



MEDIA ADVISORY

explorASIAN 2018 explores “Pan Asian Routes” for National Asian Heritage Month
Over 50 Pan Asian cultural events co-presented throughout Metro Vancouver May 1–30, 2018

Vancouver, BC—April 6th, 2018—Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society (VAHMS) celebrates the cultural contribution of emerging and established Pan Asian artists and communities in Metro Vancouver with its 22nd annual ***explorASIAN***, BC’s only festival for national Asian Heritage Month in May each year.

“With the theme *Pan-Asian Routes*, VAHMS is proud to once again acknowledge and showcase the richness and diversity of Pan Asian artists and communities in Metro Vancouver and BC—through co-presenting events that foster greater public awareness of this rich part of our Canadian heritage,” said Ken McAteer, President, VAHMS Board of Directors.

VAHMS reaches out through community, non-profit, municipal, provincial, and corporate partners to advocate for existing and potential ways to bring BC’s diverse communities together. VAHMS’ current programming focus is a direct response to the increasing consolidation of ethnic groups or “silos” that can be a disincentive to mainstream cultural integration. This year, ***explorASIAN 2018*** features more than 50 performances, exhibits, shows, and events from close to 40 partner organizations, representing Pan Asian Canadian cultural heritage and communities from Iran to Korea throughout Metro Vancouver, in the month of May and beyond.

The ***explorASIAN 2018*** Opening event (April 21) at Djavad Mowafaghian World Art Centre, Simon Fraser University kicks off this year’s program with addresses and acknowledgments from Musqueam Councillor Wade Grant and City of Vancouver Acting Mayor Raymond Louie. The ***explorASIAN*** theme song and the national anthem will be performed by Vince Mai, Eileen Kage, and Noriko Kim Kobayashi; additional performances are from Banh Mi Barbershop Quartet and Kasandra Flamenco. Vancouver City Hall will also be illuminated red (May 1), in celebration of both Asian Heritage Month across Canada and the launch of ***explorASIAN 2018*** in BC.

The ***explorASIAN 2018*** Recognition Gala dinner and fundraising event (June 2) at Pink Pearl Chinese Restaurant closes the program with the VAHMS Community Recognition Awards, a festival highlight reel, silent auction, and raffle. The Awards recognize outstanding contribution from individuals and organizations to the diversity of arts and culture in their communities. Nominees for 2018 are expected to be announced May 1.

Highlights from this year’s celebration include *Unthreaded @ Ian Tan Gallery* (May 5–31), a group exhibition of visual media from five BC-based contemporary Asian Canadian artists—Jeanette Lee, Judy Cheng, June Yun, Eri Ishii, Grace Tan—in a unique confluence of Pan-Asian identities that illustrates, challenges, and celebrates the common threads and multiplicity of voices, ideas, viewpoints, and conversations that shape our province.



Mixed Me: Multi-ethnic Storytelling for Teens & Kids (May 27) at the Museum of Vancouver in partnership with Hapa-palooza Festival, invites teens, kids, and families to an afternoon of creativity workshops and multi-ethnic readings with three BC mixed race authors: Poet and memoirist Chelene Knight (“Dear Current Occupant”), young adult writer Michelle Kim (“Running Through Sprinklers”), and animator/children’s book author Jeff Chiba Stearns (“Mixed Critters: An ABC Book”).

The *Filipino Film Series* (May 5) screening and panel discussion at Vancouver Public Library, Central Branch, features the English-subtitled, Filipino historical romantic musical drama classic “Ganito Kami Noon, Paano Kayo Ngayon?” (“This is How We Were Before, How Are You Doing Now?”), set in the year of Spanish colonization in the Philippines. And *Tracing Malong/Guhit ng Ating Malong* (May 6), a Migrante BC dance performance and arts dialogue in partnership with Co. Erasga, showcases the “malong” (wraparound garment from the Philippines’ Mindanao region).

Co-presented and featured *explorASIAN 2018* events take place throughout Metro Vancouver May 1–30, 2018. For interviews, photo opportunities, a media kit and additional releases, or other media inquiries, please email office.vahms@gmail.com. For updates and information on specific festival events, including tickets for the Opening and Gala, please visit www.explorasian.org.

About Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society

Founded in 1996, the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society (VAHMS) is a non-profit society that is dedicated to recognizing Asian Canadian participation as an integral part of Canadian society. VAHMS organizes *explorASIAN*, an annual festival celebrating national Asian Heritage Month to promote understanding and appreciation of Asian-Canadian arts and culture in the month of May. The festival includes programs, activities and events produced in collaboration with various partners from the diverse communities in Metro Vancouver.

Follow the festival as it unfolds:

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