New public database a lasting document of dispossession

By Philip Cox

Laura Saimoto never met her grandfather, Kunitake Saimoto, or knew the details of his story until she recently accessed his 600-page case file through the University of Victoria’s groundbreaking Landscapes of Injustice project.

Her grandfather, a Vancouver resident, lost his family home, as well as his possessions and livelihood including four commercial fishing vessels, when the government forcibly interned and disposessed 22,000 Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.

One family’s story, among thousands—accessible for first time

Saimoto wept when she saw his internee number—9609—assigned by the Office of the Custodian, the government authority that oversaw the internment and dispossession of Japanese Canadians from 1942 to 1952.

Now, for the first time, anyone interested in this dark history will be able to easily search tens of thousands of digitized government records, oral histories, land titles, individual case files and personal documents such as photographs and letters that the Landscapes of Injustice team has digitized and organized into a comprehensive online database, revealing the inner workings of this chilling and racist chapter in Canada’s past.

Repercussions of the internment and dispossession

The library contains records detailing more than 15,000 interned Japanese Canadians—at least one file for every Japanese Canadian family affected by the government’s dispossession efforts—and includes Custodian Case Files, like those of the Ebisuzaki and Morishita families.

SEE DISPOSESSION P.5

SEE NEUTRINOS P.4

UVic researchers advance knowledge of the universe

With powerful international partnerships, equipment and facilities, University of Victoria researchers are seeking answers to the universe’s greatest mysteries, boosted by $7.4 million in funding announced in March by the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI).

“These UVic-led projects will significantly advance new knowledge in the field of physics—inspiring and guiding students and future scientists in their quest to understand the universe and the building blocks of human existence,” says Lisa Kablyshnik, vice-president research and innovation at UVic.

The CFI Innovation Fund invests in infrastructure, across the full spectrum of research, from the most fundamental to applied through to technology development.

Neutrino shape-shifting

Led by UVic physicists Mark Hartz and Dean Karlen, the international project seeks to build a neutrino detector to study neutrino oscillations, which requires very sensitive photon detectors to study neutrino interactions that take place in about 800 tonnes of water—equivalent to about one-third of an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Unlike other subatomic particles, neutrinos do not experience electromagnetic and strong forces and so they very rarely interact in particle detectors. In order to detect enough neutrinos, a very massive detector is required, and a water detector allows for particle detection while scaling to very large masses. Neutrino oscillations are a process by which one type of neutrino turns into another. This process implies that neutrinos have a mass, even though it is ultra tiny.

The $3.4 million CFI investment to UVic for the highly collaborative project (Intermediate Detector for the Hyper-Kamiokande Neutrino Oscillation Experiment) will be used to study the neutrino oscillations and how they may differ for matter and antimatter. Results from this experiment may help answer the question of why we live in a universe made out of matter rather than equal amounts of matter and antimatter.

“We want to understand the properties of these particles in order to advance our understanding of the most basic physical laws that govern our universe,” says Hartz, a UVic adjunct professor and researcher at TRIUMF.

“While advancing our most basic knowledge of the world around us is itself a worthy goal, we also recognize that many of the most important technological advancements in the past 150 years in science and technology have come from understanding the universe in more detail,” she says.

SEE THE RING PAGE 4

UVic has been named one of Canada’s Best Diversity Employers for the tenth consecutive year. The national competition recognizes 70 employers that lead the way in creating inclusive workplaces.


A decade of leadership

The Provost’s Advocacy and Activism Awards recognizes the achievements of individuals or groups who demonstrate dedication to the advancement of social equity. The Provost’s Award in Engaged Scholarship recognizes tenured faculty members who have achieved distinct as community-engaged scholars. The Reach Awards recognizes 10 employers that lead the way in creating inclusive workplaces.


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$7.4 MILLION IN NEW CANADIAN FOUNDATION INVESTMENTS IN UVIC NEUTRINO OSCILLATION RESEARCH AND NEW PHYSICS DATA STORAGE FACILITY.

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Climate and Sustainability Action Plan to answer the call for global solutions

What are your ideas for addressing the global crisis of climate change? Consultations to develop UVic’s Climate and Sustainability Action Plan started in late-March and continue until April 23. Students, faculty members and staff are encouraged to share their ideas during this campus engagement, which will focus on shaping the vision for the comprehensive new plan.

The Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP) will respond to the urgent calls for action, including those signalled in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C and the Paris Agreement. It will build on the university’s existing structures, expertise and activities, and identify new opportunities for innovation and collaboration across research, academics, operations and community relations.

We want our plan to be creative and ambitious, and to reflect the university’s commitment to global leadership in environmental, social and institutional sustainability,” says Cynthia Milton, co-chair of the CSAP integrated steering committee. “We know our campus community is passionate about climate and sustainability and we want those ideas to inform the development of this plan for transformative actions.”

Building on UVic’s Strategic Framework and anchored in the university’s deep commitment to climate and sustainability action, the initial five-year plan will offer a comprehensive and integrated approach, identify short and medium and long-term strategies and best practices, and include tangible, measurable outcomes to move toward our vision for a sustainable future. The plan will respect Indigenous knowledge and value Indigenous ways of knowing, and being, particularly on Vancouver Island.

New management program for a changing economy

The Peter B. Gustavson School of Business will welcome its first students to a new master’s program this September.

Designed for students with a non-business undergraduate degree, the UVic Master of Management offers interdisciplinary, hands-on learning on building career-ready graduates.

The program fosters the management skills to lead teams and keep organizations nimble in rapidly changing social and economic circumstances. “As the economy recovers from the pandemic, there will be pressures on organizations to deliver and recover faster,” says Saul Klein, Dean of the Gustavson School of Business. “For students, this gives them an opportunity to upskill now to meet the future demand for socially-conscious leaders across all sectors.”

Students can expect experiential learning to tackle complex societal issues, business disruptions, emerging disciplines and changing industry demand. The cross-disciplinary cohort model brings students with diverse perspectives and expertise to the business management classroom.

Collaborations with local organizations allow hands-on skill development from the outset of the program, within groups striving to offer meaningful innovation.

The deadline to apply to the UVic Master of Management program is April 30, 2021. For more information, please visit bit.ly/21-equity.

Fall parking changes

Following a year of remote learning and working, UVic will be introducing changes to its parking pass program in time for the fall return of students, faculty and staff.

Beginning in Sept. 2021, the cost for monthly parking and daily parking at certain lots will decrease, while semester parking passes will be discontinued. Monthly parking will decrease from $114 to $75 per month for general parking, and from $199 to $131 for reserved parking. Daily parking in lots further away from Ring Road, such as Lam Circle, will decrease from 99 to 86 per day.

In Sept. 2021 the cost of an annual (12-month) parking pass will increase by 5%—to $596 for general parking or $1,043 reserved parking. The Flex 25 pass ($150 for 25 single-day permits) will continue to be available, at the same cost as last year. Parking fee increases offset the rising costs of operation and maintenance while helping to support UVic’s sustainable transportation programs, including subsidized student and employee bus passes, cycling facilities, and the Modo car share partnership.

The upcoming parking changes will provide commuters with greater parking choices and flexibility, and are intended to reduce short-term parking pressures caused by campus construction while anticipating longer-term parking needs. The goal of the university’s Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program is to promote the use of active transportation and transit in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, support healthy communities and achieve the goal of 70% non-single occupancy vehicle travel to and from campus.

Par parking is in effect on the Gordon Head Campus Monday through Saturday 24 hours a day. There is no charge for parking on Sundays or on recognized BC statutory holidays. The HonkMobile app is now available to pay for daily or weekly parking.

More about parking and transportation services: uvic.ca/parking.
University Drive pathway opens for spring cycling

The University Drive Connection Pathway is now open after undergoing major upgrades, including installation of a new two-way bike path, separate pedestrian path, new lighting, and accessibility improvements.

The project is the first of seven major active transportation network improvements to be completed as part of the Campus Cycling Plan (bit.ly/cycling-21), and the first step in developing an All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Cycling Network on campus.

"We’re excited to see the implementation of the Campus Cycling Plan moving along at a steady pace," says Mike Wilson, director of campus planning and sustainability. "We’ve been working on this project as an enjoyable and healthy mode of transportation for student, faculty and staff, and this project will really enhance B.C. high-volume intersection."

The Connection Pathway links UVic’s targeted 2021/22 campus-wide priority of academics, students, supports and campus safety, which at UVic has been 3.5-4 per cent per year for the last five years. Because tuition fees can present affordability challenges and barriers to access for some students, UVic invests heavily in supports for students in need. Investments include scholarships, need-based and emergency bursaries, and the work-study program. During the pandemic, it has also included self-isolation and quarantine supports for incoming international students. We continue to revise our financial aid and award programs to meet needs and demands.

Ancillary services

Due to the pandemic and decreased on-campus activity, revenue from ancillary operations in 2020/21 is forecasted to be $32 million less than in 2019/20. Ancillary services include on-campus housing, food, child care and the bookstore. Some service areas were impacted more than others, and some will recover faster. Athletics and recreation and continuing studies are two additional areas that have been significantly impacted by the pandemic.

The budget includes supports and fee increases for some ancillary operations to offset the significant financial impacts of COVID-19 and support the ongoing mission of the university. As on-campus activity increases we prepare to welcome students back to campus in September, we are redeploying for the medium-term financial sustainability in these areas.

More information

UVic strives to take a principled and transparent approach to developing and sharing our budget. For more information on the process, investment priorities and financial details, download the Planning and Budget Framework Framework 2022–2024.
MAKING CANADA FIRST IN THE WORLD TO MANIPULATE ANTIMATTER

BY ANNE TOLSON

It took a lot of time and effort, but George Tzanetakis says his quest to transform a popular UVic course into an online program accessible to a broad international audience was worth it.

The professor of computer science recently became UVic’s first faculty member to engage the university in a formal contract with a commercial massive open online course (MOOC) provider.

MOOCs—online courses available to anyone who has a computer and internet connection—are viewed by many as a way to make post-secondary education accessible to millions of people, including those in developing nations. Typically, MOOCs are taught by the same instructor who teaches the course at a university or college.

MOOC providers are also large, with portals that partner with the schools to offer these courses. Though many MOOCs are free, some—typically those offering certificates, academic credits or degrees—charge a fee.

“Being a first for UVic, there was a lot of work getting the contract and privacy issues sorted out,” says Tzanetakis, who is cross-appointed to UVic’s School of Engineering and the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. “But I think courses like this can increase UVic’s visibility around the world and I hope this work will pave the way for more faculty members to take a similar path.”

Tzanetakis, whose research focuses on the computer analysis of music, is involved in the computer music program since 2005. Several years ago, in an attempt to share his work more widely and to attract prospective graduate students, Tzanetakis tried posting some of his lectures on Google Hangout and then on YouTube. A few hundred people showed interest, but Tzanetakis felt the overall video quality was poor and that he wasn’t reaching a wide enough audience.

“I wanted to do a better job of it and that’s how the Kadenze course came about,” he says.

Laying the groundwork

Tzanetakis says it took more than three years from start to finish to get his program launched on Kadenze, a California-based MOOC provider that partners with leading universities to offer online courses geared toward art, music and creative technology.

During the first year, he worked with UVic staff and Kadenze to iron out issues around a contract, privacy and IP. Over the next two years—and with support from UVic’s Technology Integrated Learning grant and its Community Engaged Learning grant—he developed the course content.

The multiple components of each course, which included brief promotional videos, had to be carefully scripted. Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Tzanetakis travelled to Valencia, California, to work with a team that used a green screen, teleprompter, and multiple microphones and cameras to produce the numerous video segments.

“It was quite a process, but these videos are much more professionally produced and polished than a typical 20-minute zoom session,” he says.

Launching the UVic courses

In December, Kadenze officially launched Tzanetakis’ three-course program, which focuses on Music Information Retrieval, an interdisciplinary science of retrieving information from music using computers. The courses include topics such as digital signal processing, machine learning, programming, human-computer interaction and musicology.

The first course, Extracting Information From Music Signals, is free, though a good knowledge of programming, basic linear algebra, probability and statistics is recommended.

Those wishing to delve further into the subject can enrol in the other two courses, Machine Learning for Music Information Retrieval and Music Retrieval Systems. Together, the full program currently costs $350 (US). Although the courses aren’t for academic credit, students who take the full program receive certificates endorsed by UVic and Kadenze for each course completed, providing they earn a grade of 65 per cent or higher.

To date, about 2,000 people have taken the courses—1,400 taking the first course and about 340 each of the other two. While most students are from North America, there have also been many from Europe, India, China and Iran.

Importantly, UVic students who enrol in Tzanetakis’ original for-credit course can take all three Kadenze courses for free. In fact, his plan is to use the Kadenze version of the course to provide his UVic students with important basic information, leaving more class time open for discussion and interactive exercises.

Paving the way for others

Because the pandemic forced most post-secondary courses online, Tzanetakis says he hopes instructors who are now comfortable with online teaching will consider making the leap to MOOC delivery. He says any UVic faculty members interested in sharing their courses with a much wider audience are welcome to contact him to learn more about his experience.

His first tip for anyone considering a MOOC is that the more unique your course is, the better. A prof who tries to offer basic calculus, for example, will be competing with a large number of universities and colleges that have occupied the MOOC space for years.

“I’m probably a unique and specific to UVic, then an MOOC is an excellent way to put it out into the world,” he says. Tzanetakis says it feels great to have the courses online now and that he’s glad to have used part of his study leave to focus on the project.

“It does take a lot of effort and it took some time away from my research and teaching for a while,” says Tzanetakis, who will be teaching at UVic again this September. “But it’s something you can be proud of. For me, just knowing that there are hundreds, maybe thousands, out there who are engaging at some level is amazing.”

By the numbers

• 2000 people have taken the courses
• 1400 taking the first course
• 340 each in the other two courses
• 2 million CFI contribution
• 1000 researchers from many countries

The Belle II experiment is located at the accelerator complex of the KEK Laboratory. The experiment includes 1000 researchers from many countries around the world including Canada. The Canadian group includes researchers from UVic, University of British Columbia, McGill University and St. Francis Xavier University. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced more than $518 million to support the infrastructure of universities and research institutions across the country. UVic is also co-partnering on two additional projects supported by the CFI.

BY ANNE TOLSON

Making higher education accessible to a global audience

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Students’ Dialogue on Democratic Engagement explores representation and participation

BY CARLOS CHICAS BERTI

How can we practice democracy in a way that captures and represents the various voices, experiences and stories on it? It’s a question with ramifications for societies and governments around the world. It’s also a question that students at UVic recently undertook to explore for themselves.

UVic’s recent Students’ Dialogue on Democratic Engagement sought to foster student engagement through an innovative technique known as a deliberative mini-public. This process gained traction around the world, a deliberative mini-public is a space in which we can imagine a true representation of a particular community for the purpose of dialogue on a given topic.

Undertaken by UVic’s Community and Culture faculty’s Dr. Anne-Marie Guichard and Grosvenor School of Business professor Simon Pek, in partnership with The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia and 24 students from across campus, the project was born in 2019.

“I volunteered for the dialogue because I felt my knowledge about democracy, how it functions or doesn’t, and how it is lacking, was lacking,” says Isabelle Rutherford, an undergraduate social sciences student who took part in the dialogue.

Part of what makes deliberative mini-publics like the Students’ Dialogue meaningful is the way in which participants are selected—a technique often referred to as a civic lottery. Over 7,500 randomly selected students across the university received an invitation to participate in the dialogue. Interested students completed a short, anonymous survey which gathered demographic data from applicants, after which a final random selection was conducted to pick the final 24 students that would take part as representatives of the student body.

“The idea behind the dialogue was to create a space where students could engage in honest conversations about important and sometimes sensitive topics. ‘It’s an opportunity for us to lead by example and demonstrate better the ADS and the culture of the University of Victoria,” says UVic’s Anthony C. Lee, who took part in the dialogue.

While UVic has a long history of working with students and community members on and off campus, the format of the dialogue remained relatively unchanged, with a tendency towards more traditional ways of inviting conversation and feedback. Open houses, surveys and workshops do have their merits, however, they also present limitations, especially when it comes to making sure that a full range of diverse perspectives are included in the conversation. The dialogue presented an opportunity for UVic to involve a wide range of students. Through the civic lottery, students from various disciplines, streams of study and life experience participated in the dialogue, contributing important perspectives in support of a diverse and inclusive conversation. For Pek, this deliberative mini-public offers a process that can be used in the future of university democracy. “Universities by their very nature include various democratic systems, whether student unions, large clubs or critical faculties. Tools like deliberative mini-publics can be used in these settings in many different ways to give a thoughtful and reflective feedback and to include more voices in decision-making.”

So what did this decision-making take place about?

Students discussed two key issues in a series of four online forums: first, how to promote civil discourse, and second, how to foster more meaningful youth participation in democracy.

Each topic involved two stages: learning stages, in which the students heard presentations from expert speakers and participated in an active discussion. “These were not just presentations, in which they participated in a series of facilitated small-group discussions on the topics,” says UVic’s of social and politics graduate student Weam Abbas. Even online, the ability to discuss big ideas and help spur change in the university wasn’t lost on the students who participated.

UVic hopes the pilot will lead to more deliberative mini-publics to better engage students and the community on important topics on- and off campus. “There are so many ways to do this, it’s a question of how we can use this approach, whether as a means of involving students in discussions around strategic priorities or collaborating with our community partners around new initiatives. It’s a very exciting time to be at a university that prioritizes this type of engagement,” says Associate Professor of Community and Government Relations Julie Potter, project manager for the initiative.

“Every person through this process was using ideas that might have been previously marginalized,” says Marie Bertine, of Doctors of the World. The university is also using the feedback and to include more voices in decision-making.”

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Listening to the needs of vulnerable clients

BY ANNE MACLAURIN

Anthropologists are usually found uncovering artifacts and pieces of history, but UVic’s anthropologist of sound Alexandre Boudreault-Fournier instead applied her research skills to produce a report for the Doctors of the World mobile health clinic in Victoria.

The Doctors of the World mobile clinic in Victoria is a project launched in 2019 during an opioid crisis and, more recently, a global pandemic. In her research, Boudreault-Fournier found that the Doctors of the World mobile health clinic goes “where no one goes” in providing basic health care services to vulnerable populations in a respectful and non-judgmental way.

“I was approached by Doctors of the World to conduct interviews and produce a report about the effectiveness of the mobile health clinic in Victoria,” says Boudreault-Fournier.

“We accepted the challenge based on our knowledge of research methodologies and our sincere desire to respond to a need from the community to work on this project right during the peak of the pandemic,” adds Boudreault-Fournier.

Boudreault-Fournier is a PhD candidate who set out to investigate the records of this mobile health clinic in Victoria.

As explained in the report, “Doctors of the World provides a broad range of primary care to vulnerable populations. They never stopped providing care and dispensing—right through the pandemic—basic necessities, such as hygiene products, nail clippers, toothbrushes, masks, shampoo, medicine bottles, and a variety of such things.”

Snacks allowed for the time such as cookies and books, were also provided to patients. “Their work,” Boudreault-Fournier says, “was truly impressive.”

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This free, open-access database contains over 500,000 pages extracted from more than 20 archives and repositories across Canada, the US and the UK, offering researchers and the public an invaluable resource for investigating the records of this historical injustice.

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Trans+ conference breaks new boundaries

BY ANNE MACAURIN

The first virtual gathering of the bimonthly Trans+ Conference on Transgender Studies (MTHF) was felt to be a resounding success by its participants, despite the challenges posed by its online format. The international conference, launched in 2014 and postponed last year due to COVID-19, aims to provide a platform for discussions and exchanges between South Asian, North American, and other countries. The conference attracted attendees from over 20 countries, making it the largest online event ever in this community.

The Trans+ Conference is a unique event that brings together researchers, activists, and educators from around the world to discuss issues of gender, sexuality, and social justice. The conference has grown significantly in recent years, with attendance numbers reaching over 1,000 participants during its virtual format.

The conference started with a keynote speech on social justice and equity by Anne MacAurin, a prominent figure in the transgender rights movement. She spoke about the importance of intersectionality and how it can be used to address the needs of transgender individuals.

Panel discussions and workshops throughout the conference focused on various issues such as healthcare, employment, education, and activism. A keynote speech by Kylar Broadus, a Black Trans man lawyer and activist, emphasized the need for a trans-inclusive approach to social justice.

Another highlight of the conference was a panel discussion on the intersection of transgender activism and indigenous rights. The panelists discussed the importance of supporting and promoting the rights of transgender individuals in indigenous communities.

The conference also featured a special tribute to Aretha Franklin, a Black Trans woman, who passed away earlier this year. The tribute highlighted her impact on the transgender community and her legacy.

The conference ended with a call to action and a pledge to continue the work of the transgender community. Attendees were encouraged to take action and to support the fight for transgender rights and equality.

The Trans+ Conference is an important event that brings together transgender individuals from around the world to discuss and address issues of gender, sexuality, and social justice. It is a platform for learning, sharing, and networking, and it is a testament to the power of the transgender community.
Theatre restrictions create livestream learning opportunity

BY JOHN THERRELL
WITH FILES BY ADRIENNE HOLMBERG

As with all live theatre nations-wide, pandemic health restrictions closed UVic’s own Phoenix Theatre last March. With no performance mandate dates mandated person classes, Department of Theatre faculty and fourth-year students grappled with the need to meet graduation requirements while still respecting safety protocols. But, in classic theatrical fashion, opportunity arose out of crisis when a whole new learning stream opened up, offering students invaluable career skills that would never have been offered had it not been for the pandemic.

Thanks to support from the university, and long-time sponsor IA Financial Group, the theatre department was able to obtain professional-quality equipment to create a livestream two plays this spring: Caryl Churchill’s Problem Child and Love & Information and George F. Walker’s Problem Child.

While Churchill’s production was more of a test run, viewable only to faculty and students, the March 24-27 public livestream of Problem Child was seen by nearly 700 households.

Running Live & Information first allowed the students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the new equipment—including cameras, gimbal and a livestream switcher—while managing both the rehearsal and production process, keeping everyone safely distanced and masked.

“True livestreaming for theatre—where the performance is filmed live while you are watching—is challenging,” says instructor and assistant technical director Simon Farrow. “We wanted the viewer’s expectation of the video production to be as polished as every other element of our usual productions.”

But while the new equipment offers a broadcast-quality experience, there’s more to go live than just a clear picture and crisp sound. “The set design needs to offer access for good filming angles and costumes need to translate over the screen,” Farrow explains. “The lighting needs to be adjusted for camera exposure, the sound design needs to integrate into the livestream, the directors have to adjust their blocking—already distanced for COVID guidelines—for the camera. All of the students working in those three areas are refining their work to the camera lens, rather than the auditorium.”

The production team has had to quickly learn a whole new skill set, including filming, switching, video editing and live camera direction—career advantages for their futures in theatre.

For third-year student Brandon Sugden, directing the livestream team has been an immense and satisfying challenge. “I have learned so much in the past few months on this project, it will certainly be the most formative experience of my time at the Phoenix,” he says. “The End of a chapter means a new beginning.”

All these elements came together in George F. Walker’s gritty social comedy, Problem Child. Specifically chosen by theatre professor and director Fran Gehard—already teaching classes in acting for the camera—this single set play was ideal: featuring only four characters, Problem Child allowed for two alternating casts, offering complex roles as well as on-stage distancing.

“I’m looking at a challenging time? asks Gehard. "Yes? Different? Certainly. But we’ve loved every minute. We’re natural born theatre-makers and neither hell nor high water—nor even a global pandemic—can stop us from carrying out our work with joy.”

Sugden agrees. “I feel really honored to be helping the department bring work back to the stage. It is endlessly exciting to be making art in the same room as my colleagues again.”

VISUAL ARTS STUDENT WORK

BY MARINA HADEN
WITH FILES BY GRACE DILLON

Even during a normal year, it can be a challenge for students to complete their degree requirements and present a finished body of creative work while also planning the annual UVic United Way campaign organized public exhibition which normally attracts hundreds to campus.

This year, however, graduating students had to grapple with both creating work under strict COVID constraints, and the uncertainty of whether a physical exhibition would be permitted. The bad news? Less than a month before the expected opening date, student curators were informed that a public show would not be possible—but the good news is, they’re being shifted online for viewing by anyone, anywhere.

While this year’s BFA exhibition is entirely online, it doesn’t assume that there’s a doom-and-gloom reflection on being the pandemic class of ’21. “It’s almost sort of calling the fact, but it feels like a specific kind of world has ended,” says exhibition chair Nick Patterson. “We’re passing through the threshold into something new and different.”

Given the uniquely hands-on, often collaborative, nature of their program, Visual Arts was among the few departments permitted to run in-person this past academic year: 86 per cent of their classes were offered on campus from September to April, thanks to rigorous safety protocols.

“People have been working really hard to still make the work they want,” says graduating honours student Zoe Loyd. “There are many [of us] in the graduating class who make installations or performance-based work, which is directly impacted by current precautions and regulations. I feel really grateful that we do have the space to come together as a group, as a community—people who are doing school entirely on Zoom don’t have the same connections we are lucky enough to have.”

Patterson agrees. “There are fewer opportunities to work together because of the restrictions, and we are still putting forth our best—and that is really inspiring to me,” he says.

There is definitely a feeling that we are part of something special!“

The online exhibition The End will feature work by 30 graduating students, ranging from painting, sculpture, photography and drawing, to digital media, installations, multimedia and more.

“It has been a privilege and inspiration to see the students rally behind their vision with endless determination and a tremendous sense of community,” says supervising visual arts professor Jennifer Stillwell. “Any limitations have only inspired innovation.”

As with any exhibition, subject matter will vary by individual artist. “I think a lot of the work deals with COVID, but working through trauma,” says head of curation Jasper Van Alderen. “Identity and mental health are huge themes, [as are] the end of isolation or an exploration of identity.”

Rather than discouraged, recent JUNRA recipient and head of documentation Jamie Oersthus feels incredibly inspired by the work being exhibited in The End. “If you want to feel a sense of creativity and optimism during a time when everything feels very alien, I want you to feel that connection in others in the arts community—that’s why you should view this show,” she says. “The end of a chapter means a new beginning.”

That’s a sentiment with which Stillwell agrees. “Even though the exhibition marks ‘the end of their degree program, spotlighting that moment in time will allow them to start the next scene—I am more than confident this next generation of visual artists will do well.”

The End will run online starting April 27. See theuvicexhibitions.ca

PHILANTHROPY

A reflection on giving — and sharing my local love

BY MARINA HADEN
UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN ASSISTANT

From August 2020 to March 2021, I worked as a co-op student for UVic’s United Way campaign, a role that led me to apply for the job in July because one of United Way’s missions—supporting marginalized communities—is one I am passionate about. After I graduated high school, I struggled deeply with my mental health, and because my parents were involved in my life and were able to access care due to systemic and financial barriers. Working for the campaign seemed like a logical first step in what I hope will be a lifetime of giving it forward and doing what small things I can to slowly and steadily address those barriers. I am so proud to have worked with the UVic United Way campaign and to know that the funds we have raised will help my community in such a profound way. It has been a quietly amazing, inspiring experience.

The pandemic has changed everything, making even day-to-day functioning seem overwhelming at times. It is easy to get buried under a flood of email and forget the importance of what we are doing, what is driving us, why it matters. The UVic community has kept me going: every frustration was turned into a kind, encouraging email from a stranger, and in every moment I was overwhelmed I could find a new donor, an increase, $10 extra from someone who was paying attention to what we were doing. We had 73 new donors this year, despite all the challenges of a raging pandemic.

I have been pushed out of my comfort zone, cold-calling donors, and reaching out to local businesses, and I have several times been moved to tears by the warmth and generosity with which I was greeted, even six feet apart or over Zoom. I have watched UVic employees explain, with tears in their eyes, why they do what they do. I have watched people who accessed United Way-funded programs have their lives turned around and find support in the moment they needed it most.

I want to say thank you to this community for being part of something so extraordinary with me. Right now, especially, it is easy to turn away to sink into exhaustion and apathy, but that’s not what I’ve been happening. There have been so many subtle kindness and thoughtful contributions.

We raised more than $214,000, an amount that’s hard to even visualize. I can say with confidence, though, it matters. It means thousands of people are staying safe, getting help, eating a hot meal. Thank you, UVic.
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF UVic’s Multifaith Chaplain Henri Lock begins with meditation—usually both yoga and sitting meditation. Since COVID restrictions began, he has taken that practice online to share with others. After that, his day might include preparing for Multifaith programming, meeting with students to talk about life’s big questions, hosting soup suppers and drumming circles, holding a multi-denominational Eucharist, organizing contemplative retreats or hosting a conscious dance event.

Henri was born in Holland and came to Canada when he was 12 years old, initially settling in Edmonton. He did his graduate work in Vancouver, where he met his spouse Leslie. They then worked in the Indigenous community of Anu’Pa’ay’s, in the unceded Gitxsan territories in northern BC for five years, where their first child was born. After this, he and his family came to Victoria and he began his chaplaincy at UVic Multifaith. In 28 years at UVic, Henri has seen some radical changes to the meaning and practice of campus ministry. “When I first came here, I was assigned by my faith community to serve the people who identified with my faith community—the United Church.” But this more siloed approach has transformed into a much more collaborative and interconnected community; now 14 chaplains from 12 faiths serve students from many traditions and faiths, as well as those from no faith background. Henri’s colleague at Multifaith, Anglican Chaplain Rev’d Ruth Danieter, knows Henri has been a colleague, a mentor, and a dear friend to me. He has been, and will continue to be, an inspiration to many. Henri led with his heart, and helped shape Multifaith into a rich and meaningful resource at the University of Victoria. He poured love into his vocation as a campus chaplain, and through this, transformed many lives. The ripples of his ministry over these last decades will be felt for a long time to come.

This focus on creating a welcoming, inclusive community has all come partly from listening closely to what students want and need. These changes involved new and fresh ways of offering spiritual support—and around environmental awareness and connection with nature. Henri heard from students that they were increasingly identifying as spiritual, but not necessarily as part of a specific faith tradition. He heard that many students were finding a lot of meaning in spiritual experiences they had at festivals, which led to the creation of Momentum Festival at Multifaith, capturing some elements from festival culture—conscientious or ecstatic dance, drumming, yoga, contemplation and meditation—in a substance-free space that attracted around 150 students each year.

These students are vocal about Henri’s impact on them and their profound experiences at Multifaith. Angus Townsend, a third-year student in the biology-psychology program, spoke about how Henri helped him find community, “I am deeply appreciative of Henri’s work and presence in the time I’ve known him. I arrived at the Multifaith Centre as an outsider, yet his kindness and authenticity erased any tentativeness I had and allowed me to enter the community and further the social aspect of meditation. Henri’s love of his work and his faith is ever apparent and boundless.” Henri also sees a growing recognition across the university community of the integral role that spiritual well-being plays in students’ university experiences and in their personal and academic development. This recognition included Henri taking on an additional role at Multifaith, Coordinating Chaplain, which focuses on strengthening connections with faith groups in the community, deepening relationships with campus partners and administration of overall Multifaith programming. Henri was integral to the recent integration of Multifaith with Counseling and Health, as the Student Wellness Centre, with the aim of supporting students’ emotional, physical and spiritual health.

Henri’s identity has been very connected to his role at Multifaith; his children both attended UVic and integrated themselves with Multifaith while they were students. “It has been really great having part of my kids’ lives here at the university. My personal life has become woven into my role here.” His wife Leslie has also been very involved at Multifaith; for many years she offered energy healing workshops and she was a theme presenter at the last meditation retreat.

As he prepares to retire, Henri intends to continue with his volunteer work with the Victoria Multifaith Society and the Contemplative Society. And he will have more time for his passion for cycling. “I love bicycling, maybe because I was born Dutch. We are born on bicycles.” Reflecting on his time serving the community at UVic, Henri expresses gratitude for the privilege of working with students: “I have so appreciated being part of the university community and to work with students who are so open to exploring their connection with the universe, with one another, their idealism and profound insights.”