

UVIC TORCH

THE MAKERS

Stories from the University of Victoria community about people who make things >>>>>>>>>>

HAKAI MAGAZINE

INNOVATIVE APPS

HOOPLIGHT



STEPHANIE WILLERTH LAB

YASUKO THANH

THE HOLLOW CHILD

UMEEDA & NAREENA

SWITLO

AND
MORE







Yoga Glow

The Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA) was a blaze of colour and busy bodies for the 2019 Vikes Nation Yoga Rave. Instructors led the group through an aerobic warm-up followed by a series of yoga poses. A deejay and generous application of glow-in-the-dark face paint amped up the fun factor. The event served as a finale to this year's UVic Mental Health Awareness Week.

PHOTO CREDIT: APSSHUTTER.COM

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A Maker's Life

University of Victoria theatre grad **Jill Croft** was many things, including a creative spirit who lived a passionate life as a maker.

BY JENNY MANZER, BA '97

JILL CROFT (BFA '76) was my neighbour, her home just two doors away on our quiet cul-de-sac, but at a symbolic level Jill was *everyone's* neighbour. She embodied a spirit of community togetherness, both in small gestures—such as inviting people new to the area in for tea, or holding sherry and shortbread gatherings—and by leading bigger projects, such as founding community events and groups.

Alongside her husband, **TOM CROFT** (BA '72), she founded initiatives such as the Community Association of Oak Bay, the Bowker Creek Brush Up (a showcase for local artists), and the lushly illustrated Oak Bay Community Green Map, a tool for newcomers. Jill was also a former member of our UVic Alumni Association board and was proud of being a graduate.

Jill passed away last November at age 71 after a short illness. I could fill pages talking about her role as a Faculty Association Secretary and exam invigilator at Camosun College, or her accomplishments as an arts and culture community builder, which led her to earn a YWCA Women of Distinction Award in 2006. As well as being the prototype of what we now call a “super-connector,” Jill was, to her core, a maker. She sewed throughout her life and specialized in costume design as a theatre student at UVic. She graduated at age 29, hugely pregnant with daughter Heather (BSc '01, MSc '05), who now works on campus.

Jill and Tom married in 1972 just months after meeting and lived in various places across Canada, including Whitehorse and Calgary,



JILL CROFT

where Jill made costumes for shows like *Fiddler on the Roof*. In 1985, the couple returned to Victoria with their two girls, Heather and her younger sister, Jena.

Jill did sew, but there was more, far more. Over her life, Jill made paintings, built dolls, did linocuts, made complicated works of folded paper, stitched journals with fabric pages, hooked rugs, fashioned paper birds. While Heather was away in Europe as a high-school exchange student, her mother made a box every day—totalling 365 handmade paper boxes.

Jill drafted detailed illustrated maps and journals. She committed to daily projects, such as making a quilt block a day that reflected something in her life at a time before Instagram's 365 photo challenges were even a flash going off in someone's imagination. After becoming a grandmother, she mailed Heather's two young daughters handmade cards every week for *five years*. Jill would pursue a creative form, more than master it, then be notably humble about her achievements when someone might ask to show or buy her work. Jill even wove her own willow baskets and furniture, harvesting the branches herself from the banks of the Cowichan River.

Jill combined her passion for community and creativity by making and gifting hundreds of handmade quilts to families with newborn babies. Her quilts are prized by those who received one.

“Your mom is giving my kid a hug every night,” one of Heather's friends remarked.

Heather grew up without television, wearing home-sewn clothes and eating vegetarian dishes with names like “Vulgar Bulgar.” She was teased at school for bringing reusable lunch containers, but sees now that her parents were ahead of the curve by bicycling everywhere and teaching her to being eco-conscious. Heather's daughters, in turn, have also learned to be makers from those afternoons spent with Jill, who introduced them to her tools, saying: “Look, here's a needle and thread.”

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LETTERS
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Six Strategies for a Better World

UVic's students and faculty are passionate about discovery, invention and creation. Their innovations contribute to a better future for people and the planet.

BY JAMIE CASSELS, QC • PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR



"Innovation can be creative, social, technological or economic in form."

Our Strategic Framework's vision and priorities help create the right conditions and supports for innovation across campus. Innovation can be creative, social, technological or economic in form. The best way to illustrate innovation at the University of Victoria is to highlight a few of the countless examples that advance our framework priorities. We strive to:

CULTIVATE AN EXTRAORDINARY ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Innovation starts at home. At UVic, we strive to create a learning and working environment that cultivates innovation and makes us recognized internationally as a university of choice. UVic is one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers and a world-leader on equity, diversity and inclusion, which are foundations for excellence. Our student wellness programs, including prevention of sexualized violence and promotion of student mental health, are held up as national examples and both governments and peer institutions seek our expertise in these areas.

ADVANCE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT

Innovative research is being done across UVic and it is exciting times for areas like regenerative medicine, coastal resilience, clean energy and advanced materials. Recently, UVic recruited world-renowned materials scientist, Ian Manners, as a Canada 150 Research Chair to lead the Laboratory for Synthetic Self-Assembled Materials. The impact of UVic's advanced materials innovation will be far-reaching, with applications in health, manufacturing, renewable energy and environmental remediation.

INTENSIFY DYNAMIC LEARNING

We prepare students to contribute effectively as global citizens by engaging them in hands-on opportunities, including field schools, co-op placements, community-engaged learning, student entrepreneurship and innovation creation. The field school experiences UVic provides are transformative. Dr. Helga Thorson was awarded a 2019 3M National Teaching Fellowship for her I-witness field school, which brings UVic students to Europe to explore Holocaust memorialization.

UVic is also home to the Coast Capital Savings Innovation Centre, which allows students, faculty and alumni to take business concepts from idea to start-up venture by providing access to mentors and innovation-acceleration supports.

FOSTER RESPECT AND RECONCILIATION

UVic continues to work to implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to provide enhanced opportunities for Indigenous students. The UVic Aboriginal Canadian Entrepreneurs (ACE) program provides culturally sensitive and community-tailored business education in Indigenous communities across British Columbia. ACE participants engage in mentorship, coaching and entrepreneurial learning, including start-up and business planning. UVic is also home to the world's first and only Indigenous Law/Common Law program and Indigenous co-op program.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Sustainability research and policy is a key focus across all of our faculties and UVic is a leader in oceans, climate and clean energy research and innovation. Institutionally, we ensure we achieve or exceed our sustainability goals. UVic's new student housing facility will be designed to Passive House standards, using 80% less energy than standard buildings. This will set a precedent and is anticipated to be the largest Passive House building in Canada.

ENGAGE LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Our university and its students, faculty and staff are outward-looking and engaged. We have global partnerships with 300 institutions in 70 countries and are currently ranked as North America's top university for published research based on international collaborations. Closer to home, UVic faculty, staff, graduate students and retirees are available to speak to community groups, schools, clubs and other organizations. Last year alone, more than 600 community talks were provided, reaching an audience of 19,000 people. ↑

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UVIC ALUMNI CONNECT

CAREER CONVERSATIONS | COMMUNITY | COFFEE

The UVic Alumni Association's free online networking and mentoring platform connects students and alumni to exchange ideas, network and have fun—either online or in-person.

Join the community at
uvic.ca/alumniconnect



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Singing Together Brings Benefits

Singing in a group brings benefits for people living with memory loss as well as their caregivers, a University of Victoria team has discovered. Their latest findings are promising and surprising, says Debra Sheets, nursing professor and lead investigator of the Voices in Motion project. "There is clear evidence that participating in the Voices in Motion choir is having a significant and positive impact on the well-being and quality of life of our participants."

Voices in Motion is an intergenerational choir for people with memory loss and their caregivers. Students, caregivers and people with dementia sing together once a week.

Those diagnosed with dementia are assessed and studied to gauge the social, physical and cognitive benefits of the free choir sessions. The project is a co-operative effort involving an interdisciplinary research team from UVic, area high-school students and Island Health.

The team found that those with dementia reported feeling less stigma and social isolation. Findings indicate improved memory recall and reduced depressive symptoms over time. At the same time, caregivers showed significant reductions in burden and depressive symptoms.

The project is funded by the Alzheimer's Society, Pacific Alzheimer's

Research Foundation and several Jamie Cassels Undergraduate Research Awards.



UVic's interdepartmental Voices in Motion team, left to right: Mary Kennedy, School of Music (emeritus); Andre Smith, social sciences; Debra Sheets, nursing; Stuart MacDonald, psychology; and Erica Phare-Berg, choir director.



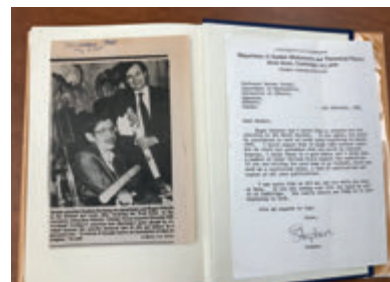
CAPI turns 30

UVic's Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (CAPI) celebrated its 30th anniversary with a gala evening last November featuring renowned Indian-American author Amitav Ghosh. CAPI was founded in 1988 as a campus "clearing house" for all matters Asia-Pacific and mandated to serve as a dedicated interdisciplinary hub for Asian-focused scholars at UVic. The centre has since established itself as a vital link to the region through a vast array of activities both at home and abroad. These include facilitating justice system improvements in Cambodia and Vietnam; supporting research into waste-pickers in Bangladesh and into labour migration in Indonesia; organizing international conferences on Chinese politics; and hosting Thai royalty. Since 2003, CAPI's acclaimed student internship program has sent 171 Canadian post-secondary students on life-changing placements with 51 different non-governmental organizations across the Asia-Pacific for a cumulative total of 85 years.

Learn more at capi.uvic.ca.

Letter Perfect

A donated book to UVic Libraries contained an unexpected treasure from one of the world's most famous physicists. When Professor Emeritus **WERNER ISRAEL** (Physics) donated a portion of his library to UVic, he included a first-edition copy of *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time* by Stephen Hawking and G.F.R. Ellis. When library staff examined the book, they discovered a signed 1981 personal letter from "Stephen" to Israel. The typed letter was tucked into the back dust jacket, along with two newspaper clippings about Hawking as well as Israel's pencilled summary of important formulae on the flyleaf. "While some of the textbooks I donated are now over 30 years old, they contain basic material that will never be outdated. It is good to know that they will again see active use by the new generation at UVic," says Israel. Hawking and Israel collaborated on two books and were friends for decades, as the informal, chatty letter demonstrates.



A letter from Hawking to Israel (1981), along with a first-edition copy of *The Large Scale Structure of Space-Time* (Cambridge, 1973) by S.W. Hawking and G.F.R. Ellis.

Digital Tools for Creative Minds

A space tucked away on the third floor of the library is providing free tools and training for people with intriguing ideas to pursue. The **Digital Scholarship Commons** in the Mearns Centre for Learning—McPherson Library provides students, faculty and staff with enhanced access to software, hardware and expertise in support of digital scholarship. The creative space hosted 234 workshops and 2,568 participants in 2018 as a way to encourage interdisciplinary work across campus and spark cross-disciplinary conversations. Staff offer access to specialized tools—like 3D-printers and scanners—and offer a range of workshops that include interactive storytelling, Photoshop, and video editing.



A staff member and a student at UVic Libraries' Digital Scholarship Commons.

Students can prepare for professional careers by enhancing skills that are not part of their formal curriculum. Hands-on learning and free workshops are also offered to the entire UVic campus, making the possibilities for creative output as diverse as the technology itself.

Learn more: onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/dsc/



UVic grad **LUCAS ADVERSE** is a world-class juggler.

Juggling for Joy

BY EDEN DASILVA

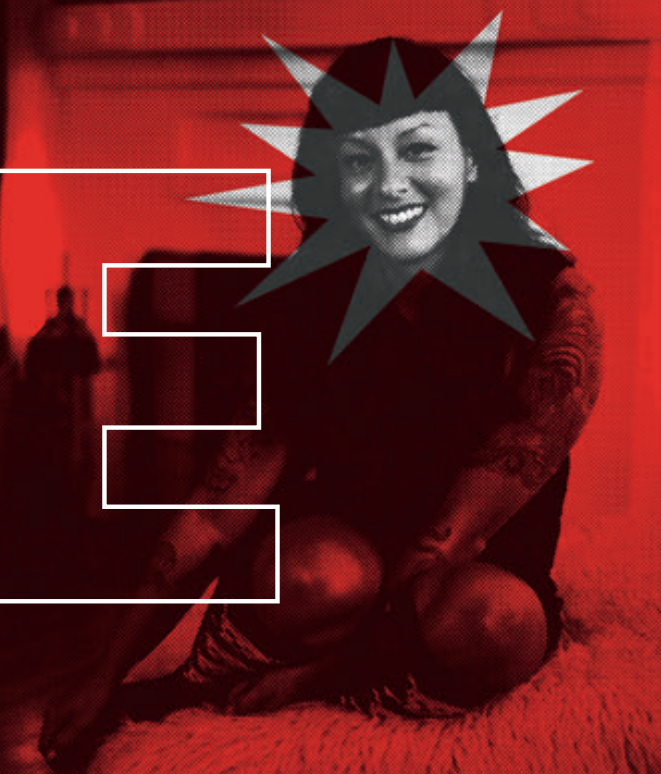
Many University of Victoria students learn to juggle as part of their studies but not quite as literally as **LUCAS ADVERSE**. The recent UVic grad is one of the biggest names on the world juggling scene. Adverse (BCom '18) lived in Brazil until age 14, when his parents helped him move to Vancouver. After finishing high school, he relocated to Victoria in 2013 to enrol in the Peter B. Gustavson School of Business. During his time on campus, Adverse was inspired by a video of Japanese jugglers and watched tutorials to learn the sport. His success, he says, is mostly just about wanting it: "Motivation is more important than natural talent."

Since 2015, Adverse has consistently ranked among the top 40 jugglers in the world, achieving a personal best of #8 in 2017. Soon after this accomplishment, he started learning how to use a kendama, a traditional Japanese toy which is similar to a ball in a cup, but more complex. At the beginning of this year, Adverse's juggling and kendama skills were showcased in an Instagram feature to 277-million followers. This marked the first time a kendama artist had been showcased by the Instagram team and only the second time juggling was featured.

Adverse was drawn to the creativity of juggling, and he says it totally changed his perception of art. "I didn't appreciate the creativity and originality that goes into a lot of art. Now, as a juggler, when I see people doing new stuff, it doesn't matter what it is, I feel like I appreciate it way more." Adverse has no plans to be a professional juggler. He creates videos to share his passion and to introduce more people to the worlds of juggling and kendama. "Even if at first you're terrible and you keep practising, you'll succeed eventually. For me, I just found myself practising all the time, and I really liked it."

We share stories from the University of Victoria community about people who make things—including films, books, food, music, medical treatments, technology and diversions.

THE





Left to right: **UMEEDA** and **NAREENA SWITLO** are fulfilling their dream by building a social enterprise around a flavourful, healthful product sourced in Belize.

Good Business

Together, mother and daughter **Umeeda** and **Nareena Switlo** run a thriving international food and beverage business that provides needed employment in Belize.

BY JENNY MANZER (BA '97)

More than 25 years ago, Umeeda Switlo (BSc '80) was living in Vancouver, adjusting to life as a single parent following the death of her husband. A refugee from Idi Amin's Uganda, Umeeda had known hard times before. She'd left Kampala in 1972 at age 15 along with other Ugandans of South Asian origin. She had witnessed tanks rolling in the streets and innocent people shot dead in front of her. She said goodbye to her parents and headed for Canada, bringing a single suitcase.

Not long after that, in 1974, Umeeda began her studies at the University of Victoria with dreams of becoming a marine biologist. "I really received an amazing education and an incredible respect for the environment," she says. These studies inspired her to found a business that would benefit the natural world.

Today, Umeeda divides her time between Belize and Vancouver, running a growing food and beverage company, Naledo, alongside her daughter, Nareena (BA '09). These days, Umeeda can watch blue morpho butterflies hatch from her bedroom in Punta Gorda, where Naledo's products are sourced. Their signa-

ture product is Truly Turmeric, a spice paste made from whole turmeric root. Their Belize operation provides badly needed employment for ten local youths while paying 350 local growers a fair price for harvesting their turmeric root. Umeeda's life is busy and stressful and rewarding.

Perhaps you can't teach resilience in a classroom, but Umeeda says her experience at UVic greatly shaped her life and her future. It was at UVic that she learned to look at the world like a biologist, with respect for the environment and ecology. When she goes to a farm, she can identify patches of land where herbicides and pesticides have been applied.

Nareena also chose UVic for her studies, trying first biology, then photography, before landing on anthropology. By sheer coincidence, Nareena ended up living in exactly the same UVic residence, in exactly the same room that her mother had. The two couldn't believe it.

After graduation, Nareena was a young anthropologist searching for the right social enterprise. Her father, Gary Switlo, who died when Nareena was just five, was a notable entrepre-

neur in Vancouver. He co-founded Concert Box Offices, the business that would later become Ticketmaster. Nareena suggests that a knack for business was in her genes, but she bounced from job to job after university. “I was born to be an entrepreneur, but I had a hard time admitting that to myself,” she says.

Social enterprise was also part of her heritage. When Nareena was a girl in Vancouver, her maternal grandmother Lella Umedaly (aka “Mamajee”) used to cook curries and tell stories about Uganda. Her mother and grandmother both instilled in her a strong sense of social responsibility—something Umeeda also put into practice.

In 2014, Umeeda was volunteering in Belize with Cuso International, a Canadian not-for-profit development organization. She was there to advise on youth employment, since 70% of the country is under age 29, and the jobless rate is high. During one of her visits to Toledo, Belize, Umeeda attended an Indian diaspora conference, meeting Indians living in Belize who had once been indentured servants. The subject of cooking came up, and a farmer showed her the wild turmeric root that grew on his land. Umeeda brought some home in a plastic bag and gave it to Nareena to sample with the idea of starting a business. Nareena thought the flavour was really good. She didn’t care for her mother’s design for the paste bottle, however, and had ideas for improvement. The idea for Truly Turmeric—and a socially conscious partnership—was born.

The name of the company, Naledo, combines the district where their turmeric is sourced (Toledo) and the first syllable of Nareena’s name. Umeeda, CEO, handles community building and manufacturing. Nareena, Chief Operating Officer, is in charge of marketing and sales. They say one of the most challenging parts of building the company was deciphering the complicated world of food safety. Nareena recalls searching acronyms on her phone while in meetings with grocery-store chains. It was a steep learning curve.

“I think I bring the detailed eye to the business,” says Nareena. “I really do think that the small details matter.” Nareena oversees project management and marketing concerns, such as the appearance of their jars or the key messages in their communication materials.

Naledo operates from a roughly 600-square-metre plant in Belize and a head office in Vancouver. Each woman spends half her time in each locale—and they are together for about one month a year. Their turmeric paste is on the shelves of more than 600 stores in Canada, and expansion to the US is in the works. Truly Turmeric can be used in curries and beverages, and the root is known to have various healthful benefits. This

year, the company will launch a line of “functional beverages,” or drinks that have nutritional benefits.

Last year, Naledo got a major boost from a famous source. The team appeared on CBC’s the *Dragon’s Den* television show and received an offer for an additional \$150,000 in funds from entrepreneur Arlene Dickinson, while giving her 20% of their Canadian business. A particularly gratifying part of the experience was having “the dragons” fully appreciate the social-enterprise aspect of their work. Now, this boost will help them get to new levels with their marketing. Nareena, a self-described risk taker, had noticed a social media call for *Dragon’s Den* participants. The audition was the next morning.

Their appearance on the show was thrilling but anxiety-making, knowing their product could be criticized in front of all their friends and family. Instead, however, they got offers from all six “dragons” or celebrity judges.

“It was a nerve-wracking experience,” recalls Umeeda. She admits that despite all their success to date, there are still many stressors, including navigating business in a developing country like Belize. “It’s a challenging environment in that doing business here is complex.”

Both Switlos say tenacity and resilience are key ingredients to becoming an entrepreneur. As a single mother and a widow, Umeeda built Naledo by starting operations with a tiny kitchen and a good idea. “Nareena and myself were living on very little to make it happen.”

While their business requires them to be apart, the duo talk all the time. “My mom has always been my cheerleader. She never said I couldn’t do anything,” says Nareena.

Even now, Umeeda sometimes still marvels at the bold moves that led her to be an entrepreneur. “It’s incredible. It’s enlightening. I think it inspires other women in business. It inspires our team... It’s an incredible journey.”



Identification card issued to Umeeda Switlo by the Republic of Uganda, Sept. 28, 1972.

Find more information about Naledo and their Truly Turmeric paste, including recipes, at naledo.com.

Diving Deep

A talented team of UVic grads creates *Hakai Magazine*, an online publication exploring coastal life and phenomena through long-form features, stunning photography, comics and videos.

BY JOHN THRELFALL, BA '96

Whether it's jellyfish in space, sloths in the water, hidden Hawaiian birds' nests, shell money in Papua New Guinea, or a catch-and-release community aquarium on Vancouver Island, the world of water conjured up by *Hakai Magazine* is rich, complex and highly readable.

The online magazine is dedicated to exploring science, the environment and society from a uniquely coastal perspective—and it's powered by an energetic team of UVic alumni, including a computer engineer, a marine biologist, an anthropologist, a historian, a composer and a writer.

Hakai Magazine was started up by two UVic grads and launched in April 2015. "Nobody else was doing this, focusing on an ecosystem that ties half the world's population together," says editor-in-chief Jude Isabella (MA '13).

Part of the Tula Foundation—which also finances the Hakai Institute, a scientific research centre based out of a former fishing lodge on Calvert Island (about 400 kilometers north of Vancouver)—*Hakai Magazine* remains editorially independent. Both the magazine and the institute are named for the Hakai Pass, located within the Hakai Lúxvbálís Conservancy, one of the largest protected marine areas on Canada's west coast, and made possible by BC tech entrepreneur, multimillionaire and Tula founder Eric Peterson and his wife. Dr. Christina Munck—who received an Honorary Doctorate of Science from UVic in 2017.

The ad-free online magazine mixes long-form, science-based journalism aimed at a general readership with news and video features into one glorious digital package that is updated weekly, filling a gap for readers—and writers—left in the cold.

But it's not like Isabella simply stepped into her job as *Hakai's* editor-in-chief. She was managing editor of the popular Canadian children's science magazine *YES Mag* before it was unexpectedly shut down in 2012. Indeed, prior to a prescient conversation between Isabella and Tula's Peterson, *Hakai Magazine* didn't even exist.

"I was working on my book (and UVic thesis) *Salmon: A Scientific Memoir* during the first few years of the Hakai Institute, and I kept crossing paths with Eric and Christina," recalls Isabella. "We had zeroed in on the same scientists who were doing really great work on the coastal margin, and they liked what I'd been writing for *The Tyee*. But it was getting hard to get your story told when there are fewer outlets to tell it."

In 2014, Isabella was visiting the Hakai Institute while writing a story for the UK's *New Scientist* magazine and was talking to Peterson about the number of media outlets that were shutting down. "Most of my own freelancing was for American and British publications at the time," she says. And although the Tula Foundation had supported other writing initiatives in the past ("they believe in journalism as a cornerstone of democracy"), it was still a surprise to Isabella when Peterson proposed a new venture. "He said, 'Let's start our own mag'—or something like that—so I said, 'Sure, if you're serious, I'll get a proposal to you.'"

Her first call was to long-time colleague Dave Garrison, publisher of *YES* and *KNOW* for over 16 years. "Who else was I going to go to?" she chuckles. "He's a great organizer and a great publisher; you really need someone who's good at the process side of things to get a magazine off the ground." They quickly put together a pitch "and pretty much the day after they read it, [Peterson and Munck] said, 'Let's do it!'"

Garrison—who started his publishing career as a *Martlet* co-editor in 1994—was working for the Victoria-based activity-listing site, Chatterblock, at the time, but didn't hesitate at the idea of starting up another magazine. "It's rare to have the opportunity to start something from nothing," he says. "

With Garrison and Isabella filling out the slots of publisher and editor-in-chief, they quickly recruited Shanna Baker (BA '06) as senior editor, Adrienne Mason (BSc '88) as managing editor, Tobin Stokes (BMus '89) as manager of social media and marketing, plus Shannon Hunt (BA '90, MA '93) as proof-reader—meaning half of the current *Hakai* editorial team are UVic alumni.

Garrison and Hunt had already enjoyed success starting up the children's science publications *Yes Mag* and *KNOW* together—and received UVic Distinguished Alumni Awards in 2006 to recognize their achievements. Mason had been managing editor of *KNOW* (aimed at younger children), so along with Isabella, much of the new team already had years of experience in producing science news together.

Based out of an open-concept office on the ground floor of Victoria's historic Customs House overlooking the Inner Harbour, the *Hakai* team exemplify both the ethos and concept of the magazine itself: passionate, coastal people who are working together to tell important stories that could potentially change the world.



“Christina and Eric believe in journalism, so we were given a job to do and we’ve done it well,” says Isabella. “We aim high . . . if you don’t have to worry about constantly fundraising, you can put all your efforts into making excellent product.”

Excellent is right: over the past four years, *Hakai Magazine* has won over 25 Canadian and international awards not only for what they publish (including two prestigious National Magazine Awards) but also for their chosen medium (17 online and digital publishing awards).

Now on his third magazine start-up, Garrison clearly feels *Hakai* offers something special. “*Hakai* is more of a calling, almost a creative pursuit,” he says. “Anything can be called a business, in the sense of pulling people together and getting things done, but we’re not trying to make money; we’re just trying to put our stories in front of as many readers as possible.”

And it seems to be working. Freed from the limitations—and expenses—of a traditional print product, *Hakai Magazine* is attracting a global readership: 2018 saw a monthly average of 95,000 visitors, up from 39,000 per month when they launched in 2015. Seventy percent of their readers hail from Canada and the US, with the UK and Australia the next biggest audience, followed by India, Germany, France, Philippines, New Zealand and the Netherlands. “In fact, Google Analytics reports at least one visitor from 237 different countries in 2018,” says Garrison, “so arguably we had a visit from every single country in the world.”

The magazine has also earned fame for their puns, with headlines like “Hey, Beacher, Leave Those Fish Alone,” about reckless beachgoers in California who disturb little fish called grunion—because who says getting informed can’t be fun? Readers can also expect professional-quality videos and comics on subjects like a “Cuttlefish Brawl.”

The *Hakai Magazine* team includes UVic grads **DAVE GARRISON; ADRIENNE MASON; SHANNON HUNT; TOBIN STOKES; JUDE ISABELLA** and **SHANNA BAKER**. Their office in the Old Victoria Custom House (or Malahat Building) on Wharf Street was a former hang-out of artist Emily Carr.

As sea levels and temperatures continue to rise, the idea of creating an accessible, sustainable, paper-free magazine dedicated to coastal peoples and science worldwide seems less of a risky idea and more like a necessity. No surprise, then, that *Hakai Magazine* was the brainchild of two UVic graduates—and that the magazine regularly features UVic research.

“All you can do is put the stories out there,” says Garrison. “Raising awareness makes a difference.” 🌿

Shoot, Score, Dazzle!

Joseph Erlic (BCom '18) and his brothers **Jure** and **Martin** (BA '15) created **HoopLight**, a fun new way to play basketball.

BY SASHA MILAM

Picture it: two kids are passing a basketball in the driveway. One of them dribbles up to the net and then shoots—with a satisfying *swish*, the ball is through—and the hoop lights up with a flash that throws a rainbow of pulsing lights over the celebratory high fiving below.

This scene is brought to you by HoopLight™, created by founder Joseph Erlic (BCom '18) and his brothers Martin, a 2015 Economics graduate, and Jure. The brothers pooled their business skills to nurture the product, which launched in July 2018.

The HoopLight story began in Joseph's entrepreneurship class. "One thing that was really emphasized during the entrepreneurship section of my degree was, 'Whatever you do with your career, make sure it's something you're passionate about,'" says Joseph. "And a lot of what's happened with HoopLight has come out of that."

When Joseph and his fellow entrepreneurship students at UVic's Peter B. Gustavson School of Business were tasked with creating a product pitch, he thought of his passion for sports. Joseph has spent some of his best hours on the soccer field, rugby pitch and basketball court.

"When I got the pitch assignment, I asked my uncle—who has created quite a few products for PCs—how he comes up with his ideas. He told me he takes one of his hobbies and finds a way to improve it. I asked myself what my hobbies were, and that was easy. All it took was looking out the window and seeing my younger cousins trying to play basketball in the dark, and the idea was there."

At first, he focused on a basketball-specific light that would improve his cousins' experience: an LED light that wrapped around the rim of the hoop so players could see what they were aiming at after dark. He made his 60-second pitch in class, got graded on his project, and continued with his courses.

But it wasn't game over yet. Joseph was a scholarship-winning Vikes rugby player, with international tournament experience and a short stint with a semi-pro team. He had always thought that rugby would be his first career. "I had always relied



on the fact that I would try for the national rugby team, try to pick up a contract to play. And then out of the blue, two major injuries in my final year of Vikes rugby shifted the whole picture. Suddenly, I had no idea what I was going to do with my life."

What he did was spend his final year as a student developing HoopLight from his original product pitch into the eye-popping light party that the Erlic brothers took to market last July. From a simple LED light strip on a hoop, it evolved into a weather-resistant, multi-coloured panel that lights up with over one hundred different patterns when a player scores. But they're not stopping there. They've also added a constant light, as well as the colourful flashing when a player scores.

Encouraging younger players to stay engaged with physical activity and sports is no small part of HoopLight's value. Indeed, the brothers are already finding ways to up their game. Martin is working on an app that plays sounds when the hoop lights up. Their vision is to integrate the digital component even further.

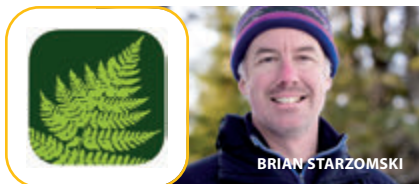
"Eventually, we'd like to add scoring to the app," says Joseph. "So every time you make a basket, you add points to your hoop score. The higher your hoop score gets, the more colours and patterns and sounds you unlock. So it's an incentive to get kids to play more. Plus, it would mean you can compete against players using the app anywhere in the world." ↑

Find out more at hoop-light.com.

Innovative Apps

Some UVic-made apps save lives, some save time—and others enhance our leisure hours. Here are just a few of the notable apps made on campus or by members of the UVic community.

COMPILED BY MACKENZIE FORD



APP: Central Coast Biodiversity

CREATORS: Brian Starzomski, UVic community ecologist and conservation biologist, UVic graduate student Chanda Brietzke, UVic alumna Kelly Fretwell (BSc '13), with support from the Hakai Institute.

WHAT IS IT? The free app, Central Coast Biodiversity, has an inventory of more than 800 species, including plants, birds, seaweeds, marine invertebrates, mammals and reptiles.

WHY WE NEED IT: Instead of carrying around multiple field guides, you can use one app.

WHO WILL USE IT? Kids, adults, students, researchers, eco-tourists, citizen scientists and everyone in between.

QUOTE: *"To me one of the great things about the app/website is that it covers a wide range of taxa—vascular and non-vascular plants, mammals, birds, seaweeds, fish, sea stars, crabs, etc.—so instead of carrying around multiple field guides all you need is your phone or tablet."* — Kelly Fretwell

LEARN MORE:

centralcoastbiodiversity.org



APP: DivDot

CREATOR: Matthew Smith (BSc in Computer Science, 2019), Nick Addison (BSc in Computer Science and Physics, 2019).

WHAT IS IT? DivDot creates payment solutions. Recently, the team launched a mobile credit-card processing app that allows trades and services to quickly request payment from their customers by text message or email. They are currently working toward a solution to eliminate the need to write cheques, particularly for large amounts of money that exceed e-transfer limits.

WHY WE NEED IT: Have you ever experienced the hassle of taking a cheque to the bank and waiting for it to clear, only for it to bounce? DivDot Direct Debits payments are online bank-to-bank transfers with no limit.

WHO WILL USE IT? Tradespeople.

QUOTE: *"DivDot started as an idea to change the way people hire local services. I recruited some classmates of mine and began to build a company out of my living room. We graduated from the living room, attended a financial technology incubator in Charlotte, North Carolina, released a payment-processing application for local services, and are now on a mission to build innovative payment solutions. One solution that we are working on is to eliminate the need to write cheques."* — Matthew Smith

LEARN MORE: Divdot.com



APP: DragonPass

CREATOR: Jane Zhu (MBA '05) and Cai Kehui.

WHAT IS IT? DragonPass is a platform for travellers to access different services at airports and railway stations, saving time for passengers and creating a more enjoyable travel experience.

WHY WE NEED IT: This company can tell you what services are available in each airport or railway station you visit. It eliminates the need to walk through each and every airport wing to find the service or amenity you need.

WHO WILL USE IT? Everyone who travels.

QUOTE: *"DragonPass is a consumer platform offering extensive services at airports and high-speed railway stations, connecting the offline services scattered around the world and providing passengers with a premium travel experience. Through years of accumulation, our service network covers 500 airports and high-speed railway stations in over 130 countries worldwide, accessing the most scarce and unique resources in the travel industry. Through our innovative platform and mobile solutions, DragonPass serves over 28-million members worldwide and provides a suite of services including lounge access, airport restaurant programs, limousine and Meet & Greet services and so on."*

— Jane Zhu

LEARN MORE: en.dragonpass.com.cn



APP: FreshWorks Studio

CREATORS: Samarth Mod (MBA '15) and Rohit Boolchandani (MBA '14).

WHAT IS IT? FreshWorks Studio is an award-winning firm that designs and develops elegant and highly functional mobile, web, blockchain and AI applications.

WHY WE NEED IT: Software isn't a one-size-fits-all product anymore. Our goal is to create extraordinary experiences utilizing the latest technologies. Creating apps that are custom-built specifically for your needs and challenges will make your organization more successful.

WHO WILL USE IT? We work with anyone from Fortune 500 companies, enterprises, non-profits, entrepreneurs to the public sector.

QUOTE: "When Rohit and I came to Victoria, still reeling from culture shock and with no network yet, we thought we would just be going to work for some tech company after finishing our MBAs at UVic. We always had a desire to do something different and wanted to have a positive impact on the community and society. We saw an opportunity to bridge the gap between technology and business with our education and experience in programming. We initially started by developing our own apps but realized a significant opportunity in developing apps for other businesses whose core business wasn't IT." — Samarth Mod

LEARN MORE: freshworks.io



APP: Kokomo

CREATOR: Ashton Meuser, Computer Engineering student

WHAT IS IT? Kokomo allows you and your friends to collaboratively build a playlist. Each user is able to suggest a song, as well as to vote for songs in the queue. The song with the most votes gets bumped up and the one with least votes gets bumped off. The project received funds from the PlanIt program with the Coast Capital Savings Innovation Centre.

WHY WE NEED IT: This app is perfect for parties and social gatherings; it eliminates the problem of disagreeing on music.

WHO WILL USE IT? Music fans, party goers and people who like hosting.

QUOTE: "Personal experience inspired me to create Kokomo, a collaborative music playlist platform. When listening to music with friends, I realized that there was often discontent with the song selection and frequent swapping of the device controlling the music. After fruitlessly searching for a solution, I decided to build my own." — Ashton Meuser



APP: Medimap (began as a website but recently launched as an app).

CREATOR: Blake Adam (BCom '11)

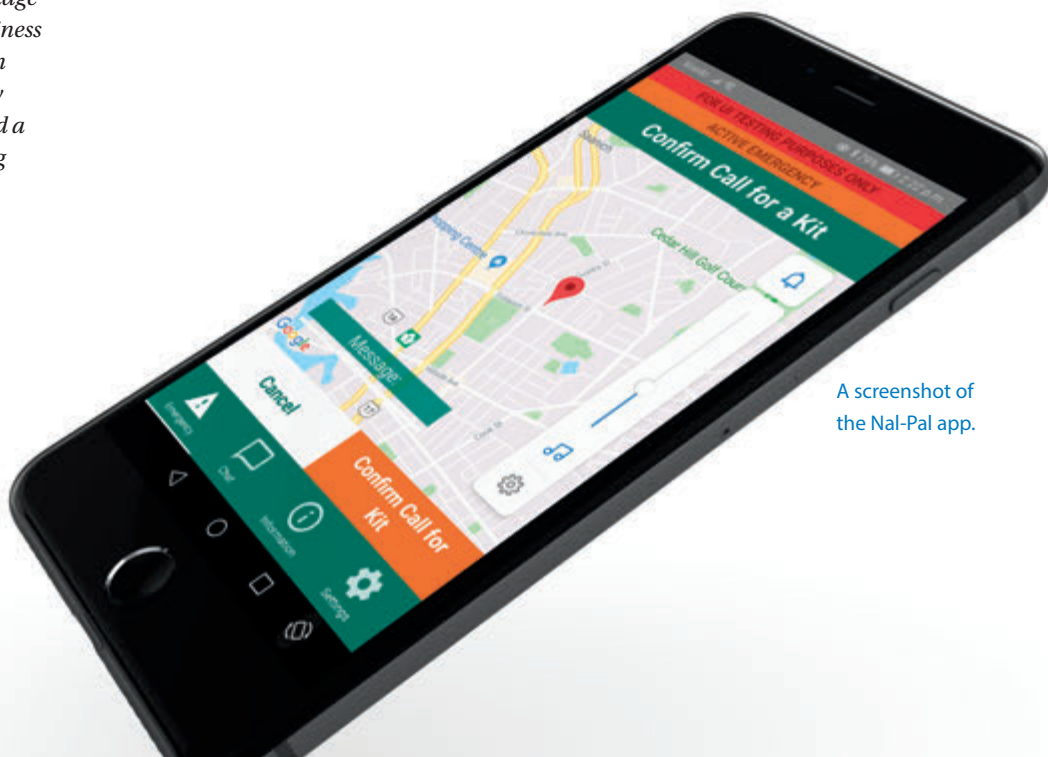
WHAT IS IT? Medimap provides easy access to wait times at walk-in medical clinics in your community to help you find same-day access to care. You can then pick one and check in online.

WHY WE NEED IT: It reduces the inconvenience of long waits at a walk-in clinic.

WHO WILL USE IT? Patients of walk-in clinics.

QUOTE: "My co-founder [Jonathan Clark] and I had experienced the frustrations of spending hours in the clinic waiting room with other sick people, and we couldn't believe that there wasn't an online resource where we could look up wait times at walk-in clinics in our community. It seemed like a really simple solution that could help a lot of people get access to care." — Blake Adam

LEARN MORE: medimap.ca



A screenshot of the Nal-Pal app.



APP: Nal-Pal

CREATORS: Derek Jacoby (PhD '16, MSc '11); Madhav Malhotra (MSc '19); Aldyn Chwelos, current BSc Computer Science student.

WHAT IS IT? An app that could save someone from an opiate overdose. By using geolocation and map features, it identifies and connects community members who own Naloxone kits with people who are currently overdosing. The drug user can then send an emergency text to the network and the nearest helper is notified and can hurry to their location. In 2018, the project was awarded \$15,000 at the South Island Prosperity Project Open Innovation Challenge.

WHY WE NEED IT: It could save hundreds of lives, especially now with the dangers of fentanyl.

WHO WILL USE IT? People who want to help save lives in their community.

QUOTE: "A group of friends and I took a naloxone training course in 2017. After about a year, none of us in the class had used our training, but in reading the news it was obvious that the opiate overdose epidemic was worsening. We realized that there was an opportunity to use technology to solve a social problem in access to naloxone. We met with local shelters and aid groups and determined that cell phones were ubiquitous among the population of drug users that were having overdoses, and that there was no app to connect someone in need of a naloxone kit with those who had the kit and training." — Derek Jacoby



APP: iDerm

CREATORS: Mohsen Akbari, Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and his grad student, Bahram Mirani (MSc '15).

WHAT IS IT? A smart bandage that connects to an app. A patient using GelDerm (patent pending bandage created by Harvard, University of New Brunswick and UVic researchers) will be able to scan the bandage's embedded sensors with a smartphone app to gauge whether or not infection has set in. The information can be used for self-monitoring and can be relayed wirelessly to a patient's health care team for follow-up.

WHY WE NEED IT: It has the potential for transformative advances in wound care and to detect the earliest signs of bacterial infection. GelDerm's ability to administer antibiotics directly at the wound site rather than through a general course of medication also reduces problems of antibiotic overuse.

WHO WILL USE IT? Doctors and patients.

QUOTE: "The idea of GelDerm was first developed when I was talking to my grandmother about diabetes and how her ulcers could be so painful when infected. Even changing the bandage was sometimes painful since the bandage was stuck to her wound, and most of the time, she did not even need to change her dressing. I thought, what if I make a bandage that does not need to be changed before it is actually needed? Since I knew that infections at the wound site can dramatically change the pH of the wound, I came up with the idea of embedding colour-changing sensors in a bandage to detect infections at early stages without a need to go to a doctor and take a lengthy lab test." — Mohsen Akbari



APP: Let's Face It 2.0

CREATOR: Jim Tanaka, UVic psychology professor, with help from UVic team José Barrios, Noel Feliciano (BSc '12, MSc '15), Jon Bowen (BSc '15), Jasmine Yadeta, Elliot McSmythurs and Leandro Collares (MSc '13).

WHAT IS IT? This app is a powerful educational tool for learning faces and recognizing emotions of the important people in the lives of children on the autism spectrum. The app for iPad allows children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to make an interactive album of faces and names. It also has unique science-based games that train facial recognition through interactive play.

WHY WE NEED IT: Provides a great tool to establish a better connection between children and their families. Teachers can also use it to learn the names of their students and students can use it as an effective tool for studying any subject that involves visual images.

WHO WILL USE IT? Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and the people in their lives.

QUOTE: "Research has shown that children on the autism spectrum have difficulty recognizing faces and interpreting facial expressions. At the Centre for Autism Research, Technology and Education (CARTE), we were inspired to design the Let's Face It! (LFI!) Scrapbook to help children on the spectrum with their face-processing skills. In the app, the child collects images and videos of the important people in their life (parents, siblings, friends, teachers) and uses them in the LFI! games. By 'building new tools for different minds,' CARTE hopes to enrich the everyday lives of children on the autism spectrum and their families." — Jim Tanaka

LEARN MORE:

web.uvic.ca/~carte/lfiscrapbook

Embracing the Dark

Writing grads **Jeremy Lutter** and **Ben Rollo** on the appeal of making movies that scare us.

BY JOHN THRELFALL, BA '96

The University of Victoria's Writing department does a brisk trade in filmmakers, thanks to an award-winning range of alumni directors, producers and screenwriters. But while most focus on creating dramas, thrillers and rom-coms, long-time collaborators Jeremy Lutter (BA '05) and Ben Rollo (BA '10) are drawn to the darker side of life.

Consider *The Hollow Child*, a 90-minute horror movie directed by Lutter and written by Rollo about children who go missing and then come back ... changed. It's captivating, it looks great and, most importantly, it's downright creepy.

"Genre filmmaking is kind of a dirty word in Canada but *The Hollow Child* was easy to pitch because people understood it," says Lutter. "Horror has a certain kind of language that's easier to explain."

Rollo suggests their film appeals on the same level as a dark fairy or folk tale. "Jeremy and I have always been attracted to the fantastic, and we liked the idea of marrying that to horror," says Rollo. "The story had its genesis in a conversation about how spooky it would be if someone you knew well disappeared and then returned different."

Citing early influences like *The X-Files*, *Edward Scissorhands* and filmmakers David Lynch and David Fincher, Lutter says it was a short hop from "the idea of imposters and foster kids and people who were self-destructive" to an "under-utilized monster" like a changeling. "You need to know enough about the genre to know what people are expecting and then not deliver that," explains Lutter.

Conceived over the course of three years and shot on the Lower Mainland in four weeks back in 2015, *The Hollow Child* was funded through Telefilm Canada's competitive "Talent to Watch" program for first-time feature directors and made for "somewhere south of a quarter-million," says Lutter.

The film was produced by Peter B. Gustavson School of Business alumna Jocelyn Russell (BCom '12), a friend of the director and writer since they all attended Cedar Hill Middle School, then Mount Douglas Secondary together. Lutter says while there's camaraderie, there's little glamour in the life of an indie filmmaker. "It means being a constant entrepreneur; I thought at some point it would get easier, but it always stays exactly the same level of hardness."

After having its world premiere at the 2017 Victoria Film Festival, *The Hollow Child* went on to earn five nominations and one win in BC's annual Leo Awards, as well as picking up an



Hannah Cheramy as Olivia, the girl who disappears in the woods and returns changed in *The Hollow Child*. Broken Mirror Films duo **JEREMY LUTTER** (left) and **BEN ROLLO**.

award at its European premiere in Portugal, before earning the grand

prize at Mexico's Feratun Film Festival, both in 2018. And it's still on the festival circuit, playing across the US and (aptly) appeared at the Vancouver Badass Film Festival in March 2019.

Tellingly, Lutter's production company is called Broken Mirror Films. "Art is never a perfect reflection of life, it's always a distortion," he says. "There's something about broken characters that interest me. I don't think I've ever told a story that wasn't about someone who is broken; we're all broken in some ways—that's what makes us interesting."

Lutter's own near-death experience in a horrific 2008 car accident skewed his perspective toward the unseen world. "It was a completely transforming experience," he says. "Once you go through something like that, it's hard to forget that some random happenstance can end your life at any moment. I was making films before, but I got way more serious about it afterwards."

For Rollo, filmmaking adds an essential collaborative element that's missing from traditional prose writing: "You start with a germ of an idea, but then everyone else on the project brings their own vision to it, which adds to it in unexpected and wonderful ways," he says. "I love being on set; it's a frustrating, exciting, tumultuous experience that's really like nothing else." ¶

Building Better Treatments

Stephanie Willerth's research into tissue engineering and regenerative medicine could be a game changer for spinal-cord injuries, brain cancer, Alzheimer's disease and more.

BY MARK WITTEN

When Stephanie Willerth was enrolled in a high school International Baccalaureate program in her native Missouri in 1996, British embryologist Ian Wilmut successfully cloned a sheep named Dolly. “I was fascinated by it all. I read the original scientific papers on the Dolly project and wrote an extended essay on the possibilities of cloning and stem cells and their potential to generate replacement tissues,” says Willerth, a professor in Mechanical Engineering, Division of Medical Sciences, and Canada Research Chair in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Victoria.

Today, Willerth is making those incredible possibilities real in the fields of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine, which could lead to new and better treatments for conditions such as spinal-cord injury, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and brain cancer. She's developed cool tools like specialized bioinks for use with 3D bioprinting, biomaterial scaffolds and biodegradable microspheres to produce engineered neural cells and tissues from stem cells for two main purposes: replacing diseased or damaged regions of the nervous system and as novel models to screen for promising new drug treatments.

Willerth uses her cutting-edge toolkit to make personalized neural tissues from stem cells more rapidly than with other tissue-engineering methods and to improve their viability, so cells and tissues implanted in the human brain or spinal cord are more likely to survive and thrive. For example, in a research collaboration with Vancouver-based Aspect Biosystems, Willerth combined her specially formulated fibrin-based bioink—recently submitted for a patent—with Aspect's proprietary bioprinting technology to produce neural cells and tissues that resemble spinal-cord motor neurons and tissues to help develop potential cell therapies for treating spinal cord injury.

“Our bioink supports neural stem cell growth and the capacity to differentiate into specific cells, such as motor neurons. Although neural stem cells don't like other bioprinting processes, they do like the combination of our bioink and Aspect's bioprinting process and we get very good cell viability,” explains Willerth, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Washington University.

She has also developed 3D biomaterial scaffolds to deliver drugs and control their release to help repair and regenerate damaged spinal-cord tissue and to support the transplanting of motor neurons (reprogrammed from stem cells) in the spinal cord so they can survive and grow. Another promising regener-



Professor Stephanie Willerth at work in her lab at the University of Victoria.

ation project involves converting scar-forming cells called astrocytes that proliferate after a spinal-cord injury into healthy nerve cells. “We would inject a specific protein into astrocytes after spinal-cord injury to help reprogram and convert them into neurons,” she explains.

Willerth's bioprinted neural tissues, similar to spinal cord tissue, can also serve as a powerful new tool for screening drugs to treat spinal-cord injury. “Pharmaceutical companies are very interested because our neural-tissue models will allow them to do preclinical screening and testing of drug compounds on more humanized tissues, and this more accurately represents the *in vivo* response to treatment.”

Willerth is collaborating with University of British Columbia neurologist Dr. Haakon Nygaard to reprogram skin cells from patients with different subtypes of Alzheimer's disease into neural tissues for drug screening to help identify more effective drug treatments. “By reprogramming stem-cell lines containing different genetic mutations associated with Alzheimer's disease, we can use personalized medicine to screen for drug targets to treat different subsets of the disease,” she says.

Willerth's lab is also harnessing the tools of regenerative medicine to investigate new approaches to treating glioblastoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer known in Canada for claiming the life of musician Gord Downie. In a study with UVic undergraduate student and Provost Award winner Christopher Lee, Willerth used a cocktail of small molecules to reprogram glioblastoma cells into nonproliferating, healthy neurons, an approach that could potentially be used to inhibit the spread of glioblastoma cells. Willerth and Lee also created a novel 3D printed glioblastoma tumour model using a fibrin-based bioink for drug screening. “The advantage of testing in a 3D glioblastoma tumour model is that it's closer to a tumour in the human body, which gives you better idea of a drug's effectiveness and toxicity,” she says. †

Hard Words

Novelist **Yasuko Thanh** has produced an unflinching memoir about her life on the streets, her mental health struggles—and her relentless drive as an artist.

BY TOM HAWTHORN

Creating fiction offers an escape for the writer and performer Yasuko Thanh. Her new work, a memoir, provides no such relief. Thanh burst onto the Canadian literary scene by winning the Writers' Trust/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize with a short story originally assigned in a University of Victoria writing class. The prize led her to an agent and a book deal. Thanh (BA '11, MFA '13) went on to win the 2016 Writers' Trust Fiction Prize for her debut novel, *Mysterious Fragrance of the Yellow Mountains*.

The question of whether or not she will win that prize is how she concludes her latest work, *Mistakes to Run With*, offering an optimistic endnote to an unsparing, clear-eyed, and masterfully written memoir about life as a homeless teenager. The path from the streets to the classroom to attending CanLit awards ceremonies was a long and bumpy one. "In less than six months," she writes, "I'd gone from a bed in a psych ward to a luxury hotel with a TV in the bathroom mirror."

The memoir is her first book-length foray into non-fiction. Being exposed is unsettling. "With fiction we have a little bit of a curtain to hide behind," she says. The energetic Thanh, a striking presence in person with Dutch-boy bangs and nautical-themed ink on her arms, has a purpose for being forthright about her earlier life. She wants to help end the stereotyping and stigmatization of prostitutes, which leaves women and girls vulnerable to predators, as well as to the criminal justice system.

"I hate the whole cult of victimhood, the whiny, woe-is-me thing," she says. "In all the stories I had told friends about my past, I always highlighted myself as not a victim. As somebody tough."

Thanh is the daughter of immigrants—her mother from Germany, her father a Sorbonne-educated economist from Vietnam—who found poverty and disappointment in their new land. Thanh was an overachieving student who got little love at home. At 15, she ran away; her parents were indifferent. "For something to be lost, someone



A new memoir by
YASUKO THANH, out
now with Penguin
Random House Canada.

needs to be searching for it," she writes. "What goes missing unmissed is not missing."

Survival on the streets involved thievery, sex for money and drugs for favours. "I hardened myself. No shame in survival. There was no disgust, only satisfaction in doing what needed to be done."

As she prepared for the memoir's release, she wrote and recorded 16 songs. Music is a big part of her life, and she played guitar and screamed vocals for the punk band 12 Gauge Facial. She also performed with a rockabilly group, Jukebox Jezebel. It was her intention for the new album to share the same title and release date as the memoir to act as an accompanying soundtrack, but she needs more money to complete the recording.

"You're squishing a whole life into 200 pages, so parts are glossed over," she explains. "The songs are another window into areas I wasn't able to expand on."

This term she has been teaching WRIT 304, a fiction workshop conducted in the same classroom where, a decade earlier, poet and novelist Steven Price set her on course to win that first breakthrough prize. ¶

A Cure for the Restless

After summiting several personal mountains, **Kelsey Ramsden** (BA '00) writes about the void people can feel after a big accomplishment.

BY HUGO WONG (BA '17)

When **KELSEY RAMSDEN** (BA '00) introduces herself, she says she is “a creator who values intimate connection.” It is not her job title, but this approach is woven into all she does. When faced with a choice or challenge, she refers back to that introduction and encourages others to do the same.

Ramsden is the author of *Success Hangover: Ignite your next act. Screw your status quo. Feel alive again*, released by Lioncrest Publishing last fall. It was written for people who accomplish their long-term goal—such as earning a degree or promotion—yet feel unsatisfied.

Ramsden, who has spent much of her life in the construction industry, says building personal fulfillment was not always front of mind. “I was never a tremendously interested student,” reflects Ramsden, who describes herself as being on and off academic probation. After failing a calculus class, she switched from biology to economics, which saw her interest and her grades rise. She did well in electives and subjects she liked, such as theoretical physics, but only scraped by when it was a course just to “check a box.”

When she graduated from UVic in May 2000, her walk across the stage did not bring the sense of fulfillment she was seeking. “I had the sense that graduating would complete a loop. I’d feel better, I’d feel accomplished, I’d know what I was doing,” she says, speaking from her home in London, Ontario.

It is a feeling she experienced time and again—including after earning her MBA from Western University. Since then, Ramsden has been extremely successful in business, including being named Canadian Female Entrepreneur of the Year twice. While accomplishing this, she also raised three children and battled glassy cell carcinoma, a rare form of cervical cancer.

“Sometimes when we arrive at that place, where we have so many choices, we thought the way forward would be obvious,” she says. “It’s really a turning point of saying: what do you want?” she says.



KELSEY RAMSDEN



“They get their undergrad, their MBA, their promotion...they’re checking that next level of success but they feel like, immediately after that dopamine high wears off, they feel not good. They’re hungover, and they’re on the chase for what’s next.”

Instead of focusing on big accomplishments like an award or a raise, she prefers prioritizing innate qualities and incremental changes, rather than making a big dramatic gesture. When asked to introduce themselves, Ramsden says people tend to define themselves by what they do instead of who they are. Switching from their job title to more innate personal traits to describe and define themselves can allow people to find common threads between all their activities, and also to eliminate options by making a more decisive choice when possibilities might seem overwhelming.

Despite championing incremental changes, she does not regret any of her accomplishments, including her time at UVic.

“UVic, in particular, is one of those really interesting places where you get the rich petri dish where new and innovative things come out of by virtue of proximity,” says Ramsden, noting the cross-pollination showed her the value of other disciplines. “Because of the size of the campus, it was not uncommon for business kids to hang out with artists or biologists going up island.”

These days, Ramsden still values an interdisciplinary approach. She continues to head up several businesses but has begun leading retreats throughout the year for herself and her fellow participants. Most recently, she organized a retreat that combined meditation with the sharpshooting of targets, meant for people wanting to explore or challenge their existing sense of self.

“People are going to want to know who you want to be. The truth is you already are; there’s no one to become. We’re asking the wrong question,” says Ramsden. “The real question is: ‘Where do you want to apply who you are?’”

Find out more at successhangover.com

Paeon to the Prairies

Dion Manastyrski (BSc '01) created a keepsake photo book to document a disappearing way of life.

BY JENNY MANZER (BA '97)

Dion Manastyrski (BSc '01) grew up in Rose Valley, a small town in the grain belt of Saskatchewan. In 1911, the surrounding municipality of Ponass Lake had a population of 600. By 1941, its numbers had swelled to 3,000. At last count, only 600 souls still call the area home. Seeing this decline, Manastyrski feared the stories of the area's homesteaders, like his grandparents, might slip away. He set out to capture the stories and images of family farms across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba before the people—and places—disappeared for good.

"By losing the family farm, we're losing a great deal," says Manastyrski.

Manastyrski studied biology at UVic, where he honed research skills, and he has years of experience in photography and publishing. He drew on these talents to create *Prairie Sunset: A Story of Change*, a hefty art book with pages of photos and first-person narratives telling the story of European settlement in the area. (The book does not address stories of the area's First Peoples, which, Manastyrski notes, would require a complete book on its own.)

His grandparents immigrated to the Prairies from Eastern Europe—and he dedicates the book to their memory. He says he wanted the story of the homesteaders to be told in their own voices, so he uses direct quotes: "There are many treasures in their words."

The project spanned 10 years, eight road trips and 70 interviews. The Victoria resident independently published the 240-page book to ensure it would reach the level of quality in production that he envisioned, and be printed and bound in Canada. The book is visually striking, with thick pages, and full-colour original photos along with archival images and maps. The images are often compelling, yet haunting with sunlit fields contrasted by decaying, abandoned structures. The process of creating, selling and marketing the book has changed Manastyrski, who says he was once profoundly shy. The book has been featured in dozens of news articles and is in its third printing.

"I wanted to make a book that people would hand down for generations," he says.



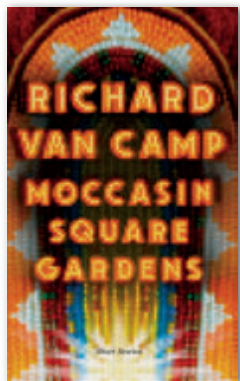
Two of the many hauntingly beautiful images in *Prairie Sunset: A Story of Change*, by **DION MANASTYRSKI**, who appears at right.



For more information visit prairiesunset.ca.

Van Camp's World

Award-winning author **Richard Van Camp** (BFA '97) returns with a new book of short stories.



Writing grad and storyteller extraordinaire Richard Van Camp (BFA '97) is back with a new book, *Moccasin Square Gardens*—a title referring to the nickname for a dance hall in Fort Smith, NWT, where the author grew up. Van Camp, a member of the Dogrib (Tłı̨chǫ) Dene Nation, is the author of 20 books for adults and children, including the acclaimed novel *The Lesser Blessed*, workshopped during

his time at UVic, as well as bestselling children's books such as *We Sang You Home* and *Little You*.

His latest book is a collection of short stories, many of which display his trademark wit, lively dialogue and penchant for pop culture. The collection includes parody addressing cultural scourges such as Man Babies, as well as futuristic horror about monsters called Wheetago that devour humans and returned to earth because of greed and global warming. Other stories feature time travel, aliens and alienation, Sky People and aunties, shamans and archivists—all from Denendeh, the land of the people north of the sixtieth parallel. The Edmonton resident also explores some painful subjects, such as in the ruminative "I Have to Trust."

I Have to Trust

*that all the friends and family we've lost along our
way
are the first to hold the babies who never made it into
our hands
or left too soon*

*So that when we see each other at the great feast in
the sky
our loved ones will hand us our beautiful babies first
and hold them with us together
to become an even bigger family
and be whole in our hearts and spirits
forever...*

From *Moccasin Square Gardens: Short Stories*, by Richard Van Camp © 2019. Douglas & McIntyre. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher. †

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**University
of Victoria**

An Artful Life

Len Collins is an information architect with **University Communications + Marketing at the University of Victoria**. He grew up in Sidney with his nine siblings. He is also trained in print and web design. Collins worked for many years in England as creative director for a multinational firm, but returned to be close to his family. Collins is also an artist and when not at UVic, he can be found in his Colwood art studio or enjoying life with his partner, Chris, and their Boston terrier, P.D. (Puppy Doggie). Here, Collins describes a typical Monday for him.

6:02 a.m. Our puppy's internal clock goes off every morning at the same time. I take P.D. out to do his business and then bring him back up to bed for a cuddle before we get ready for the day.

6:40 a.m. Chris and I both work at UVic, so we commute together, making the "Colwood Crawl" actually enjoyable. A detour to Timmy's drive-thru for extra-large coffees helps start our day.

8 a.m. At the office, I update my team connect page in preparation for our weekly meeting. I'm part of the team redesigning the UVic website, a mammoth task that has required months of in-depth research into who uses the site and what their needs are.

9:30 a.m. I ask a colleague to test an activity I've designed in order to confirm whether it requires changes. Our website is primarily a communications tool, so we need to be strategic about content to ensure it fits the needs of the 24 unique audiences we identified during the research phase.

10 a.m. At our Monday team meeting, we exchange stories from our weekends, provide updates and troubleshoot. I find this is a great way to start the week and allows me to be a supportive team member.

11 a.m. Back to my desk, I work on some user-testing activities. Each activity is aimed at a specific website audience and consists of 10 tasks. The test suite asks users to identify where in

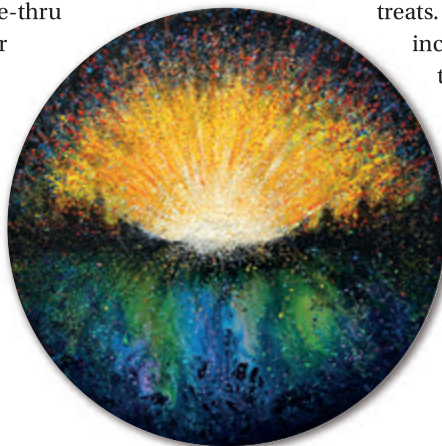
the proposed navigation they would go to complete that task. Most people take intuitive websites for granted, but they require lots of testing and forethought!

12 p.m. Weather permitting, I try to get out for some fresh air—often meeting Chris for a walk and/or a bite to eat on campus.

1 p.m. A colleague and I work together on an upcoming workshop about undergraduate program page-enhancement opportunities. I facilitated over 100 website workshops on campus in my first year at the university.

2 p.m. My Apple watch alerts me that P.D. is barking, so I log onto my puppy-cam app to say hi to him. I can even use the app to dispense some treats. After that brief break, I incorporate some changes to the new website structure based on some feedback from my colleagues. We work well as a team, which is crucial when you are consolidating and restructuring over 50,000 webpages!

2:45 p.m. Off to see my colleague, Erin, to discuss how she feels about the changes I integrated into the test activity. Two squirrels playing outside my window remind me how much I love this scenic campus.



Above: "Triumph" by Len Collins, 51 x 51 centimetres, encaustic wax and acrylic on wood panel. Top right: "Folds" by Len Collins, 23 x 30.5 centimetres framed, encaustic wax on wood panel. Bottom right: Len's partner, Chris, and their dog, P.D.



3 p.m. Last meeting of the day for me. We are developing “user stories” to capture the who, what and why of a website user task. These stories help us keep focused when we start designing the layout and functionality of the new website.

4 p.m. Time to head home. Chris and I usually stop in to visit his mom in her care home. She is an avid reader, so we often bring books.

4:45 p.m. I love to cook and Chris loves to eat, so we usually stop to buy fresh ingredients for dinner. We treat ourselves to one pizza night a week, but try to eat healthy dishes like chicken Caesar.

5 p.m. Home to see P.D.! He goes crazy with excitement when Chris talks to him in his “Poppa” voice, which makes my heart melt every time.

5:20 p.m. P.D. gives us kisses in case we don’t know it’s his dinner time. I start our own dinner prep. Chris, a UVic grad, is now an MBA candidate and will work on homework or read a case study.

6:30 p.m. We are homebodies during the evenings, but in nicer weather we will bike ride on the trails near our home. We bought a special bike trailer for P.D. to join us.



7:30 p.m. My sister calls to chat about an upcoming family party—“Fabulous & 50” is the theme! Then I make an update to my art website (encaustica.ca). My “encaustic” paintings are made using hot beeswax and pigment. I get to work on my art during the weekend when I have more “me” time. I hope to open a small gallery later this year.

8:30 p.m. It’s a toss-up... we might watch a Netflix documentary or crank up the karaoke machine: I deejay while Chris sings. Or maybe play *Mario Party* on our new Switch?

9:45 p.m. We take P.D. out one last time and head up to bed: 6:02 a.m. comes early.

Bottom line: I am excited for the new UVic website to be launched in 2020, my partner completing his MBA later this year, a new puppy to watch grow and a new gallery in the works. There is so much to look forward to, both professionally and personally! 🙌



Creative Spirits

We profile UVic alumni who recently made a bold life change

Name: JESSICA SCHACHT, theatre artist and entrepreneur-co-founder of Ampersand Distilling Co.

Age: 30.

Hometown: I grew up in Victoria and have lived all over Vancouver Island. Now I call Duncan home.

UVic degree and year: I earned a BFA in Theatre in 2010. I specialized in Production and Management.

What I used to be: After graduation I completed my apprenticeship and joined Canadian Actors' Equity Association as a professional stage manager.

Then I had the idea to: Supplement my contract work with a business of my own. I co-founded Ampersand Distilling with my husband, Jeremy, and his parents, launching the business in 2014.

Why I did it: My husband has a degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of British Columbia and had always been interested in starting a distillery. His parents were entrepreneurs and had an organic vegetable farm. The distillery seemed to be a natural culmination of our skills and entrepreneurship.

How I did it: It was a team effort. We really took advantage of each of our transferable skills. My communication and organizational skills and the fast pace of theatre perfectly prepared me to work on a start-up. Between theatre contracts I would work on the business plan and recipe development while Jeremy and his dad designed and built the stills. It took us about three years to take the idea from dream to reality.

What I love about my new life: It's been fantastic to connect to another industry of creative individuals. Having a stable business has also helped me transition to the creative side of theatre as a writer, director and dramaturg.



JESSICA SCHACHT
at the Ampersand
Distilling Co.



What I miss about my old life: Theatre productions open and close, and then you get time off. Distillery production is never-ending!

One lesson learned: Think of a Plan B, file it away, then turn around and pursue your dream with the relentless audacity that you can achieve it.

One person who helped me: We received a lot of help and advice along the way, but if I have to pick one person it's my husband and business partner, Jeremy. Without his support there is no way I could balance theatre and the distillery.

One trade secret: Nobody likes a warm martini—keep your cocktail glasses in the freezer.

You can find me: Look for our products in private liquor stores and restaurants across BC (www.ampersanddistilling.com/#locations) and follow our adventures on Instagram @ampdistillingco. 🍸

Scholarship Honours Grandparents

Tony Giovando (BA '98, MPA '04) credits his time at University of Victoria for helping him create two successful careers. His first was as teacher, then, after grad studies, he reinvented himself as a public servant. Giovando currently works as a Senior Advisor for the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat of the Government of Canada. His positive experience at UVic inspired him and his wife, Laura Evans, to establish the Leonard and Eileen Hamilton Scholarship in Spanish and Italian Studies. The gift honours his grandparents, who were a crucial part of his success at UVic.

The idea:

My wife, Laura, and I have made it a priority to give back in many different ways, but we were looking for a way to support students at the University of Victoria that was meaningful to our family.

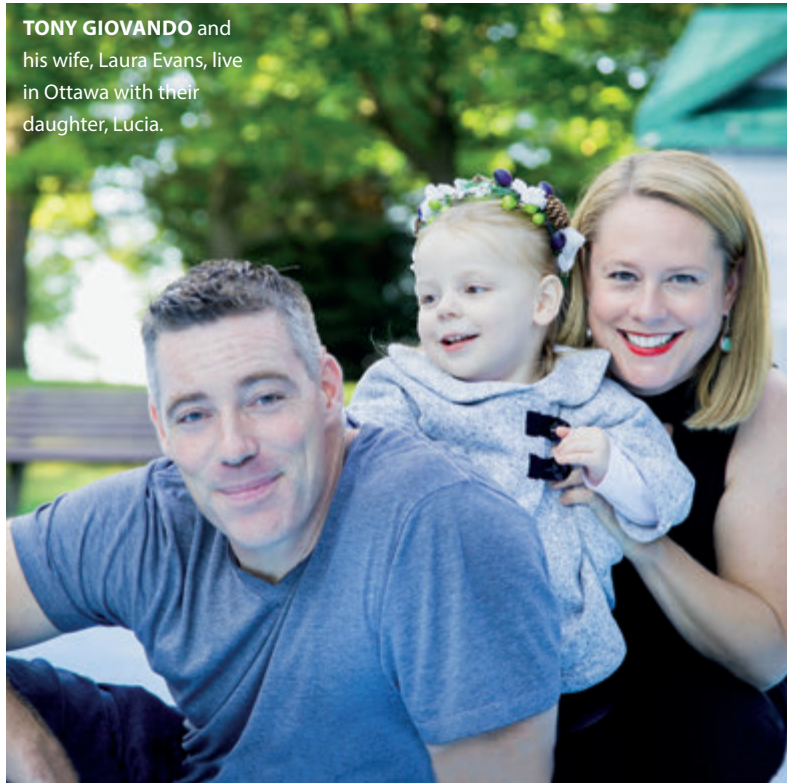
The inspiration:

My grandparents, Leonard and Eileen Hamilton, were a big inspiration to me growing up. Neither had the opportunity to attend university but were avid learners throughout their lives. While I attended UVic, they opened their home to me, and, as well, to any of my buddies who wanted to join for a meal and/or needed a place to crash. Staying with my Nan and Grandpops helped considerably to limit the costs of my undergrad. Thanks to their generosity, I was able to do some really unique things and to (actually!) apply my studies immediately after graduation, including living in Mexico and Europe teaching humanities classes in private high schools. Their support and belief in me helped set me up for success, and now I am hoping to do the same for others.

How we did it:

We decided to set up the scholarship in Spanish and Italian Studies because that was the area I studied in my undergrad at UVic. I loved the encouragement my professors gave to dialogue and reflection on culture, history and languages,

TONY GIOVANDO and his wife, Laura Evans, live in Ottawa with their daughter, Lucia.



which I was studying. And the program served as this really great intersection of interesting individuals of different fields and backgrounds.

What we accomplished:

We wanted our gift to feel personal, so we asked that the students write an essay as part of their application, illustrating how they reflect the Renaissance ideal of the *uomo/donna universale*. It was important to us for the scholarship not to go to a student with just the highest GPA but a student who was well-rounded and involved in community organizations or played in campus sports programs. Each year, we are amazed to learn about the exceptional work students accomplish, and it is rewarding to know that we are supporting them in our small way.

Looking forward:

As students once ourselves, we experienced the impact scholarships could make for those on a tight budget. We are pleased to be able to make life a little easier for such exceptional students while honouring the legacy of my grandparents. As well, we hope that it may also provide them the confidence and encouragement to continue to pursue their education. †

We invite our alumni to share your UVic story with us at [UVic/mystory](https://www.uvic.ca/mystory).

ALUMNI LIFE

A Tour to Remember

In 1969, a team of UVic rugby players travelled to the United Kingdom to play six games in 21 days.

Fifty years ago this September, the University of Victoria Vikings went to the United Kingdom to play six rugby games in 21 days. We were led by our mentor, Howard Gerwing, who believed that only by touring could we develop our skills as rugby players. Our coaches were David Docherty and Ray Calton. Dean Robert Wallace and his wife, Norah, accompanied us, lending prestige to the group. After a few days in London and practising in Hyde Park, we set off on our journey to play games in: Birmingham, Leeds, Edinburgh, Dublin, Cardiff and Oxford. The culmination of our tour was a match against the Oxford Greyhounds, celebrating the 100th anniversary of rugby at the famous Oxford University.

"In every way it was a great trip" said Docherty, head coach. "The boys did very well against some strong opposition. Both on and off the field, the tour was a tremendous success. The boys showed a lot of guts and are to be commended for the way they handled themselves. They have really added finesse from the trip, particularly in loose attacking." The experience that the team achieved in that tour led them to capture their third and fourth Barnard Cups and become BC Rounsfell Champions in 1971.

I often think of those memories of the summer of 69, when we travelled around the United King-



PAUL CARNES



dom together. The bond still exists between those mates who played long ago, which has resulted in reunions and gatherings. When you have a squad that experiences such an intense tour, their friendships last forever. – *Paul Carnes (BEd '72)* †

Meet our 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award Winners

Back row, left to right: **Shawn Stebbins**, BSc '84, Science, President & CEO of Archipelago Marine Research; **Kevin Orr**, BA '02, Social Sciences, Vice-President, Winner Medical Group; **Scott Butler**, BCom '98, Business, President at Highstreet Ventures Inc.; **Nathan Medd**, BFA '01, Fine Arts, Managing Director of Performing Arts, Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity; **Valerie Jepson**, LLB '01, Law, Integrity Commissioner, City of Toronto; **Barry Gough**, VC '57, Humanities, Canadian maritime and naval historian. **Front row, left to right:** **Shaan Pruden**, BSc '84, Engineering, Senior Director of Partnership Management at Apple; **Griffin Russell**, MPH '15, Human and Social Development, Regional Harm Reduction Coordinator, Island Health, Shared Services BC; **Alexander (Alex) Nelson**, BA '98, Education, Resident



Elder for Surrounded by Cedar Childcare; **Wendy Kotilla**, Dipl '01, Continuing Studies, Founded the Youth and Ecological Restoration program; **Nella Nelson**, BA '76, Library, Greater Victoria School District administrator for the Aboriginal Nations Education Division.

Seven-Day Celebration

Alumni Week 2019 was a smashing success, with 17 events on campus and around town—from a curling bonspiel, to thought-provoking talks, to a splashy awards evening. Many events were close to capacity this year. Thank you to all who volunteered or attended this memorable week.



1: Alumni Week kicked off on February 1 with a special screening for on-campus alumni of the short film *'Til Death* by **CONNOR GASTON** (BFA '12, MFA '14). Guests at the lunch-time event enjoyed popcorn, pizza, and pop from a special UVic tumbler. Credit: Swell Social. **2:** Fun (and puns) abounded at the **UVIC CURLS ALUMNI WEEK BONSPIEL**



held at the Victoria Curling Club on February 2. Credit: Swell Social. **3:** Married couple **NELLA NELSON** (BA '76), nominated by the Library, and **ALEX NELSON** (BA '98) selected by Education, were two of the 11 recipients celebrated at the 2019 UVic Distinguished Alumni Awards on February 5. **4: VALERIE JEPSON** (LLB '01) accepts her award, accompanied on stage



by (left to right) UVic Chancellor Shelagh Rogers, Alumni Association President Peter Jong, and Dean of Law Susan Breau. **5:** Decorations, festive lighting and delicious catering enhanced the special Distinguished Alumni Awards evening at the scenic **Songhees Wellness Centre**. **6:** **ESI EDUGYAN**, author of acclaimed novels such as *Washington Black* and two-time winner of the Scotiabank Giller prize, was our In



Conversation guest this year. **7:** UVic Chancellor **Shelagh Rogers** led a lively In Conversation evening February 7 with acclaimed Writing graduate **Esi Edugyan**. The event was held on campus in the Michèle Pujol room.

Class Notes

News and photos from around the alumni world

1970's

IMANT KARLIS RAMINSH, Dipl 'Ed, has been appointed a member of the Order of Canada for his contributions and achievements as a Canadian musician, conductor and composer.

1980's

JOHN BARTON, BA '81, is the new City of Victoria Poet Laureate. Barton is a prolific author/poet and the former long-time editor of the *Malahat Review*. Barton has written or edited 26 books, chapbooks and anthologies. These include: *The Malahat at Fifty: Canada's Iconic Literary Journal* (2017), *Polari* (2014), *For the Boy with the Eyes of the Virgin: Selected Poems* (2012) and *Seminal: The Anthology of Canada's Gay-Male Poets* (2007). Barton's appointment was announced by the City of Victoria and the Greater Victoria Public Library earlier this year. He will serve for four years.



JOHN BARTON, City of Victoria Poet Laureate.

DAWN DOIG BSc '88, has published multiple children's books and is pleased to announce that she now has an

author's website:
doigda.wixsite.com/mysite-1

DONALD KRUSEL, BEd '81, recently received an SS *Beaver* medal from the Maritime Museum of BC in recognition of his contributions to the province's ocean sector. Krusel helped transform the Port of Prince Rupert from an underused resource-export port to a thriving container terminal and diversified trade gateway while serving as the port's president and CEO. Krusel is a board member of Oceans Network Canada, a UVic initiative.

JANE MURPHY, BSc '86, a UVic Nursing graduate, has been named chair of the North Island College board of directors. Murphy is former CEO of St. Joseph's General Hospital and previously held senior executive positions at Langley Memorial Hospital, the South Fraser Health Region and Surrey Health Services, including Surrey Memorial Hospital and Community Health Services.

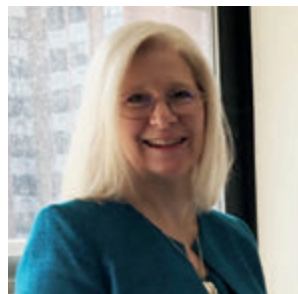


JANE MURPHY leads North Island College.

ANDREW PETTER, LLB 1981, has been appointed a member of the Order of Canada for his commitment and leadership in advancing university-community

engagement and higher education throughout the country. Petter, a former member of the UVic law faculty, is currently President and Vice-Chancellor of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver.

MILÉNA SANTORO, (née Andrews), BA '87, has been teaching in the department of French and Francophone studies at Georgetown University in Washington, DC since 1996. She has received several major honours in recent years, including the 2018 American Council on Quebec Studies' Prix du Québec, the 2018 International Council of Canadian Studies Certificate of Merit, the 2017 Grand Prix de la Francophonie, the Georgetown University Vicennial Medal, and the Quebec government's "Médaille hommage 50e." Santoro is a leader in the Quebec and Canadian studies academic community, and served two terms as co-editor for the *International Journal of Canadian Studies*. She majored in French at UVic and also holds a PhD from Princeton University.



MILÉNA SANTORO

MAY Q. WONG, MPA '86, has released her second book, *City in Colour: Rediscovered Stories of Victoria's Multicultural Past*, published by TouchWood

Editions. Did you know that the early settlers to Victoria included Hawaiians, Métis, American Blacks, Jews, Chinese, and Japanese? Emily Carr wrote about Kanaka Row—why did so many Hawaiians come to Vancouver Island? What important legacies were left by three Métis matriarchs – Amelia Douglas, Josette Work, and Isabella Ross? Canada's first Jewish judge and first Chinese female doctor were born in Victoria. These and many other fascinating stories of unsung individuals and significant cultural communities are in *City in Colour*. Wong is also the author of *A Cowherd in Paradise: From China to Canada*, published by Brindle & Glass.



MAY WONG

1990's

MARY-ANNE NEAL, MEd, has received the Arctic Inspiration Prize for her work on the Dene Heroes Publication Project. Her project was chosen by a national selection committee that included former premiers, grand chiefs, northern dignitaries, youth, industry leaders, academics, artists and philanthropists. The Dene Heroes Publication Project builds literacy skills among Indigenous youth and increases pride in the Dene people. As project director, Neal

leads a team of Indigenous youth in acquiring the knowledge and skills they require to annually publish a collaborative book about Dene heroes that will be distributed to all five communities in the remote Sahtu region of the Northwest Territories. The book inspires Indigenous students, community members and out-of-school youth to write about someone of Dene descent they admire. Contributors interview elders, talk about heroic qualities, write about their heroes, take photographs, draw pictures and read what others have written.

Partnering with schools, community members contribute their ideas, stories and pictures to be published in the book that is distributed to all contributors at a joyous celebration in each community. The Arctic Inspiration Prize encourages, identifies, funds and celebrates breakthrough northern initiatives that have a measurable impact on improving the lives of people across the North.



MARY-ANNE NEAL poses with a copy of *Dene Heroes of the Sahtu*.

2000's

BRIAN CANT, BA '03, Cert '08, MBA '18, has begun a new role as Manager of Communications &

Marketing for the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority. Cant is vice-president of the University of Victoria Alumni Association. He lives in Victoria with his husband, daughter and their lively duck toller.

PETER J. DE GREEF, BA '01, a UVic Economics alumnus and a long-time commercial fisherman, was recently appointed a commissioner for the International Pacific Halibut Commission (www.iphc.int).

ALISON JAMES, BA '05, MA '13, has been hired as chief of staff for City of Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps. James started the position as head of strategic operations in April.



ASHLEY LITTLE, BFA '06, recently published a Young Adult novel, *Confessions of a Teenage Leper*

(Penguin Teen). Little is the author of four previous books—*Prick: Confessions of a Teenage Artist*, *The New Normal*, *Anatomy of a Girl Gang*, and *Niagara Hotel*. She lives in the Okanagan Valley.

RENÉE MACKILLOP, BA '08, was named as one of Calgary's Top 40 under 40 by *Avenue Calgary* magazine. MacKillop is Associate Director of Food and Wellness at the Alex Community Health Centre. MacKillop led the campaign to raise \$4 million to build the Alex Community Food Centre, the first of its kind in Alberta. This community hub brings people together to grow,

cook and share food. The centre hosts cooking, nutrition, gardening and fitness classes, provides meals and includes an affordable produce market. Programs and meals are free with priority given to low-income people.



RENÉE MACKILLOP



EMILIA NIELSEN, BFA '04, recently had her scholarly text, *Disrupting Breast Cancer Narratives:*

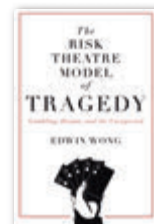
Stories of Rage and Repair, published by the University of Toronto Press. Her debut book of poetry, *Surge Narrows* (Leaf Press, 2013), was a finalist for the League of Canadian Poets' Gerald Lampert Memorial Award. *Body Work*, her second book of poetry, was published by Signature Editions in spring 2018. That same year, she joined York University's Health & Society Program in the Department of Social Science as a tenure track Assistant Professor in Arts, Medicine and Healing. Nielsen also holds an MA and a PhD.

KERRY LYNN OKITA, BA '03, was named one of Calgary's Top 40 under 40 in November 2018, by *Avenue Calgary* magazine.

Okita has built a practice in employment and immigration law at the firm of Bishop & McKenzie LLP. Okita has worked for women's rights in Africa, for the United Nations in Afghanistan, and has helped many Calgary-based families navigate immigration issues. Okita has also volunteered for the Women's Centre of Calgary for many years.



KERRY LYNN OKITA



EDWIN WONG, BA '04, Jubilee Medalist, Greek and Roman Studies, has published a new book, *The*

Risk Theatre Model of Tragedy: Gambling, Drama, and the Unexpected. The book presents an exciting new model of theatre. Risk theatre was also the centrepiece of a major international playwright competition hosted in Victoria at the Langham Court Theatre (see risktheatre.com). It was the biggest competition in the world for the writing of tragedy. In the first year of the competition, over eighty playwrights from eight countries—from Emmy award winners to emerging playwright—competed for the \$10,000 award.

2010's

LYNN FANELLI, Dipl '17, a graduate of UVic's Cultural Resource Management program, has joined the Lake Country Museum and Archives as Executive Director. "I look forward to the challenges ahead utilizing my UVic knowledge to move the museum forward," Fanelli says.

BRANDON LAUR, BA '16, has been awarded the British Columbia Medal of Good Citizenship for his role in promoting Internet safety as part of The White Hatters, an initiative he runs with mother, Beth, and father, Darren. The White Hatters have visited more than 350 schools throughout BC and Canada, as well as about 100 schools in the US. They share a


message of social media safety and digital literacy with students, principals, teachers, school counsellors, parents and law enforcement officials. The family volunteers hundreds of hours every year to offer guidance on technological issues ranging from cyberbullying, sextortion and online active threats. Over the past decade, they have intervened in close to 200 cases where students had connected with their organization online



BRANDON LAUR

because they or someone they knew was struggling with suicidal ideation. The family received the honour together.

ANGELA WIGNALL, BSN '16, MA '16, has won a Rising Star Award, granted by the Nurse and Nurse Practitioners of BC. Wignall began her career at Island Health as a public health and perinatal nurse, and now works across the care continuum, from acute and community care to leadership and education. She also teaches at the Camosun College School of Nursing. Wignall supports quality across Island Health by providing a frontline clinical lens on work done by the quality and safety team. Wignall advances cultural safety and knowledge through research and recently became a founding member of Island Health's emerging Innovation

Lab, working to connect nurses to opportunities for engaging in innovation and leading change. 



ANGELA WIGNALL

What's New With You?

Be in the next Class Notes. Send news and photos to: torch@uvic.ca

Farewell

BARBARA CATHERINE CHANT, MBA '00, passed away in October 2018 after a long illness. Chant loved learning and travel. After completing her BA at UBC and MBA at UVic, she spent her career working as an educational administrator in Canada and overseas. Vietnam was her second home for many years. Multiple System Atrophy (MSA) stole Barbara's body, but not her spirit. She leaves behind her loving husband, James Paulson, son Eric, step-children Tim (Jessica), Gabrielle and

Gillian, grandson Milo, and beloved sister Alison. She will be missed by family and friends across Canada and around the world.

RODERICK "RORY" COUGHLAN, BA '02, MA '95, PhD '02 passed away on January 5, 2019, as the result of surgical complications. Born in March, 1952, on the Isle of Wight, Coughlan grew up in Southampton where he became an ardent and long-suffering fan of Southampton Football Club. He went on to live briefly in London, before moving to Canada in the 1970s. He started

out in Regina, Saskatchewan, but ended up in Victoria—his favourite place on the planet. In between he spent just over 16 years living and working at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. While he found the weather there unspeakably difficult, he loved all aspects of his work teaching and mentoring students in the Department of Psychology and across disciplines. It was this passion that left a lasting mark at Trent.

He was larger-than-life in the classroom, passionate, loud and engaging. He had the opportunity to mentor many bright students—supervising

Honours thesis and graduate students, many of whom have gone on to make significant contributions both within and outside the academy. On his return to the West Coast, Coughlan had just begun to teach, once again as a sessional



RODERICK "RORY" COUGHLAN

instructor, at the University of Victoria, where he had completed his PhD in 2002. The foundation of his academic interests and his leftist politics were grounded in a commitment to personal agency, social equity, human dignity and living a life of passion. He will be missed by his family, his friends, and his colleagues.

PATRICK LANE (DLitt '13) award-winning poet and novelist, passed away on March 7 at age 79, from a heart attack. His publisher, McClelland & Stewart, made the announcement, calling Lane "one of Canada's most renowned writers"—a claim few would refute. His passing made headlines in media outlets nationwide.

Lane's distinguished career spanned 50 years and 25 volumes of poetry, as well as award-winning books of fiction and nonfiction, published in over a dozen countries. The winner of numerous accolades—including the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry, the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Literary Excellence, the Canadian Authors Association Award and three National Magazine Awards—he



PATRICK LANE at his convocation address.

was named an officer of the Order of Canada in 2014.

An influential member of the Department of Writing from 1992 to 2004, Lane was also famously married to writing professor emerita Lorna Crozier—The *Globe and Mail* once described the beloved pair as "BC's poetry power couple" and, in her acclaimed poetry collection *The Book of Marvels*, Crozier wrote of her husband, "We are at home with one another; we are each other's home."

An editor, anthologist and frequent media commentator about poetry and Canadian culture in general, Lane was also a much sought-after teacher, having held positions at the University of Saskatchewan and as writer in residence at the universities of Toronto, Alberta,

Manitoba and at Concordia. In recognition of his service to Canadian literature, he received a Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) from UVic in November 2013, as well as honorary doctorates from UBC, McGill University, UNBC and VIU.

HAROLD J. PAGE, VC '45, DEng '88, passed away on Salt Spring Island January 19, 2019, at the age of 93. Page attended Victoria College in 1944 to 1945, then UBC where he earned a degree in Electrical Engineering in 1949. His engineering career spanned private industry, utilities regulation and executive roles within the BC government. A career highlight was working with his inter-provincial colleagues on the Canadian Constitution. Upon retirement in 1987, Page was appointed a Commissioner to the BC Utilities Commission and served part-time until 1996. A dedicated professional engineer, he was recognized with life memberships in provincial and national engineering associations, and with a Fellowship in the Engineering Institute of Canada. He was also awarded the Queen's Silver

Jubilee Medal for his worthy and devoted service to community and profession. Page received an Honorary Doctor of Engineering in 1988 for his contributions in establishing the Faculty of Engineering at UVic. During retirement he was active in the Salt Spring community. An outstanding husband, father, professional and citizen, his integrity, competence and kindness were widely recognized and will be missed.



HAROLD J. PAGE pictured at a UVic Engineering Iron Ring ceremony.

EDYTA JOSEFINA SAHLEN, BA '84, passed away on Sept. 25, 2018, at Kiwanis Pavilion in Victoria. Sahlen, featured in our Spring 2018 *Torch*, had celebrated her 100th birthday in April. 🕯

UVIC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2019 Annual General Meeting

CREATING SPACES FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

Strategies for effective cultural competencies in the workplace
Moussa Magassa, GCert '17, UVic Human Rights Educator

Monday, June 17 | 6:30 p.m. | University Club of Victoria

6:30 p.m. Registration and refreshments

7 p.m. Alumni Association business meeting | Keynote speaker
Reception follows



Register online alumni.uvic.ca by **June 12** or call 250-721-6000 (toll-free 1-800-808-6828)



Please visit alumni.uvic.ca for board of director nomination information. Nominations must be received on or before May 31, 2019.

LAST FALL, WE ASKED TO HEAR YOUR UVIC STORIES.

Together, with your fellow alumni, you shared your memories and generously donated to the Student Emergency Fund—making even more stories possible.

Thank you for being part of the UVic story.

uvic.ca/mystory



Acclaimed writer gifts archives to UVic

Edith Iglauer (LLD '06) was internationally known as a journalist, author and activist but called the BC coast home.



Libraries played an integral part in the life of Edith Iglauer (LLD '06) from an early age when a librarian in her hometown of Cleveland, Ohio, set her on the path to becoming a writer. She also met her first husband, Philip Hamburger, at Columbia University's library. It seems only fitting, then, that the *New Yorker* writer's fascinating archives were donated to and gratefully received by UVic Libraries.

Born on March 10, 1917, Edith Theresa Iglauer spent a lifetime in pursuit of journalistic integrity. Her strong interest in adventure, US politics, the environment and the Canadian North led to an extraordinary 80-year writing career.

She worked as a war correspondent in the Mediterranean for *The Cleveland News* in the 1940s; convinced her editor that she should cover US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt; and then moved to New York City, where she wrote about the beginning of the United Nations for *Harper's Magazine*.

Her archives are now available at UVic, providing a scholarly resource for researchers studying literature, politics, history and the writing process.

"Edith Iglauer's archives not only document a significant writer's process and career, they cover eight decades of world events and social change, and as such they are a rich source for object-based learning and primary research," says Director of Special Collections and University Archivist Lara Wilson.

The collection includes correspondence, fan letters and cassette tapes of interviews, original notes for her *New Yorker* articles, nonfiction book manuscripts, Second World War reporting and work at the US Office of War Information, along with material covering Eleanor Roosevelt's speeches.

A 1960s portrait of **EDITH IGLAUER** taken in New York. Below: she received an Honorary Doctor of Laws in 2006 from UVic. She's seen here with then-president David Turpin (left) and chancellor Ronald Lou-Poy (right).

Iglauer had an insatiable interest in the world and would research stories exhaustively—on topics ranging from the World Trade Center, to air pollution, to Arctic cooperatives and Inuit culture. She reviewed the first exhibition by Inuit carvers in New York City, penned an in-depth profile of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and wrote a book on famed BC architect Arthur Erickson.

She came to Vancouver in 1973 for an assignment to write about fishing. She later met and married her second husband, John Daly, a BC salmon fisherman. They lived on board his troller, the *MoreKelp*, on the Sunshine Coast, an experience that inspired her bestselling memoir, *Fishing with John*, which became a TV movie. After Daly's death, she later met and married Frank White, her third husband. She loved the BC coast and resided in Garden Bay, BC (part of Pender Harbour) for the rest of her life.

In November of 2006, Iglauer received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree at UVic, recognizing her as a trailblazer for women in the field of journalism. Iglauer exclaimed that it was the proudest moment of her life.

"I can hardly believe this great honour is happening to me!" she said, in the introduction to her 2006 convocation address. "I started writing when I was a small girl, and I still write because I can't stop writing."

At Iglauer's convocation, UVic writing professor emerita Lynne Van Luven said:

"A staff writer for the *New Yorker* magazine since 1961, Edith Iglauer became one of her generation's most adventurous and astute observers of the Canadian way of life."

Iglauer passed away on February 13, 2019, in Sechelt. The loved ones she leaves behind include two sons, Richard and Jay Hamburger, and two grandchildren. – Lisa Abram



Switching Tracks

A Writing grad crosses the country by train to pursue music—and finds the new-found freedom unsettling.

BY CORMAC O'BRIEN (BFA '18)

The train snores at night, just as my bunkmate does. Its aluminum carriage walls rattle and rock as we weave our way over the Rocky Mountains and through the Prairies; if you lie awake at night (this is pretty much an inevitability, given the motion and noise) it sounds as though the train itself is alive and breathing.

The train is called *The Canadian*, and its cars and carriages are named after historic Canadian icons. The 4,400-kilometre trip from Vancouver takes four nights and features breathtaking views of the Rockies, the Prairies and the lakes of Ontario. It has panoramic views of the countryside, plenty of windows and no Wi-Fi.

My younger brother and I took the train to Toronto, where we had a few gigs lined up for the month of March, performing under his name, Fintan O'Brien. As participants in a ViaRail program that allows musicians to travel for free in exchange for playing concerts to the passengers, we saw it as the cheapest way of getting to a much bigger musical city and kick-starting our pop-music careers.

I am a journalist and musician (my apologies to every high school guidance counsellor who tried their best with me), with a BFA degree in Creative Writing from UVic. After I graduated in June 2018, I stepped away from the offer of a journalism internship in Edmonton and joined my brother in pursuing music.

The prospect of diving into music was terrifying—the internship felt secure and straightforward, while a career in music seemed hectic and unclear. But I felt I could handle it. I'd survived the business and bustle of a university degree, after all. I was a writer and editor at the *Martlet*, the campus newspaper, for most of my degree, splitting nearly all of my time between late nights in a musty basement newsroom and early mornings in cold lecture halls for four straight years.

But then I graduated, and I realized that it's not always the bustle that a new grad has to struggle with: sometimes it's the emptiness.

In university, things are always moving. It's a bit like a train journey, really. Your schedule, for the most part, is decided by someone else. There is a clear direction, with a clear goal. No matter



CORMAC O'BRIEN
(left) and brother Fintan on stage at a Rifflandia event in 2018. Centre: musician and journalist Cormac O'Brien.

how disoriented or hungover you feel, you can always count upon the linear motion.

As my brother and I filled our days in Toronto, our route was decidedly more muddled. The train tracks gave way to city intersections, with no clear path through them (even with a grid system that puts Victoria's twisting roads to shame).

During my UVic days, any fears of being stationary were swallowed by the comfort of university monotony. But now, the 7 a.m. wake-ups for 8 a.m. classes were gone, as were the check-ins from professors or the email reminders from university admin. In their places were squandered mornings spent holed up in a rented basement suite fielding spam emails from online coupon services.

Our time in the big city, my third visit there, was short. We left Toronto in April, boarding the *Canadian* at Union Station and squeezing ourselves into our tiny, two-person cabin. We were heading back to Victoria and the quietness it promised. We looked back on a busy and breathless month in Toronto, filled with exciting opportunities and the promise of a big break, and both of us hoped we might soon be back. Whether we would or not was up in the air.

I was glad to get back on *The Canadian*, tuning into the stillness of the snowy Prairies and hearing the train breathe and creak beneath me. I'd missed feeling the motion as I slept and knowing I was going somewhere, no matter where that anywhere was. I'd missed looking out the window at the track ahead and knowing which direction was forward. ¶

Find Fintan O'Brien's music here: <https://soundcloud.com/fintan-obrien>

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY NIK WEST

Life is better in a wetsuit, it seems, judging from this scene in Cox Bay, Tofino. The moment was captured by **Nik West** (BA '95).