



Thank You

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..... 30th Anniversary

Explor**ASIAN** Festival

Closing Award Ceremony

MAY 31ST, 2026

4:00 PM – 8:00 PM

**Pink Pearl Chinese Restaurant
1132 E Hastings Street, Vancouver**

30th Anniversary
Explor**ASIAN**
Festival





PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

I would like to convey my warmest greetings to everyone celebrating Asian Heritage Month.

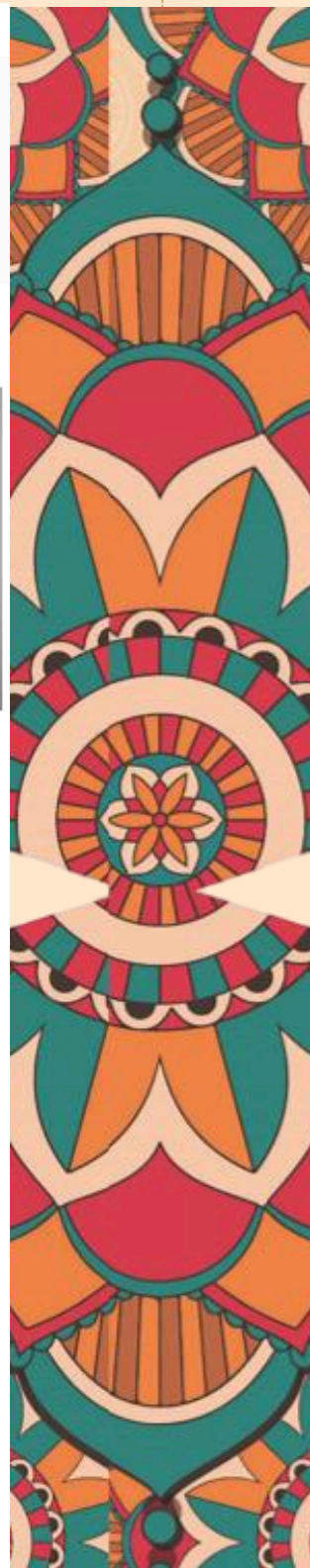
Asian Heritage Month is a wonderful opportunity for all Canadians to explore the richness and diversity of Asian arts and culture and to learn more about the many contributions that members of the Asian Canadian community have made, and continue to make, to our nation in all fields of endeavour.

I would like to thank the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society for hosting today's event and for its commitment to celebrating the diversity that enriches our nation.

I wish you all an enjoyable and memorable experience.

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada

Ottawa
2026



V A H M S
VANCOUVER
ASIAN HERITAGE
MONTH SOCIETY

Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society

VAHMS was founded in 1996, celebrating Asian Heritage Month, and the members are mostly from Asian backgrounds, and to promote the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Asian communities through art displays, music, and performances. Talented artists from Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Iranian and Indian communities will share their vibrant traditions and artistic expressions.

VAHMS Event Planning Committee

Chief Event Planner: June Chen McIntyre

Event Planner: Behnaz Fazli-fard

Stage Director: Isabel Shen

Event Team: Nessim Tariq, Sania Mohar, Nancy Wang, Josh Kapoor, Denny Wang, Tao Xu, Alvin Chen, Meer Anwar, Yohi He, Alireza Fadaie, Wendy Wang, Justin Pham, Tarig Ghuman, Shirley Huang,



Performance Highlights



Maggie Guo is a Chinese folk vocalist specializing in traditional Chinese folk music. She won First Prize in the Beijing Division and a Silver Award in the National Finals of the National City Singer Competition. Maggie has also performed on CCTV and numerous provincial television programs across China.

Anita Shahriary is a classically trained mezzo-soprano, pianist, lyricist, and composer known for blending classical technique with diverse musical styles. She has been singing for over 10 years and has performed extensively across British Columbia at festivals, concerts, and community events, recently presenting her first concert, *Songs in Bloom*. In 2026 Anita received two 1st place medallions at the Vancouver Kiwanis Music Festival in Senior Classical Voice and Classical Voice Excellence.



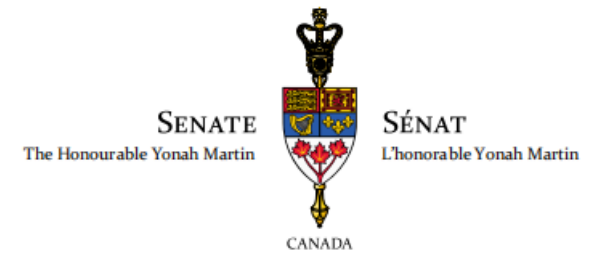
Pooneh Alizadeh (Mehrbano) is the award-winning artistic director of the Academy of Middle Eastern Dance, AMED Dance Academy.

- *Awarded as a BC Culture Ambassador in 2016.
- *The Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards of 2018.



MehrBano

Persian Dance Awards Committee Member
Award-winning Artist | Director of AMED Dance Academy
Choreographer, Instructor, Leader & Founder | BC Culture Ambassador
2016 | Top 25 Canadian Immigrant Awards of 2018
Master Degree in Art



April 2026



MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE YONAH MARTIN

On behalf of the Senate of Canada, it is a pleasure to extend warm greetings to all participants and guests celebrating the 30th Anniversary of *ExploreASIAN*, presented by the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society (VAHMS)

For three decades, *ExploreASIAN* has served as a vibrant platform for celebrating the rich cultural diversity, traditions, and contributions of Asian Canadian communities. Through its dynamic programming—ranging from cultural performances and artistic showcases to culinary experiences, it continues to strengthen cross-cultural understanding and community connection.

As you mark this important milestone, I extend my sincere appreciation to the VAHMS Board, organizers, artists, and volunteers whose dedication makes the celebration of this special milestone possible. May this anniversary year be a time of reflection, pride, and renewed inspiration for the years ahead.

Wishing you a successful and memorable 30th anniversary celebration!

The Honourable Yonah Martin
Senator of Canada





Dear Friends:

I would like to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month.

Asian Heritage Month presents a wonderful opportunity to learn and celebrate Asian cultures throughout Canada and to appreciate the many contributions Asian Canadian community have made and continue to make.

I would like to thank the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society for organizing this event. Your dedication to the arts is evident. I wish you all a day of fun and celebration.

Yours sincerely,

Ron McKinnon, MP



11. 6:20 PM –Break time

12. 6:35 PM – Line Dance
Performed by Global Multicultural Affairs Society

14. 6:45 PM – Fun Game “Forse Si Forse no Bachata”

15. 6:55PM – Chinese Dizi and Erhu “Jasmine Flower”
Performed by Yinong Yao Mingru Yuan

16. 7:05 PM – Traditional Thai Dance “Rabam Uthong”
Performed by Thai Cultural Association of BC

17. 7:10 PM – Persian Traditional Singing
Performed by Anita Shahriary

18. 7:20 PM – Traditional Chinese Dance: Little Fairy
Performed by Bright Sunset Chinese Dance

19. 7:25 PM – Lucky Draw
Sponsored by JCJL Enterprises Inc.

20. 7:35 PM – Philippine Traditional Instruments:
“Paghlong & Sarunay”
Performed by Mayo Landicho

21. 7:45 PM – Persian Traditional Dance
Performed by AMED Dance Academy

22. 7:55 PM – Chinese Singing
Performed by Meggie Guo

23. 8:00 PM – Closing Remarks



Event Schedule

MC

Margaret Gallagher

3:30 PM – Registration

4:00 PM – Networking

1. 5:00 PM – Opening Dance: Spring Hill
Performed by Bright Sunset Chinese Dance
2. 5:05 PM – Land Acknowledgement
By Stephen Armstrong, Kwikwetlem First Nation
3. 5:10 PM – President’s Greeting
By June Chen McIntyre
4. 5:15 PM – VIP Guest Remarks
5. 5:25 PM – Introduction of Partners & Sponsors
6. 5:35 PM – Japanese Drum Dance “Eisa”
Performed by Vancouver Okinawa Taiko
7. 5:45 PM – Persian Traditional Dance
Performed by AMED Dance Academy
8. 5:50 PM – Peking Opera Medley
Performed by Vancouver Jingyun Opera Association
9. 6:00 PM – Korean Traditional Dance
Performed by Julie Kim Dance Academy
10. 6:10 PM – Fashion Show
Performed by International Fashion Gala



Zoë Royer

Member of Parliament
Port Moody – Coquitlam
Anmore, Belcarra



Best Wishes for the 30th Annual Asian Heritage Month Festival!

It is a pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society as you celebrate the **30th Annual Asian Heritage Month Festival**. This milestone reflects your long-standing commitment to honouring the rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions of Asian Canadian communities.

This year’s events, from the Opening Ceremony in Coquitlam, to the lively Taste of Asia celebration, to the Closing Awards Ceremony honouring exceptional artists, shine a light on the creativity, diversity, and cultural richness that strengthen our shared Canadian story.

As a member of the House of Commons **Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage**, I am deeply committed to supporting the arts and cultural traditions that connect us, inspire us, and tell the stories of who we are. The performing arts hold a special place in my heart. They bring people together, spark creativity, and strengthen the bonds that unite our society. Your festival embodies these values beautifully.

In my role as Co-Chair of the **Canada China Legislative Association**, I have seen how cultural exchange fosters understanding and strengthens relationships between communities. The work we do to promote dialogue, collaboration, and mutual respect reflects the same spirit of connection that your festival celebrates.

My heartfelt thanks to June Chen and the entire VAHMS team for your leadership and passion. Your work uplifts voices, celebrates heritage, and brings our communities closer together.

Zoe Royer, MP





JAKE SAWATZKY, MP
New Westminster—Burnaby—Maillardville



April 25, 2026

Dear Friends,

As the Member of Parliament for New Westminster—Burnaby—Maillardville, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the opening ceremony of the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society's (VAHMS) 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month.

I am pleased to celebrate and recognize the incredible milestone that is Asian Heritage Month's 30th anniversary. Since 1996, VAHMS has been dedicated to recognizing and promoting Asian heritage through arts, culture, education, and community engagement, serving Metro Vancouver as a non-profit organization. For 30 years, VAHMS has taken on the essential role of facilitating diversity and inclusion, bringing communities together to share stories, traditions, and lived experiences.

This event marks the official launch of the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society's (VAHMS) festivities, celebrating the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Asian communities.

It is my hope that this opening ceremony brings joy, happiness, community, and appreciation for Asian heritage. Through live music, art displays, and food offerings, may this month be filled with celebration and renewed connection for Asian culture and heritage.

I would like to commend the organizers, volunteers, and donors who have made this event possible, and for all their hard work and commitment year-round.

With best wishes,

Jake Sawatzky, MP
New Westminster – Burnaby – Maillardville

#611 – 628 Sixth Avenue, New Westminster, BC, V3M 6Z1
Jake.Sawatzky@parl.gc.ca | 604-775-5707



Community Partners



Vancouver Jingyun Opera Association

Sponsors



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Media support



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— LAO YUAN NEW MEDIA —





CITY OF PORT MOODY

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Greetings from Mayor Meghan Lahti

Warmest congratulations to the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society on the occasion of your 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month.

This milestone is a meaningful testament to three decades of honoring the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Asian communities and recognizing the valuable contributions of Canadians of Asian heritage.

I commend the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society for its continued dedication to fostering understanding, inclusion, and cultural pride, and I extend my best wishes for a successful and inspiring month of celebration.

Warm regards,

Meghan Lahti
Mayor, City of Port Moody



A MESSAGE from PREMIER DAVID EBY



As Premier of British Columbia, I would like to extend warm greetings to everyone attending today's Opening Ceremony of ExploreASIAN Festival, hosted by the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society (VAHMS).

Now in its 30th year, ExploreASIAN celebrates the rich heritage, traditions and perspectives that the Asian communities of British Columbia have brought to our province, helping to shape its history and culture. With events being held throughout Asian Heritage Month, this is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the many achievements and contributions of Asian Canadians to the social, cultural and economic landscapes of our province. BC is strengthened by its multiculturalism, and occasions like this help to build a more accepting and welcoming province for all.

I would like to recognize the VAHMS and everyone else whose hard work went into the planning of this year's events. Since its founding in 1996, VAHMS has shown a dedication to promoting and celebrating Asian culture through education, arts and community engagement in the Metro Vancouver area. By bringing people together to share in one another's traditions and heritage, we foster a spirit of inclusivity and respect that strengthens the fabric of our communities.

Wishing you all a joyous ExploreASIAN Festival and Asian Heritage Month!

Honourable David Eby, KC
Premier of British Columbia



April 22nd, 2026



Greetings for the Opening Ceremony of the Asian Heritage Month Festival

I am pleased to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society on the occasion of your 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month.

For more than three decades, VAHMS has played a vital role in celebrating and promoting Asian Canadian arts and cultural diversity through year round programming and strong community partnerships. Your signature initiative, explorASIAN, continues to be a cornerstone of Asian Heritage Month celebrations across Metro Vancouver.

Congratulations on reaching this important milestone, and I wish you a successful and inspiring celebration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Blatherwick
MLA for Coquitlam-Maillardville



CITY OF PORT COQUITLAM

Greetings from the Mayor



On behalf of the City of Port Coquitlam and our Council, I am pleased to congratulate the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society on 30 years of celebration, education and community-building.

The ExplorASIAN festival marks an extraordinary milestone this year. This anniversary is a reminder that heritage is more than something we “remember” once a year.

Please enjoy this engaging opportunity to learn and share culture, food and stories.

Sincerely,

Brad West
Mayor
City of Port Coquitlam



April 13, 2026


Greetings from Mayor and Council,

On behalf of City Council, I welcome everyone to the 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month.

We are lucky to live in such a welcoming country where we have the ability to share our cultures and celebrate these special occasions that contribute to the richness, diversity and quality of life in our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank event organizers for hosting this wonderful event, and wish all those in attendance a most enjoyable experience.

Yours truly,



Richard Stewart
Mayor



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

CERTIFICATE OF CONGRATULATIONS

PRESENTED TO

The Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society

I extend my sincere regards on hosting the 30th annual celebration of Asian Heritage Month. This milestone reflects three decades of honouring the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of Asian communities that strengthen our region. This legacy continues to inspire greater understanding, inclusion, and shared pride across British Columbia.



April 25th, 2026



Anne Kang 康安禮
Burnaby Centre MLA
本拿比中區 省議員





LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

A Message from MLA Paul Choi

FOR

The 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month

April 25, 2026

On the occasion of the 30th Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month, I extend my warmest congratulations to the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society for three decades of outstanding leadership and dedication.

Your efforts have greatly enriched multiculturalism in our communities and strengthened understanding, respect, and connection across diverse cultures.

Thank you to your entire team, volunteers, and partners for your continued commitment to celebrating diversity and fostering inclusion. Your work helps build a stronger, more vibrant, and more united society for all.

Paul Choi
MLA Burnaby South-Metrotown



 CITY OF
VANCOUVER | Office of
the Mayor

MAYOR KEN SIM



April 25, 2026

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of the residents of Vancouver and my colleagues on City Council, I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the opening ceremony of the 30th Anniversary of ExplorASIAN Festival.

Asian Heritage Month is a meaningful time for our city, an opportunity to celebrate the incredible contributions of Asian communities here in Vancouver and across Canada. From culture and the arts to business and public service, Asian Canadians continue to shape our city in important ways.

Over the past three decades, it has brought people together to share traditions, showcase artistic excellence, and deepen understanding across cultures.

A sincere thank you to the Vancouver Asian Heritage Month Society for your continued dedication and leadership in organizing this milestone celebration. Your commitment to promoting understanding, fostering inclusivity, and celebrating the contributions of Asian Canadians is truly commendable.

Thank you as well to all the organizers, volunteers, artists, and participants who have made this 30th anniversary event possible. Your efforts are deeply appreciated, and I wish you a wonderful and memorable celebration.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ken Sim

