



REACH AWARDS

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THE RING

February 2022

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

uvic.ca/news



University
of Victoria

SPEED READ

UVIC LIBRARIES
New library info system coming this June

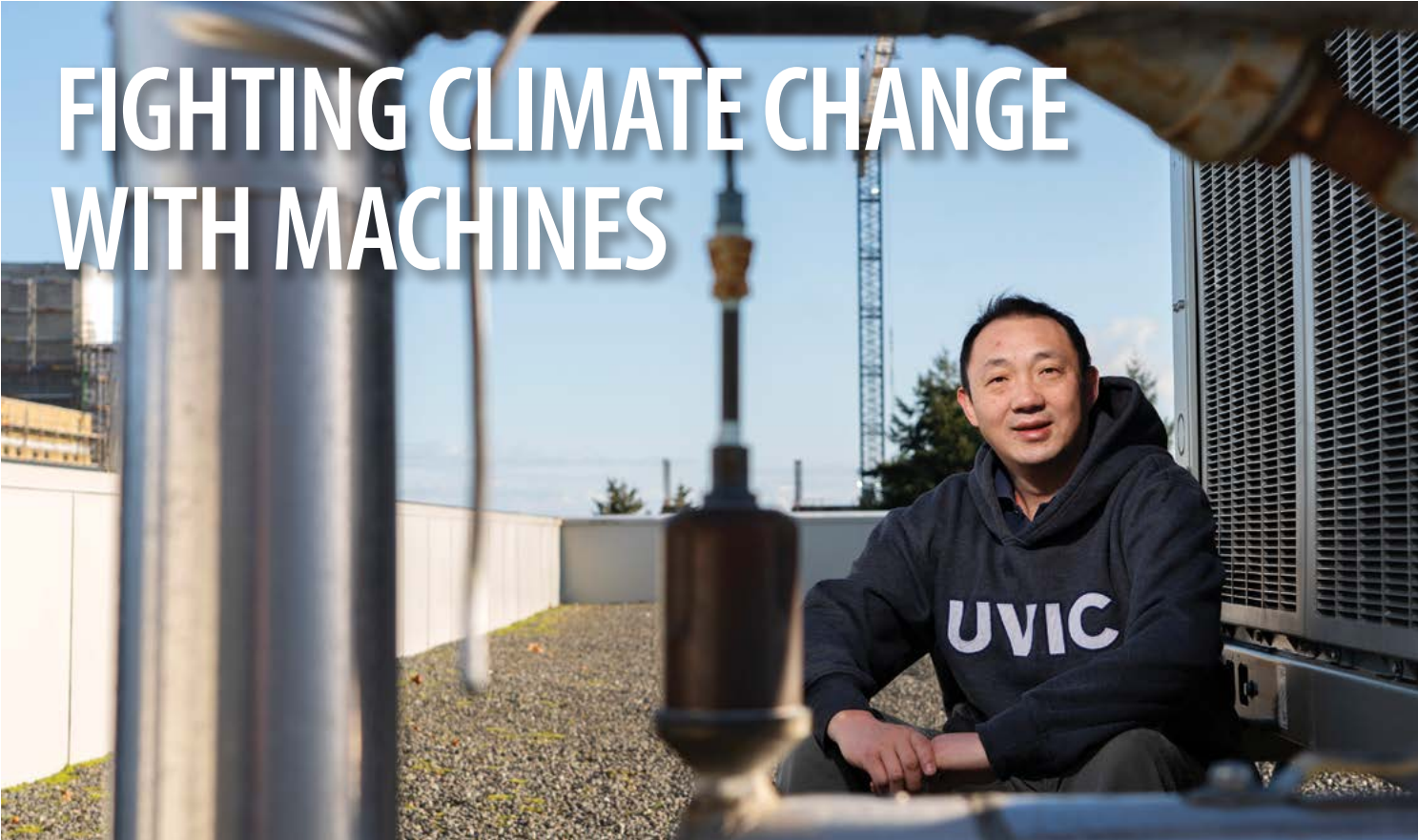
UVic Libraries is in the process of moving to Ex Libris' Alma library services platform and Primo discovery platform, which will replace UVic Libraries' two-decade-old Voyager catalogue search and Summon search interface. This once-in-a-generation software migration will offer improved search capabilities for students and researchers.

libguides.uvic.ca/alma

Library cards for community members

Everyone is welcome to use the UVic Libraries. Residents of Greater Victoria can obtain a library card from the Ask Us desk in the Mearns Centre for Learning—McPherson Library. You will need to present a piece of government-issued photo ID. Members of library consortia, government bodies, UVic Alumni Association, and others are also eligible for free limited privileges with presentation of appropriate documentation.

uvic.ca/library/borrowing



Shi. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

10,938

NUMBER OF
TIMES YANG SHI'S
WORK HAS BEEN
CITED BY OTHER
RESEARCHERS—A
MEASURE OF HIS
WORK'S IMPACT
IN HIS FIELD.

Using artificial intelligence to ensure the efficient use of energy.

BY RICHARD DAL MONTE

The heat dome baked parts of the Pacific Northwest. Wildfires raged around the world. Torrential and destructive flooding displaced communities in British Columbia. The world in 2021 was fixated on the impacts of climate change.

But if humans are going to stop the damage they've caused, they're going to need help from machines, researchers say.

That's where Yang Shi comes in. Shi is director of UVic's Applied Control and Information Processing Laboratory,

and his focus is on the mathematic models and strategies behind the remote control and monitoring of complex cyber-physical systems. His research encompasses the theory underpinning large-scale systems such as smart buildings, communities and cities—work that will be crucial in ensuring the efficient use of energy to reduce carbon emissions.

That's not just a matter of having energy-efficient cooling systems, though. Rather, energy efficiency must be built into a design that actively considers carbon requirements because there's a price associated with carbon.

"This cost needs to be considered in the individual control and optimization of each agent—that is, for example, a single room or a small building—and the

community-wide control and optimization," Shi says, noting each layer of such a hierarchical system must be co-ordinated with the others.

Putting this into context, he points to the example of a smart community, which has interconnected controls and technology designed to maximize energy efficiency. If such a community has renewable energy integrated into its grid—for example wind farms and solar panels—there will at times be an intermittent supply of electricity due to weather conditions.

The remote, artificial intelligence-enabled control systems he's working on can balance out those fluctuations so that those communities are only using power

SEE CLIMATE SMARTS P.2

Inclusivity + ingenuity + opportunity = Inspire STEM program



Damian

Fostering diversity and inclusivity in science, technology, engineering and math.

BY ANNE TOLSON

For Daniela Damian, creating a unique program aimed at strengthening student retention among underrepresented groups in STEM disciplines has been a bit like launching a startup company.

Called "Inspire: STEM for Social Impact," Damian's program will provide students in the Faculties of Engineering and Computer Science and Science with paid co-op opportunities in which small teams work with industry mentors to develop solutions that address real-life

challenges in local communities.

The program targets students from historically underrepresented groups—encompassing gender, Indigeneity, race and ability.

"I'm building a team, bringing in lots of funding, identifying community projects, building industry partnerships and doing marketing," says Damian, director of the program. "I feel like I'm launching a startup—it's been scary but also very exciting!"

To start, the Inspire program will prioritize students in first and second year because that's where the numbers show the biggest decline, especially among women, says Damian, a software engineer and professor in UVic's computer science department. "We want to catch these students before they lose interest by giving them an opportunity to make

a difference outside the classroom and in collaboration with industry."

This May, the program's first cohort will be divided into teams of four students—called Apprentice Garage team members—who work with an industry partner to solve a problem identified as an issue in the community. Damian says projects will have a social impact, in areas such as environmental and social sustainability. The program will also hire senior STEM students as part-time, paid Ambassadors—one for each team—who will coach the more junior students.

Damian has already attracted significant support from industry, the community and UVic, totalling about \$1 million in funding. The largest funder is IBM, which is contributing \$500,000 over

SEE INSPIRE STEM, P.3

ringers

The City of Victoria has announced its 2022 Youth Poet Laureate: undergraduate **Eli Mushumanski**, a writing major completing an English honours degree, will be the 10th person and third UVic student to hold this position. During their one-year term, they will be mentored by current Victoria Poet Laureate and writing alumnus **John Barton**. Mushumanski’s duties will include presenting new work at various events and organizing a youth poetry festival. “In the past couple of years, poetry has helped me turn inward and explore my relationship to myself. Now, as Youth Poet Laureate, I’d like to use poetry to look outward,” says Mushumanski. “In a time of great climate anxiety, I’m interested in how art can help us reclaim our responsibility to nature rather than simply escape it.”

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Join the conversation and contribute to the Equity Action Plan

Join the conversation and have a say in what equity, inclusion and anti-racism look like on campus. The university Equity Action Plan (EAP) consultation and engagement process launched on Jan. 19, and will continue over the next four months. All faculty, staff and students are encouraged to participate.

“We are committed to developing an outcome that provides our university with a set of goals and strategies to advance and embed equity, inclusion and anti-racism on our campus,” says Cassbreea Dewis, executive director, Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). “The plan will only be as strong as our community’s input and that’s why we want to hear from you.”

Since the outset of this project, a core strategy of creating the EAP has

been to think and do things differently. The consultation and engagement process demonstrates a commitment to equity-centred design and follows the creation and work of the Reflection and Challenge Committee (RCC). The RCC is a diverse group of leaders (faculty, staff and researchers) and experience experts (people with lived/living experience of barriers to equity, inclusion and belonging). The RCC has been instrumental in the development of the EAP engagement plan as we begin to frame the challenges and opportunities for change at UVic.

The consultation and engagement process provides an opportunity for the RCC to hear from the UVic community. “We, all together, are connected. We’re incredibly interdependent. All of our voices are

important in this process,” says RCC member and UVic PhD candidate Chelsea Thomas. “I strongly believe this plan cannot be completed without community voices,” says Mami Schouten, RCC member and equity, diversity and inclusion research officer.

Since the launch of the first phase of engagement on Jan. 19, over 800 online survey responses have been received. In this phase, the UVic community was asked how they would like to be consulted. Phase 2 will begin on Feb. 7 and provide the opportunity for the development of collective goals by asking the university community what they want equity to look like at UVic. In phase 3, the focus of engagement will be on identifying barriers to equity, diversity and inclusion by consulting

key stakeholders and providing opportunities for people to share their experiences and stories. Phase 4 will involve an opportunity for the campus community to give feedback on the plan’s goals and help identify the actions required to advance those goals.

Students, faculty, staff and other members of the UVic community are encouraged to take part in all phases of the engagement by participating in the conversation. Learn more about the consultation and engagement process and provide your feedback at uvic.ca/eap.

The development of the EAP builds on the shared vision, values and actions of the UVic Strategic Framework and our commitment to addressing barriers to meaningful equity, diversity and inclusion.

Hard truths about the ‘60s scoop

BY PHILIP COX

Author, community organizer and social justice advocate Colleen Hele-Cardinal, a Nehiyaw Iskwew from Onihcikiskowapowin Saddle Lake Cree First Nation Alberta, will share and reflect upon her experiences growing up in a non-Indigenous household as a ‘60s scoop adoptee on Feb. 9 at 6:30 p.m., when she joins Humanities Dean Annalee Lepp on a virtual stage for *Humanities Reads: Colleen Hele-Cardinal*, the keynote event of UVic’s fourth annual Humanities Week.

Hele-Cardinal is a co-founder of the National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network and a public figure who speaks candidly about the connections between murdered and missing Indigenous women, colonial violence, racism and the Indigenous child welfare system.

Her latest project, *In Our Own Words: Mapping the ‘60s Scoop Diaspora*, provides a mapping tool for visualizing the displacement of ‘60s scoop survivors across the globe, a platform to share personal stories

UVIC

Humanities Week

7-11 FEB 2022

and experiences and a database for survivors and their families looking to reconnect with one another.

At this event, she will read from her book, *Ohpikiihaakan-ohpihmeh (Raised somewhere else): A ‘60s Scoop Adoptee’s Story of Coming Home* and discuss the themes raised within it with Lepp before engaging in a live Q&A with the audience.

“*Ohpikiihaakan-ohpihmeh* powerfully confronts the legacy of colonialism in Canada by telling hard truths about the ‘60s scoop based on the author’s personal experiences,” says Lepp. “We are honoured to welcome



Hele-Cardinal. SUPPLIED PHOTO

Colleen Hele-Cardinal to UVic and to have this opportunity to listen and have a conversation with her about her work.”

Established in 2019, Humanities Week is an annual, weeklong series of events designed to showcase the critical and creative research of faculty and students in UVic’s Faculty of Humanities. This year’s other events include:

(Re)Claiming Voices: 6 Stories in 6 Objects
Feb 7 at 6:30 p.m.
A panel of scholars to share an eve-

ryday object with its own story to tell about marginalized voices, concealed histories, or resistance and resurgence.

The “Un-Essay” Competition
Feb 9 at 6:30 p.m.
UVic Humanities students compete for top prizes by presenting their research through any creative form of expression that is not an essay.

All Humanities Week events are free, online and open to the public. ASL interpretation is also available upon request.

uvic.ca/humanitiesweek

CLIMATE SMARTS

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

from conventional, often carbon-producing grids when absolutely necessary, and supplying power back to those grids when they have an excess of renewable electricity.

These complex dynamic systems make real-time adjustments not just based on the control algorithms cre-

ated by Shi and his colleagues, but on machine learning and AI that can make predictions based on information that is collected.

“The goal of real-time control is to solve problems in milliseconds,” says Shi, a mechanical engineering professor and Highly Cited Researcher who

has won outstanding teaching awards and UVic’s Craigdarroch Silver Medal for Excellence in Research.

Shi’s research has other less obvious environmental links. His work could also be used to co-ordinate a squadron of unmanned aerial vehicles—UAVs or drones—to be used in conjunction with ground-based robots to deliver urgent aid in case of disasters where people are cut off from emergency responders, such as in a scenario similar to the catastrophic flooding seen across BC in mid-November.

Whatever research he’s working on, Shi favours bringing the latest knowledge into the classroom and to work on solutions to global problems with an international community of scientists including in research areas of control engineering, communications and energy systems.

What’s a complex cyber-physical system? The physical part ranges from individual buildings or HVAC systems to entire interconnected communities while cyber refers to cloud-based, machine learning-powered AI controls that direct the physical side.

Creating these systems is a hugely complicated endeavour involving

researchers around the world advancing their own and one another’s work. That’s why Shi is an often-cited expert in his field, he’s also a leader in the areas of networked and distributed control systems, advanced model predictive control and industrial cyber-physical systems.

To foster and support international collaboration among researchers and engineers, Shi helped start the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Conference on Industrial Cyber-Physical Systems, with UVic hosting the latest edition in May 2021. IEEE states it is the world’s largest technical professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity.

Shi’s research is supported by National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Mitacs and the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

UVic researchers focus on examining the personal, social and environmental costs of technology and improving health, communications and security for people around the globe as outlined in *Aspiration 2030*, the university’s research and creative works strategy.

UVIC

THE RING

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The University of Victoria's community newspaper

uvic.ca/news

The University of Victoria acknowledges and respects the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and ɥsáŋeɥ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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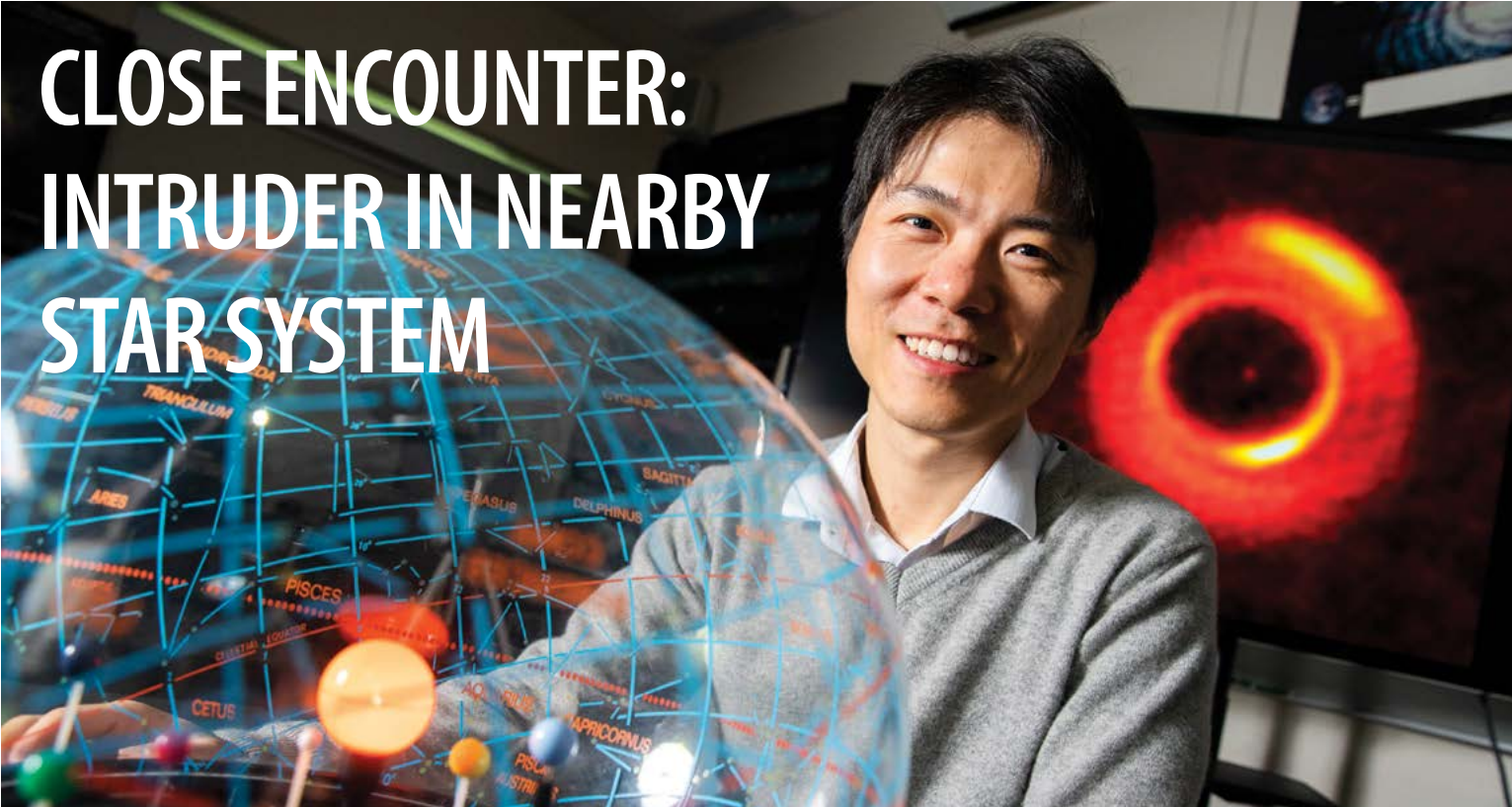
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Ruobing Dong. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

BY DOROTHY EGGENBERGER

Rare stellar flyby event caught in action

How do we uncover the galactic past of our solar system? Its history is long gone—searching for it here is like sifting through a burned village after a fire. Instead, scientists look to other early solar systems to find the clues to our history. University of Victoria astronomer Ruobing Dong looks to the Z Canis Majoris (Z CMa) solar system—where he has made a breakthrough discovery.

Together with an international research team, Dong uncovered the first evidence of a stellar flyby disturbing the protoplanetary disk—or birthplace of planets—using the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) and the Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array (JVLA). The intruder object came in close proximity to and interacted with the environment surrounding the binary protostar, causing

the formation of chaotic, stretched-out streams of dust and gas in the disk.

Few convincing direct observations have ever been made, and until now, these events have remained largely theoretical. Flybys happen fast so it is difficult to catch them in action.

“People have long speculated that lightning could cause forest fires. To prove that hypothesis, you would have to record the moment lightning strikes a tree and lights it. What we have done with our ALMA and JVLA observations is equivalent to capturing lighting striking a tree,” explains Dong.

Scientists have speculated flyby events on a few young star systems before however; those suspected “intruders” might have been bound to the primary stars. Stars are born in clusters and will experience close encounters with one another as their orbits settle.

“In other words,” explains Dong, “we may be observing siblings within one family of stars playing with each other. Many stars are born in twins, triplets, or multiples. Interactions

among siblings are different in nature and have different consequences from interactions with other star families.”

By examining the changes in Z CMa’s disk morphology—essentially flyby fingerprints—the team was able to identify the intruder, offering the most comprehensive evidence of an intruder flyby event to date.

The meeting place of the theoretical and observational is key to this discovery. Dong and co-author Hau-Yu Baobab Liu (Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics at Academia Sinica) were looking for evidence of gravitational instability in Z CMa system when they discovered the flyby. Meanwhile Nicolas Cuello (Université Grenoble Alpes) had just published new simulations of flybys in protoplanetary disks—which looked exactly like what Dong and Liu had observed.

Dong happened to be giving talks at Universidad de Chile and the ALMA headquarters in 2019 when he saw Cuello. “I was like ‘Nico, I think I saw something you just simulated!’” remembers Dong, “And he was like

‘Great! Let’s compare the models with observations’. From there we finally settled on the flyby scenario. Sometimes, good things happen when people talk.”

Armed with new evidence the planet pioneers plan to investigate the frequency of flybys and how important such events are to the planet formation processes in circumstellar disks. “The two stars in the Z CMa binary systems are both experiencing accretion outbursts,” says Dong, “Previous theoretical models suggest that flyby events may trigger stellar accretion outbursts. Could this idea be further tested in the Z CMa system, as now we have a specific flyby event example?”

The team may also investigate the nature of the intruder object. It is yet to be seen at infrared wavelengths: is it an extremely young stellar object whose emission concentrate at ALMA and JVLA wavelengths or a star with an edge on disk so that it is obscured at optical and infrared wavelengths?

The answer lies in a galaxy far, far away.

UVic continues as a top sustainability performer

According to the 2021 Sustainable Campus Index, released in November 2021, UVic continues to be a post-secondary sustainability leader. The Sustainable Campus Index recognizes top-performing universities and colleges who participate in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) and is released annually. UVic has continuously improved its STARS submissions, which are assessed every three years, and earned gold-level ratings each time (69.7% in 2014; 76.70% in 2017; and 80.17% in 2020).

In the 2021 Index UVic received high marks in three areas: coordination and planning, innovation and leadership, and transportation.

Coordination and planning

UVic received a score of 100 per cent in sustainability coordination and planning, showing that success starts with a great plan. This category includes

initiatives and governance practices that foster sustainability at an institutional level through strategic planning for sustainable futures. Examples include the work of the Sustainability Advisory Committee, Staff Sustainability Network and Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability, which works with students, faculty and staff across campus to meet the goals and actions set out in the Sustainability Action Plan.

In addition, UVic’s Community Associations Liaison Committee works with neighbouring community associations to develop mutually supportive relationships, share information and resolve concerns.

Innovation and leadership

UVic was recognized for the innovation of its Joint Degree Program in Canadian Common Law and Indigenous Legal Orders (JD/JID), where students combine the study of Cana-

dian Common Law with engagement with Indigenous laws to develop a deep understanding of Indigenous law and governance. As part of the program, students spend a full term immersed in community-led field schools, observing the ways in which Indigenous legal processes are being applied and working with communities on law-related projects.

Transportation

UVic is a top-ten performer for sustainable transportation with a STARS score of 79.7 per cent. This is due in large part to the university’s efforts to support low carbon energy and power technology in its motorized fleet, and the goals of the Sustainability Action Plan: Campus Operations 2020-2021 to increase sustainable transportation methods to 70 per cent of the total trips to and from campus. In the 2018 campus traffic survey, sustainable transportation methods such as

walking, cycling, transit and carpooling made up 63 per cent of all trips to campus.

UVic supports sustainable commuting through its Travel Choices program by providing student and employee transit pass programs, an All Ages and Abilities infrastructure and amenities for cyclists, and sustainable driving options for days when a vehicle is needed. Level-two electric vehicle charging stations—including 10 new stations in lots 1 and 4—are located across campus, and UVic has partnerships with two car share programs: Modo and Evo.

STARS is a voluntary framework used by colleges and universities to measure, report and strengthen their contributions to global sustainability. It is used by over 1,000 institutions internationally and is administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

around the ring

President’s welcome back to in-person instruction

“One of the best things about UVic is how we care about and support each other. We are strong in our commitment to make our campus a safe and vibrant place to learn, teach and work,” wrote UVic President Kevin Hall in a Jan. 25 message about the return to in-person instruction at UVic.

Complete message: bit.ly/22-note-uvic.ca/return-to-campus

United Way campaign update—the time to give is now!

Have you been waiting for the Zumba or Plasma Car events to give to the UVic United Way campaign? Once again, we are having to postpone in-person events due to health and safety considerations this year. Although plans are underway for other fun, socially distanced giving opportunities, please don’t wait to give. Help us reach our goal of \$280,000 by March 30. COVID continues to have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable people in our cities and you can help! Show your local love through a one-time donation or by signing up for payroll deductions. More information: bit.ly/22-uway

ringers

Congratulations to School of Music professor **Anthony Tan** on winning the 2021 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music for his composition “Ways of Returning.” Presented annually by the Canada Council for the Arts, the \$7,500 Léger Prize encourages professional composers to create avant-garde music and foster performance by Canadian ensembles. Tan—who joined music in 2020—draws artistic influence from conceptual metaphors, an attention to sound’s psychophysical experiences and a reflection on music’s cultural context; his winning composition is an 18-minute work for amplified string quartet and electronics, commissioned by Montreal’s Quatuor Bozzini and E27 musique nouvelles. Audiences will have the chance to hear his music in person when he performs as part of the Faculty Concert Series on February 12, fellow professor Christopher Butterfield and Banting Fellow Taylor Brook.

INSPIRE STEM

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

five years, marking the first time the company has supported a Canadian university in following its Apprentice Garage model. Inspire has already attracted 30 industry and community partners.

“I’ve been quite overwhelmed by the positive response from the community,” says Damian. “I’ve felt so empowered by the enthusiasm of the partners, as much as I hope to empower the program participants.”

Damian’s motivation to create the program was sparked by her own research. During her 20 years at UVic, she has studied the human reasons projects developed by software engineering teams succeed or fail. Along with effective communication, she believes the most innovative and successful teams are those that reflect society’s diversity.

“This is what I’ve been interested in for many years and I’m at the point

now where I really want to have a broader impact,” she says. “I saw this program as an opportunity to have that kind of wide-reaching effect.”

Damian is working with UVic’s Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives (where she is cross-appointed) to create a project with a community partner in a country such as Nepal, Japan or Sri Lanka. Next year, she expects to include high school students in the program.

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2021 REACH AWARDS

RECOGNIZING RESEARCH & TEACHING EXCELLENCE

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS

Harry Hickman Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching and Educational Leadership



McGuire. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Erin McGuire

Associate Teaching Professor |
Department of Anthropology

Erin McGuire believes teaching is best when it is flexible, experimental, experiential, universal and unsettling. In the words of students and peers, she is an exceptional teacher who inspires and is deeply committed to inclusivity, and addresses pressing cultural issues using anti-racist and decolonizing approaches. As an archeologist, she brings experiential learning alive, combining hands-on experiences, teamwork, communication and reflection in creating unique community-engaged partnerships, such as working with members of the local Jewish community to map cemeteries. McGuire is also renowned for her leadership and innovation in the use of learning technologies, and in the mentoring and training of graduate teaching assistants.

Gilian Sherwin Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching



Personn. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Tim Personn

Sessional Lecturer | Department of English

Tim Personn is committed to student-centred teaching design and active learning. A sessional instructor in the Department of English and in the Academic and Technical Writing program, he views learning as a social and interactive activity. He ensures his classroom—whether online or in person, asynchronous or in real time—is a vibrant space where students are engaged to explore, make mistakes and learn. He inspires confidence in students through providing incremental learning tasks with feedback, leading to crucial assignments. Personn exemplifies innovative and inclusive online teaching practices by creating discussion forums through which students develop critical listening and assessment skills to navigate complex conversations.

Award for Excellence in Teaching for Experiential Learning



Burke

Dr. Brendan Burke

Professor | Department of Greek and
Roman Studies

Brendan Burke has developed impressive student learning experiences, which come only from exposure to travelling and living in Greece. The UVic in Greece program, oriented toward experiential teaching and learning through travel, culminated in the immersive UVic's Semester in Greece program in 2017 and 2019. In addition, Burke has led a research-engaged training program that blends archaeological practice and research methodologies with cultural competencies in his excavation work in central Greece. Working in partnership with the Canadian Institute in Greece, his field schools provide a training ground for future archaeologists and ethically minded global citizens. Burke continuously strives to reduce barriers and increase access to fieldwork and on-site learning. His unwavering commitment to transformative experiences drives our understanding of the past and prepares socially engaged leaders for a sustainable future.

Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research-Enriched Teaching



Rosenberg. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Lisa Rosenberg

Professor | Department of Chemistry

Lisa Rosenberg is an inspiring teacher and mentor who integrates nuanced analytical reasoning about her own and others' research into the classroom at every opportunity. She has contributed in a pivotal way in the restructuring of the departmental curriculum to support students in thinking like researchers and becoming "chemical thinkers." She initiated the successful Inorganic Chemistry Exchange program, a national network that sees students move across the country to take part in intensive research experiences. Rosenberg combines scientific excellence with a profound commitment to student success through the development of critical-thinking tools that graduates carry with them throughout their careers.

Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Supervision and Mentorship



García-Barrera. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Mauricio Garcia-Barrera

Associate Professor | Department of
Psychology

Mauricio Garcia-Barrera is an exemplary supervisor and graduate advisor who has mentored 14 graduate students and served on numerous dissertation committees. His students describe his approach to research as infectious, creating an environment that fosters critical thinking, creativity and engaged dialogue. Garcia-Barrera's Cortex lab is an inclusive and supportive space, incorporating peer review feedback and collaboration. He has published peer-reviewed articles with 30 student co-authors in top psychology journals and serves as an associate editor on the journal *Psychological Assessment*. Garcia-Barrera further supports his students in their teaching professions, assisting with course design and lecture development, which has led to his students receiving national teaching excellence awards.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARDS

David H. Turpin Gold Medal for Career Achievement in Research



Leadbeater. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater

Professor | Department of Psychology

Bonnie Leadbeater is among the first scholars in the world to shine a light on differences in how children, adolescents and young adults respond to experiences of adversities such as bullying, teenage pregnancy, mental illness and substance use. Her work illuminates children's strengths and their contexts of support. She has also created innovative and far-reaching programs to prevent adversities. As just one example of her innovation and impact, the WITS Programs for the prevention of bullying are authored and evaluated by Leadbeater and are used in elementary schools across Canada; and they've been tailored for francophone and Indigenous communities in Canada as well as for schools in Brazil. Leadbeater's rigorous research and knowledge mobilization help mental health practitioners, governments and health authorities to improve the daily lives and well-being of children and youth.

Silver Medal for Excellence in Research



Cleves. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Rachel Cleves
Professor | Department of History

Rachel Hope Cleves believes that we need a deep understanding of history if we want to develop effective solutions for contemporary problems. She sees things other people don't want to, follows trails nobody else can find and examines issues in the history of sexuality that challenge contemporary cultural norms, like age-differentiated sex in the 19th and 20th centuries and same-sex marriage in early America. It's a testament to the excellence of her research that in spite of the difficult subjects she chooses, her articles and books are published by the most prestigious academic journals and presses. By challenging us to reflect on the historical moment in which we live, she is shaping creative intellectual engagement among the next generations—the ones who will make our future.

Award for Excellence
in Knowledge Mobilization



Stanger-Ross. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross
Professor | Department of History

Jordan Stanger-Ross addresses social wounds, political injustices and layered identities. As the head of a nation-wide partnership, he revealed the hidden motives and moral failures that led to the dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. His team documented resistance to the policies and the legacies of the destruction of home. The result is Landscapes of Injustice, a model of how knowledge can be shared with the people who need it. Families and scholars now have life histories, analyses of land titles and law and broader reflections on racialized dispossession in settler-colonial societies. Museum exhibitions and school resources have taught Canadians to think in new ways about home, citizenship and injustice. A research database holds curated files for every one of the 22,000 interned people. Stanger-Ross brought into public discussion a new history of Canada's historic injustices against a marginalized people.

Award for Excellence
in Research Partnerships



Helbing. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES



Bright. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Dr. Caren Helbing
Department of Biochemistry and
Microbiology

Dr. Doug Bright
Practice Leader, Environmental Risk
Assessment – Hemmera

No more tracking, trapping and tagging. Hooked on their passion for detecting and protecting species at risk, Caren Helbing and Doug Bright of Hemmera developed a quick, easy and, crucially, reliable method to collect and test for environmental DNA—with just a scoop of water. All animals shed DNA into their environments and now, with the environmental DNA technologies advanced and optimized by Helbing and Hemmera, environmental managers and citizen scientists can more easily determine what kinds of animals live where. Together, Helbing and Bright are making it possible to locate endangered animals without disturbing their habitat and to get early warning of invasive species. Scientists, industry and governments have been freed from unreliable data with this innovative tool—and Helbing and Hemmera are transforming the possibilities of sustainability and conservation.

Andy Farquharson Teaching Excellence
Awards for Graduate Students

Erin Chewter
Department of Political Science

Erin Chewter's approach to teaching is inclusive and non-judgmental. As a TA, she ensured that all students had support to succeed. To that end, Chewter developed detailed support materials for students. As one of her nominators states, "Erin clearly places a high priority on helping students hone their academic skills towards success in their current programs at Uvic and beyond."



Chewter. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Allie MacIlroy
Department of Greek and Roman Studies

"Unfailingly constructive, concrete and detailed feedback," and "handled sensitive material adeptly and sensitively" demonstrate the range of Allie MacIlroy's capabilities as a TA. "Unflappable professionalism," though, sums up her overall approach to her work, which was strongly evident during the shift to online learning. Students felt highly supported due to MacIlroy's regular communication, patience and overall help as they navigated the new learning terrain.



MacIlroy. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

Brooklynn Comish-Trimble
Department of Economics

Brooklynn Comish-Trimble's approach to supporting students is framed by her quiet confidence and approachability. Empathetic, creative and scholarly are just a few of the words that nominators used to describe Comish-Trimble's caring and supportive nature. Students emphasized that she always held their work to high standards while providing ample support and including personal research experiences to enrich the course content.



Comish-Trimble. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

"These awards recognize our exceptional faculty and graduate students, who are dedicated to the highest standards of teaching, research and creative activity. This year's distinguished honourees are inspiring teachers and ground-breaking researchers, whose work is driving critical social, economic and environmental change here in our community and across our world.

Thank you and congratulations to all the award recipients and nominees for your passion, commitment, and leadership."

—Uvic President and Vice-Chancellor Kevin Hall, PhD

The Reach Awards will be celebrated in an online ceremony on Friday, Feb. 18, hosted by Vice-President Academic and Provost Valerie Kuehne, Vice-President Research and Innovation Lisa Kalynchuk and President Kevin Hall. Recipients of the Provost's Award in Engaged Scholarship will also be honoured during this event.

Transformative filmmaking

BY PHILIP COX

The story of Agnes—known to many as the locus classicus of sociological research about transgender people—has been interpreted in many ways for many purposes, but never in the way that it’s told in a new feature-length documentary by award-winning filmmaker and UVic gender studies scholar Chase Joynt.

The film premiered Jan. 22 at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival. On Jan. 28, Joynt’s film was announced as the winner of both the Audience Award: NEXT, and the NEXT Innovator Award.

“*Framing Agnes* challenges assumptions about historical or archival truth while examining the pressures put on trans people to tell and perform certain kinds of truths for safety and access to services that others take for granted,” says Joynt, who directed, co-wrote and produced the film.

“Everyone performs different truths for different reasons and to different ends. Here we try to show how even sociological studies and film documentaries can act as a sort of playground of fictions that naturalize some ways of being at the expense of others.”

Although the film centres around Agnes—who entered a study about sex disorders at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1958 under false pretenses to gain access to the gender-affirming care she needed—it also tells the never-before-heard stories of five other gender non-conforming people who were involved in the study but ultimately excluded from the published research and, thus, the historical record.

These stories are vividly realized by an all-star cast of trans actors, including celebrated artist and filmmaker Zackary Drucker, producer of the Golden Globe- and Emmy Award-winning show *Transparent* and the

Emmy-nominated series *This is Me*, and the indomitable Angelica Ross, most well-known for her roles on the FX television series *American Horror Story: 1984* and *Pose*, and as a model for Louis Vuitton.

Joynt began filming *Framing Agnes* shortly after arriving at UVic in 2019. Research for the film, however, began five years earlier after he received a Mellon Fellowship for Arts Practice and Scholarship at the University of Chicago to work with US sociologist Kristen Schilt. Through that grant, the two gained access to the private archive of Harold Garfinkel, one of the doctors who had worked with Agnes at UCLA.

“Kristen and I always knew that there was more to Agnes’ story,” Joynt states. “We understood that she was being framed by Garfinkel in a very particular way, to fit within the research framework he was developing. So, to find records of her words in his archive was an opportunity to imagine what else could have come from their encounter, and to consider what might exist beyond that frame.”

Refusing the frame

What makes *Framing Agnes* unique is the way in which Joynt’s documentary refuses any authority over its subjects, choosing instead to juxtapose reenactments of the interviews found in Garfinkel’s files with contemporaneous representations of gender non-conforming people in the media and outtakes of the actors attempting to understand the individuals they portray and the historical context in which they lived.

The result is a sort of mosaic of ideas about trans lives and trans-ness that are set in conversation with and against one another, undermining any past or present claim to a homogeneous trans experience, identity or culture.



Joynt (left), in character as UCLA sociologist Harold Garfinkel, on the set of *Framing Agnes* alongside Zackary Drucker (right), who plays Agnes. PHOTO: DONALD SCHERSCHLIGT

“As a filmmaker, I steadfastly believe that if you are making a documentary that matters, you must be willing to lose control over your story,” adds Joynt. “One of the ways in which I tried to do that with *Framing Agnes* is through collaboration with other trans artists and scholars, in an attempt to disrupt the solo-authored authority that has long controlled Agnes’ history.”

Joynt used a similar technique in his last feature film, *No Ordinary Man*, which rallies a community of trans masculine artists to rescue the life story of 20th century jazz artist and trans cultural icon Billy Tipton from tabloid tragedians, restoring his legacy as a loving father and talented musician after decades of sensationalist misrepresentation by the mainstream media.

Co-directed with Aisling Chin-Yee, *No Ordinary Man* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and was then placed on their Canadian Top 10 of 2020 list. The following year, it was named one of the Best Movies of 2021 by *The New Yorker*, which praised it as “a genre unto itself.”

This collaborative method is one that Joynt also brings into the classroom, as for example in his fall 2021 course GNDR 349: Feminist Art Field School, co-taught with Michelle Jacques, chief curator for the rRemainModern museum in Saskatoon, in partnership with the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

Through an ongoing series of dialogues with artists, curators, scholars and museum practitioners, the course led undergraduate students to discern ways in which art institutions have

supported oppressive practices, and to examine their potential for enacting social change.

“In his films and in his teaching and research, Chase Joynt reaches across genres, mediums and institutions to generate radically new forms of knowledge and creative possibility,” says Alexandra D’Arcy, associate dean of research in UVic’s Faculty of Humanities. “He is an artist and an intellectual of world-class calibre.”

The film’s premiere was supported in part by the Faculty of Humanities and the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation.

The feature-length film builds on a shorter, previously released version of the same name, which premiered at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival.

More info: festival.sundance.org or framingagnes.com

An ocean of beauty and discovery

Pathbreaking biologist who helped conceive and direct UVic’s VENUS undersea observatory named an officer of the Order of Canada.

BY RICHARD DAL MONTE

Verena Tunnicliffe had her first encounter with the ocean when she was seven and held it in the palm of her hand.

She hadn’t yet seen the sea when her mother gave her a box covered with shells, and as she examined their varied shapes and swirls and ridges in

their home in landlocked Deep River, Ontario, they might as well have been fragments of an asteroid, for they represented to her an unknowable world filled with alien species.

“I loved the shapes,” says Tunnicliffe, a UVic biology professor emerita. “At first, it was just a curiosity item but, gradually, I began to realize ... the things were beautiful. And that stayed with me all my life, the beauty of the ocean. But also that things had a form—you wonder how they get that way. And so that’s what sparks the imagination.”

That imagination fired a passion that saw her build a childhood collection of shells in the shallow space under her bed; dig in the mudflats of the Bay of Fundy—for three sum-

mers—while a student at McMaster; and study coral reefs off Jamaica.

And it drew her, eventually, to Vancouver Island, from which she explored the deep, dark fjords—730 metres down—off the BC coast in submersibles and began a four-decade career in deep-sea exploration.

For that career, marked by scientific discovery and leadership in ocean research, Tunnicliffe was, in December, named an officer of the Order of Canada.

‘Pretty crazy endeavours’

Tunnicliffe, who conceived and directed development of Ocean Networks Canada’s VENUS Cabled Observatory on the floor of the Salish Sea, says she’s appreciative of receiving Canada’s



Tunnicliffe takes a sea lion skull from the collection basket of a remotely operated vehicle. PHOTO: CHERISSE DU PREEZ

highest civilian honour but shares the acclaim with colleagues.

“The honour is given to one person but there’s a whole team of people behind you,” Tunnicliffe says.

“It’s just impossible to do the kind of work I do without that team of colleagues and students. But particularly important are the people who have enabled all of that work along the way, which includes the University of Victoria administration, who supported me a lot in some pretty crazy endeavours, because I took some chances.”

One of those chances was the expedition that would lead to discovery of “hot vents” on the ocean floor and the establishment of Endeavour Hydrothermal Vents Marine Protected Area, a deep-sea habitat and Canada’s first marine protected area.

It’s appropriate, or least consistent, that she credits colleagues for the accomplishments that have marked her career, for the thing she has studied over and over is how different species work together.

“You can gradually build a picture

of how the community works and... can begin to analyze how the communities have evolved,” she says.

Different species must work together

Relationships and interdependence among species are a crucial piece of her research work to this day as she looks at how they could be affected by deep-sea mining and resource extraction. She’s currently writing a paper about the western Pacific Ocean, looking at how animals differ from New Zealand to Japan and other locations, and how they’re connected.

But the species she’s most concerned about right now lives above the waves.

“The more we modify environments and take out of our ecosystems, the harder it’s going to be for future generations of humans to meet their needs,” she says, adding, “I feel pretty strongly that we tend to be a species that really has to hit the crisis before it starts doing something.”

Full story: bit.ly/22-verena

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LAFAYETTE STRING QUARTET PLANS FINAL PERFORMANCES



The Lafayette String Quartet (from left): Joanna Hood, Sharon Stanis, Pam Highbaugh Aloni, Ann Elliott-Goldschmid. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

BY JOHN THRELFALL

A Detroit McDonald's may be the most unlikely place to start the story of UVic's internationally acclaimed chamber music ensemble, yet under the golden arches is precisely where the newly formed Lafayette String Quartet (LSQ)—violinists Ann Elliott-Goldschmid and Sharon Stanis, violist Joanna Hood and cellist Pamela Highbaugh Aloni—had made the decision to pursue a career as a professional string quartet in 1986.

Now, with over a dozen albums and a thousand appearances worldwide behind them, the members of UVic's multiple award-winning Lafayette String Quartet have announced their decision to retire as a performance ensemble in August 2023.

"We just thought we'd do this for two or three years, but here we are over 35 years later—and what an experience we've had," says Highbaugh Aloni. "But great things have to stop at some point, and this feels like the natural time to finish."

A passionate commitment as artists and teachers

Since accepting the newly created artists-in-residence position at UVic's School of Music in 1991, the LSQ and UVic have continued to create musical history for over 35 years.

"Supporting the world's only all-female string quartet with its original members is a distinct rarity, and we are extremely proud of their accomplishments," notes Acting Vice Prov-

ost Susan Lewis, who, as former dean of UVic's Faculty of Fine Arts and former director of the music school, has known the LSQ for 20 years. "The quartet has transformed the teaching of chamber music at UVic, training and mentoring a generation of over 400 string musicians and developing the master's of music in string quartet performance—the only program of its kind in Canada."

Not only has the LSQ enhanced UVic's reputation, it has also played an essential role in Greater Victoria's extended music community, as both musicians and champions of public-school string programs, as well as bolstering Canada's chamber music reputation and legacy.

"The Lafayette Quartet helped put UVic on the map as a string and chamber music destination by setting an internationally recognized standard of excellence," says Alexis Luko, current music director.

A musical lineage of performance and teaching

Named for both the street and early home of two of their members (the Lafayette Towers on Detroit's Lafayette Avenue), the LSQ's musical lineage is far more vaunted: among their own musical mentors were the Cleveland String Quartet and the noted Russian violinist Rostislav Dubinsky, founder of the Borodin Quartet, who had the unique opportunity of working directly with famed 20th-century Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

Indeed, one of the LSQ's career highlights—along with performing

the complete Beethoven cycle of string quartets and the full Mozart quartets and quintet cycles—was the unique performance of a chronological cycle of Shostakovich's 15 string quartets over a series of five concerts at UVic in 2017.

"The great thing about being in a string quartet is that it's repertoire-driven: it's the music that we play that makes being in a string quartet worthwhile," notes Elliott-Goldschmid. "Our career took such a rich trajectory with teaching—had we been strictly a performing group, we would have gotten through much more repertoire—but our role models were always great musicians who taught."

Highbaugh Aloni agrees. "Teaching enhances so much of our playing; one of my own teachers said you don't really learn how to play until you can teach. We have all benefited from being teachers; it really affected how we play individually and as performers."

The senior string quartet in Canada

From their earliest days as a quartet, the LSQ earned both praise and international attention, which continued throughout their career.

"They are never less than amazing," says James Campbell, who has known the LSQ since he performed with them—on Dubinsky's recommendation—for his debut faculty concert at Indiana University's Jacob School of Music in 1988. Dubbed "Canada's premier clarinetist," Campbell has since performed with and booked

the LSQ numerous times at Ontario's acclaimed Festival of the Sound, of which he has been artistic director since 1985.

"They were definitely unique as one of the only all-female quartets, but it was their spirit that set them apart," he recalls. "They've been together through children, through illnesses, through injuries, through all the ups and downs of a musical career, which are many. Most quartets have players that come and go—the name continues but the personnel change—but the Lafayette are united as sisters: it's unique and quite amazing."

In addition to their musical and teaching legacy, the LSQ also created the annual Lafayette Health Awareness Series in 2005 to provide expert information on various health topics ranging from COVID and aging well to brain health and breast cancer—the latter of which both inspired the series and profoundly impacted the LSQ, following a 2001 diagnosis and treatment for one of its members.

As such, music and well-being have become integral to the daily lives of the LSQ—from their own practice and health to both their students and the audience members with whom they share their music.

A generational legacy

For Allana Lindgren, the dean of UVic's Faculty of Fine Arts, the ensemble represents the pinnacle of performance and pedagogical rigour.

"The members of the LSQ have been inspiring role models of elegance, intelligence and artistic brilliance

throughout their impressive careers," says Lindgren. "They embody our guiding aspiration in fine arts to challenge our students to excel through our own passionate commitment to excellence as artists and teachers."

As they finalize plans for their final season—including the recording of five new commissions by female composers, among other performance projects—each member of the LSQ offers a more personal reflection on their legacy.

"We could never have dreamed of this adventure," says Highbaugh Aloni. "We've really had a great run."

Stanis agrees: "I just feel so blessed to have had such rich opportunities."

For her part, Elliott-Goldschmid looks to their impact on the local music scene. "There was chamber music here when we arrived, of course, but there's been such growth over the past 30 years...Victoria had incredibly fertile ground and we just helped to plant the seeds. We've made music with so many colleagues around the city over the years, and our students are now playing in chamber groups everywhere in Victoria and across the country."

It's this final thought that may well offer the best coda to the Lafayette String Quartet's legacy. Thanks to their dedicated mentorship, the LSQ is surrounded by a generation of student musicians who are now succeeding as peers in ensembles, symphonies and quartets of their own.

"It is so fulfilling to play with our former students," concludes Hood. "Nothing beats that."

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The Ring February 2022 Page 7

Reawakening cultural tattooing of the Northwest

BY TARA SHARPE

Ink marks paths through skin like rivers across the land. The indelible history of Indigenous tattooing, like the landscapes and waterways of traditional territories, can never be erased. Its significance reaches back through ancient time and ancestral connections, but its practice was banned in Canada in 1885 at the same time as the potlatch.

A growing resurgence in Indigenous tattooing in BC is reclaiming and reviving traditional techniques, as well as traditional rights to be tattooed. At Legacy Art Gallery Downtown (630 Yates Street) through April 9, *Body Language: Reawakening Cultural Tattooing of the Northwest* takes an intimate look at cultural tattooing from the perspectives of five Indigenous tattoo artists: Dion Kaszas (Nlaka’pamux), Corey Bulpitt (Haida), Dean Hunt (Heiltsuk), Nahaan (Tlingit) and Nakkita Trimble (Nisga’a).

“This exhibition is important for Legacy programming because it provides space for the artists to talk about the revival of these ancient cultural tattooing practices and how these practices can provide healing to Indigenous People, especially to Indigenous youth through their reclamation,” says Lorilee Wastasecoot, Inineew (Cree) of Peguis First Nation, a UVic alumna and UVic’s curator of Indigenous art and engagement at Legacy Art Galleries.

From the perspectives of five artists

Body Language, on loan from the Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art, opened at Legacy Downtown with a Jan. 13 event featuring Kaszas, Nahaan and Trimble. Approximately 90 people tuned in on Zoom, with the artists touching upon how the tattooing practices of skin stitching and hand poking connect them to their respective cultures and personal identities.

“This exhibition has travelled to Haida Gwaii, Port Alberni, St. Albert and now to us in Victoria,” adds



The five artists of the *Body Language* exhibition. PHOTO: AARON LEON, 2017.

Wastasecoot. “We are grateful to Dion Kaszas and Beth Carter for curating such a beautiful exhibition and sending it out on the road for others to learn from.”

Also represented at Legacy is UVic alumna Asia Youngman (BA ’13), whose film further explores the revival of cultural tattooing.

“I fell in love with filmmaking”

Youngman is an award-winning Cree-Métis director and screenwriter who was born and raised on Coast Salish territory.

This Ink Runs Deep, which opened at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival, features six Indigenous tattoo artists including Kaszas and Trimble. It can be viewed in Legacy’s sidewalk gallery space along Broad Street.

“I think what connects all these artists is their love for their communities, their families and ultimately who they are as Indigenous People,” says

Youngman. “Tattoos are a beautiful way of symbolizing that and celebrate the growing pride that is happening across Canada as we reclaim these practices that were once taken away from us. So I’m really excited to have this film screen alongside the Body Language exhibit just so people can not only witness different tattoo methods but also hear about each of the artist’s journey into discovering, practicing and sharing these art forms.”

After graduating from UVic, Youngman secured a job with a provincial Indigenous health program aimed at wellness and upstream suicide prevention for youth. She worked on its online platform, which fortuitously involved video content.

“I took an interest in filming and editing, and went off with a camcorder and made some videos, and that’s how I fell in love with filmmaking.”

And that was it for her. She says she’s never looked back—except to re-

flect how she got here from there: “It’s kind of a random path to filmmaking but it kind of makes sense. I focused on psychology and sociology in my undergrad. The subject matter was really fascinating to me and I think I gained a really good understanding of people in terms of our complexities and why we do the things we do.”

“And even in the feature film I’m currently directing, there is a bit of overlap because we’re exploring topics like mob mentality. So, in a way, I feel that’s connected to my undergrad. And I think that’s partly why I chose to do the film, because I did gravitate towards those subject matters.”

Youngman graduated from Vancouver Film School in 2017 and, right after, worked on *Ant-man and the Wasp* and *Deadpool 2*.

This Ink Runs Deep garnered the Best Director and Best Short Film awards in 2021 at the Vancouver Short Film Festival and, just before

the pandemic, Youngman took home Best Short Documentary at the 2019 Calgary International Film Festival.

Addressing gaps in gender and cultural representation

Legacy staff have worked throughout the pandemic to continue to provide safe and welcoming opportunities for everyone to engage their artistic curiosity and learn more about Canadian, Indigenous and international art.

“This year, Legacy has many plans that see us working on major projects with three UVic faculties: education, social sciences and fine arts,” adds Mary Jo Hughes, Legacy’s director who is leaving her position at the end of February for a move to Galiano Island to paint full-time and continue to teach museum studies.

Read more on Youngman, *Body Language* and Legacy’s upcoming projects: bit.ly/3rf1ni4

legacy.uvic.ca

PHOENIX THEATRE

Adapting *The Waste Land* for the stage, 100 years after its literary debut

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Since its publication in 1922, T.S. Eliot’s landmark modernist poem *The Waste Land* has never ceased to be controversial. Inspired by the physical and emotional devastation of both the First World War and the global influenza pandemic, Eliot’s 433-line poem has spawned countless courses, studies, reviews and books. But, over the course of its 100-year life, *The Waste Land* has rarely been adapted for the stage—and usually only for solo performers.

Now, theatre professor Conrad Alexandrowicz has taken on the somewhat daunting task of directing and choreographing his own adaptation for a February 17-26 full-cast run at the Phoenix Theatre.

“This is not a play, and it completely ruptures all the rules of drama,” explains Alexandrowicz. “The attention of the poetic voice is constantly changing ... but I wanted to create continuity within the piece, so I’ve rearranged the text to create dialogue—which was really an amazing thing to do, as it works brilliantly and reveals meanings in an entirely different way. So yes, every single line he wrote will be spoken—sometimes more than once—but not necessarily in the order [he wrote them].” He pauses and laughs. “I’m sure T.S. Eliot would really hate that.”

No stranger to stirring strong emotions in his audiences, Alexandrowicz is a physical-theatre maker who specializes in the creation of interdisciplinary performances which address subjects central to the human journey: issues of relationship, gender and power, and the nature of the performance event itself. Given that *The Waste Land* has been described as “the most revolutionary poem of its time” and still has the ability to spark controversy a century after its publication, Alexandrowicz’s unconventional adaptation seems ideally suited to such nonconventional source material.

“We’ve never done this kind of abstract physical theatre at the Phoenix, so I’m really interested to see what people will think of this adaptation,” he says.

Working with a cast of 13 students plus four designers, Alexandrowicz is taking his creative cues from the poem itself. “In one scene, for example, Eliot quotes a song called ‘The Shakespearean Rag’—so we have a singer appear and the rest of the cast comes running on and suddenly we’re in a musical—then all that disappears and we go back to scene that was interrupted. I’m trying to embody and reveal as much as possible given the shifts within the text.”

Another aspect of this adaptation Eliot would likely hate is the fore-



Alexandrowicz on the set of *The Waste Land*. PHOTO: JOHN THRELFALL

grounding of the poem’s homosexual subtext, which offers a marked contrast to the poet’s famously disastrous first marriage. While studying in Paris as a young man, Eliot shared a rooming house with Jean Verdenal, a medical student who then died during WWI.

“There is very significant and convincing evidence that he was very much in love with this man,” says

Alexandrowicz, whose first book was *Acting Queer: Gender Dissidence and the Subversion of Realism*. “There are a lot of tensions in the text I’m trying to reveal. But, as a gay man, I really want to bring this relationship to the forefront and pull it out as a narrative thread people can follow.”

While he appreciates this adaptation may not satisfy Eliot purists, Alex-

androwicz insists that—much like *The Waste Land* itself—there’s meaning beyond what appears on the page.

“If you’re really exploring something, you’re going to create strong feelings in response to it,” he concludes. “I think, in these times of crisis, we should be trying to create vital drama.”

phoenixtheatres.ca