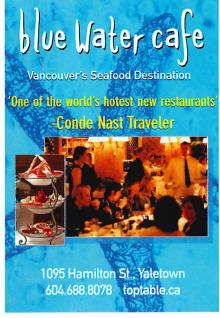
Our table of four polished off everything except the vegetables—a testament to the bean curd dishes. All of us were satisfied and we left with leftovers.

With most dishes priced at about \$10 or less, Bo Kong is inexpensive.

I will definitely be returning to Bo Kong. Besides wanting to satisfy my Vegetarian Cutlet craving, I'm curious about the other dishes.

Go to Bo Kong with a sense of adventure and an open mind—don't go expecting to replace meat—you will be delighted to find a tasty alternative.







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The Power of Touch continued from page **34**

we are constantly bombarded with viruses and toxins. Taking care of yourself and relaxing will help. Reflexology improves circulation, helps the assimilation of food, and promotes relaxation, helping the body eliminate toxins and waste."

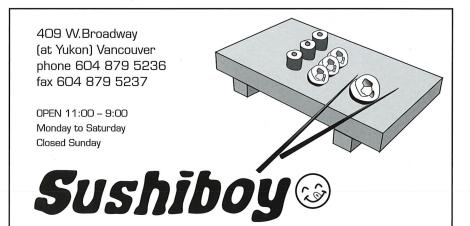
In my second session at the spa, I receive Shiatsu, a form of massage developed more than 3,000 years ago. Trained in the art of relaxation, Moneca Yardley, my Shiatsu massage therapist, understands what she refers to as the "flows of electricity and energy in the body, the body's blood work, and the interaction between the extremities and the brain." As she gently moves my body to yet another position, she creates the balance needed for peace and trust of the world. Shiatsu, according to Yardley, is a refined way of communicating with our bodies to being "part of the universe instead of isolated and independent." To the Shiatsu practitioner, relaxation is a learned state of mind, a skill not all of us allow ourselves to experience—and is the path to true happiness or bliss.

Shiatsu is performed in a room where the therapist can completely focus on the client, who is dressed in loose clothing. Treatment takes place on

Shiatsu is a refined way of communicating with our bodies.

a firm surface such as a mat or massage table. Along with the use of pressure, a great deal of movement is involved, so space is important. A Shiatsu session is approximately one hour, with a 10-day cycle recommended.

Shiatsu, Reflexology, and Reiki massage techniques allow us to achieve a greater state of relaxation, which, in turn, leads to good health and emotional well-being. If these massage techniques are new to you, give yourself the opportunity to experience their gifts. After my treatment was finished, I calmly floated home—tranquil, balanced, and complete—fully grounded in body, mind, and spirit.





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A Beginner's Guide



Manekineko lives in Vancouver and chances are you saw him the last time you went out for sushi. This white porcelain cat is perhaps the most recognizable of Japanese superstitions in North America. Decorated with lively orange and red spots and holding lucky scripture, Manekineko is hard to ignore. It seems everyone has seen this good luck charm, but almost no one can tell you its relevance. The truth is we know little about the superstitions of our neighbours across the Pacific Ocean. Blood type, numbers, and even chopsticks, bring good luck, making superstition a fascinating aspect of Japanese culture.

Manekineko is usually found in businesses relying on heavy customer volume, including restaurants and drinking establishments. Manekineko literally means "beckoning cat." According to the Encyclopedia of Japan, Manekineko has traditionally been regarded as a mascot for shopkeepers and business owners. The figurine varies in size and is constructed from papier-mâché or pottery. Smaller versions are given out as protective amulets to those making their first shrine or temple visit of the new year.

Japanese superstitions also apply to chopstick use. In Japan, chopstick etiquette is important, so refrain from sticking chopsticks upright in your bowl of rice. Traditionally, a bowl of rice with chopsticks sticking out is reserved for funeral altars and is, therefore, considered a bad omen. In addition, after a body is cremated, family members pass bones from chopstick to chopstick into the urn. For this reason, passing food this way is frowned upon in Japan. Finally, chopsticks should never be

grasped in the fist. This is a hostile gesture.

In many Southeast Asian countries, words take on an abundance of meanings based on similarities in pronunciation. According to John Condon, author of What's Japanese About Japan, Japanese language is rife with word play. Tai, meaning "red snapper," is regarded as the good luck fish of Japan for a reason. This festive dish loses much in translation. In English, we might call this snapper and seaweed, while in Japanese, a play on words occurs. The word tai is part of the word omedetai, which means "congratulations," and the seaweed, or kombu, sounds very much like yorokobu, or "to be pleased." Thus, those who eat snapper and seaweed are blessed with good fortune.

Numbers also play a huge role in Japanese superstition. The number four in Japanese is pronounced shi while the word for death is pronounced the same way. The number nine is pronounced ku, which in Japanese also means "pain." Japanese refrain from giving presents in groups of four, and even dinner sets have five pieces.

The number 24, or ni-shi, means "double death," while 42, or shi-ni, means "to die." These numbers are considered extremely unlucky.

In Japan, even your blood type has superstitions attached to it and is widely believed to determine people's personalities. Sharalyn Orbaugh, Professor of Asian Studies at UBC, stated, "Japanese magazines often write about how you can categorize people by their blood type and almost everyone knows their blood type and what the characteristics of that type are." According to Haruko Victor, people with Type A blood are diligent, serious, but easily stressed. Those with Type B are assertive and strong-willed. Type O people are said to be bighearted and benevolent, while people with Type AB are sensitive and sentimental.

Omamori bukuro, or "a charm in a brocade bag," is perhaps the most common of Japanese lucky charms. This protective amulet is sold at Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples and is believed to bring financial success, good health, and happiness to those who possess it. Usually one-inch wide and two-inches high, the decorated bag displays blessings and the name of the temple from which it was issued. On the inside is a prayer or blessing written on paper or a thin piece of wood. However, opening one's omamori is ill advised and said to negate the blessing. The Encyclopedia of Japan says omamori are occasion specific. For example, omamori for safe travel can be hung from rearview mirrors in cars. Prosperous business omamori may be kept in stores, while omamori for success on exams would be tied to school bags.

Lucky charms, good fortune by numbers, and the history of Japanese superstition make up a large part of Japanese culture. There is much to learn, for in Japan, the lines between custom, superstition, and religion are often blurred. These beliefs and tenets are an important facet of the Japanese character. Quite charming indeed.



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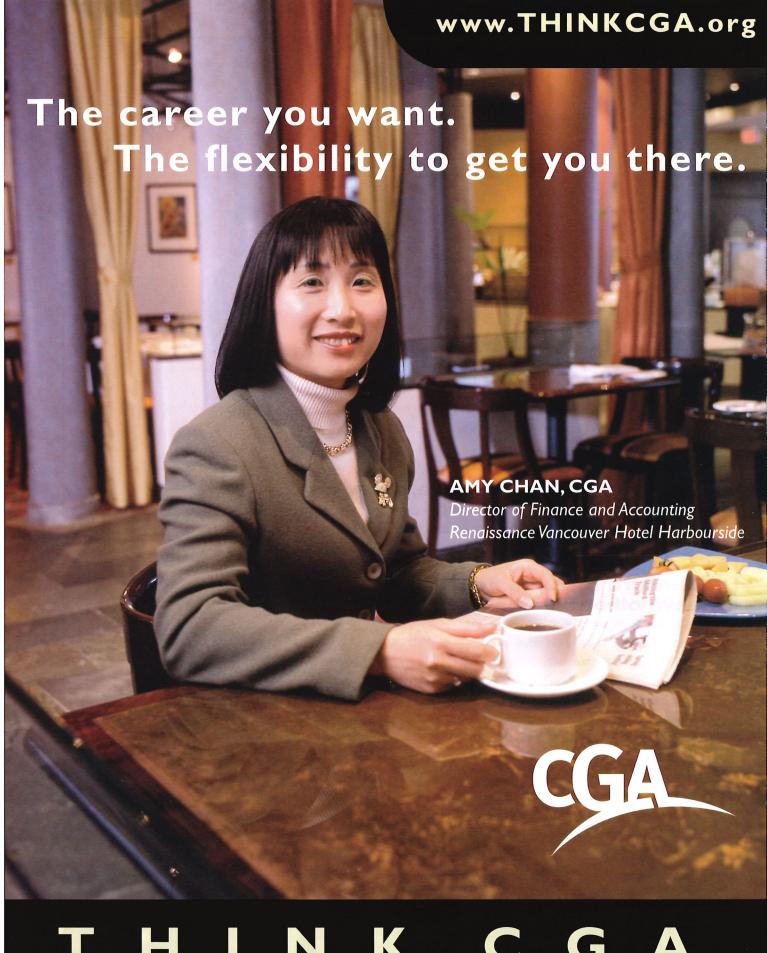


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