

APPLYING MATH TO ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS PAGE 3

THE RING

FEBRUARY 2023

The University of Victoria's
community newspaper

uvic.ca/news

University
of Victoria

SPEED READ

FORBES RANKING

One of Canada's best employers

In January, UVic was ranked one of Canada's top employers, placing 25th overall, according to Forbes magazine. "We are proud that UVic has been recognized in Forbes' Canada's Best Employers list as an industry leader offering an exceptional place to work," says AVP Human Resources, Kane Kilbey.

[tiny.cc/23-forbes](https://www.tiny.cc/23-forbes)

FEB. 6-10

UVic Humanities Week

Feb. 6-10 is Humanities Week, an annual week-long series of events that showcase the critical and creative research of our faculty and students, while provoking audiences to reflect on contemporary social topics. This year's theme, Food Matters, will explore the everyday, the controversial, the contested and the interconnected truths of food. Four free events showcasing UVic student and faculty research will be held online and in person.

uvic.ca/humanitiesweek



Buckley (at right) with UVic grad Anna Curtin. PHOTO: ARMANDO TURRA

Clean, safe drinking water

29%

OF THE WORLD'S
POPULATION
LACKED SAFE
DRINKING
WATER IN 2017,
ACCORDING TO
THE UNITED
NATIONS.

Improving water treatment systems for people and planetary health

BY RICHARD DAL MONTE

Clean water is a global concern.

Ensuring access to clean water for everyone on the planet increasingly requires sophisticated systems to make less-than-pristine water potable, or at least usable.

A UVic professor and her research partners were recently awarded a \$300,000 NSERC grant to ensure one popular system—reverse osmosis membrane technology (ROMT)—stays clean, safe and unclogged.

Heather Buckley, an associate profes-

sor of civil engineering and chemistry at UVic, explains that this type of filtration involves forcing water through a thin membrane that filters out contaminants or, in the case of ocean water, even salt. The challenge with such a system, she notes, is that microbes can grow on the surface of the membrane and fill its pores, causing the system to be less efficient—requiring more energy to push water through.

That's called biofouling, and chlorine is typically used to kill the microbes that cause it. But Buckley says that comes with negative side-effects, forming

harmful disinfection byproducts and damaging the RO membrane.

Buckley and the UVic Green Safe Water Lab are partnering with BI Pure Water—a Surrey, BC company that designs, manufactures and tests waste and water treatment systems—to develop sustainable, economical, safe chemicals that prevent the negative effects of biofouling in ROMT systems.

The goal is to help federal, provincial and municipal governments, First Nations communities, industry and remote work sites provide safe, reliable, sustainable water supply using ROMT.

While Buckley emphasizes that chlorination remains an effective water

SEE CLEAN, SAFE WATER, P.3

INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Puzzles from the Holocaust



Painting of Lea Perla Blumenfeld

BY PHILIP COX

The details were sparse, but the crux of the story was clear: Lea Perla Blumenfeld had been shot and killed by Nazis at a forced labour camp during the Holocaust—and one of her sons was forced to bury her.

Almost 80 years later, this was the story told to Lea Perla's great-granddaughter, Lisa Abram, the communications officer for UVic Libraries, by an older cousin during the week of mourning following Abram's father's death in late 2021.

As a third-generation Jewish Romanian-Canadian, Abram had been led by her parents to believe that no one on either side of her family was killed in the Holocaust. How had she never heard of this before, she wondered in a state of disbelief. And who was the son in the story?

Were it not for the fact that Abram was working with one of the university's leading

Holocaust Studies experts at the time, this may have been the end of the story, rather than the beginning. As it turned out, she was exactly the right person to solve these puzzles from the Holocaust, working in exactly the right place.

"I've always been curious," says Abram. "I liked to do puzzles as a kid. My dad would often hide one of the pieces from me—maybe to keep me curious and not give up when there was a piece missing. I think that gave me the interest and skill set to put all the pieces of this puzzle together."

Early efforts

Since childhood, Abram had wondered vaguely about her great-grandmother on her father's side, whose painted portrait had hung on her grandmother's apartment wall for decades. "It was the only image my grandmother had of her mother when she immigrated from Romania," Abram recalls.

The bits and pieces of her father's family history that she had picked up in her youth were enough to satisfy her then, but as an adult coming of age just prior to the advent of the internet, she gradually realized that her understanding of her ancestry was partial at best.

A turning point in her search almost came around 2016 when Abram's nephew asked about their family history, which prompted her to seek out information about the ancestral hometown online. The most promising result was an old memoir titled *My Dear Shtetl Mihaileni* that had been published just before the turn of the millennium.

Clearly a labour of love for a time gone by, the first-person narration walked its readers through the main street of the small *shtetl* (Yiddish for "town"), recall-

SEE HOLOCAUST, P. 6

global leadership

Top comprehensive university for private-sector research

Last month, UVic was named a Research University of the Year in the annual survey of Canadian research universities conducted by ReSearch Infosource, a consulting firm that focuses on the Canadian research and development ecosystem. UVic was the top-performing comprehensive university for funding by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), and was also the top comprehensive school in growing its private-sector research participation.

More: uvic.ca/rankings

LIBRARY RENOVATIONS



Over the next four months, the Mearns Centre for Learning–McPherson Library will be renovating its main service desk and expanding study space on the main floor. The UVic community can expect the following renovation outcomes:

- welcoming and centralized service area
- improved collaborative spaces between staff and students
- improved visibility of library services and clear sightlines
- expansion of main floor student study space
- improved functionality of staff workspace
- improved decolonized design

Noisy construction will be scheduled outside of library hours whenever possible. While noise will be kept to a minimal level, free earplugs and noise-dampening headphones are available at the Ask Us Desk that is temporarily relocated at the back of the building on the main floor.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE



UVic is celebrating student stories for UN International Day of Women and Girls in Science, with role models such as geography grad student Lauren Man (pictured above in the Southern Pacific Ocean) inspiring others to make a difference in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math. Visit uvic.ca/news on Feb. 11 to find out more.

Planning ahead for new mixed-use university district

UVic is planning for the development of a new mixed-use university district including housing and supporting commercial uses at the Ian Stewart Complex (3964 Gordon Head Road) and Campus Storage Facility (3957 Gordon Head Road).

The goals of the project are:

- To establish a potential mixed-use university district that provides new housing opportunities to support a more vibrant campus and surrounding community.
- To ensure a financially sustainable model for the university district that generates revenue to support university priorities.

New development will be aligned with the university's strategic priorities, generate revenue through housing and commercial uses and respond to pressing regional housing shortages.

Other academic institutions in British Columbia have successfully built university communities benefit-

ing university employees, students, and the community as well as providing new sources of revenue to support the university's academic mission.

Community engagement

Community engagement is an essential part of planning for a new mixed-use university district. The campus and neighbourhood engagement process will follow the university's Community Engagement Framework. Opportunities for future engagement will be shared broadly.

History of the site

The Ian Stewart Complex was UVic's primary recreation centre from 1991 to 2015. Remaining uses within the building include storage, office space, two academic laboratories and an ice arena. In 2015, UVic completed the Centre for Athletics Recreation and Special Abilities, meaning that almost all athletic uses were transferred to this new complex. The remaining ice arena was constructed in 1970 and is well beyond its estimated



Area map, with Ian Stewart Complex and the Campus Storage Facility highlighted in blue

life of 40 years. The university will be undertaking a planning and approval process for the project while also preparing decommissioning plans for existing facilities including the ice arena. This will provide time for existing users to transition programs

to other facilities.

The Campus Storage Facility, located adjacent to Field 8, is used to support campus operations. The building was completed in the 1980's and no longer meets the needs of the university.

UVIC

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uvic.ca/news

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

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PHILANTHROPY

\$2.5 million gift supports research on land, oceans and stars

BY SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

An unexpected and substantial legacy gift from the estate of renowned Calgarian and philanthropist Margaret (Marmie) Hess is supporting graduate and UVic post-doctoral researchers across the sciences. The gift created a \$2 million endowment to fund two graduate student awards, with the remaining \$500,000 funding research grants for post-doctoral fellows.

Marmie Hess was a great art lover, collector, philanthropist and volunteer throughout her long life. After she passed away in 2016, her legacy continued through the distribution of her substantial estate, which included bequests of important collections of art to the University of Lethbridge and

University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. The generous \$2.5 million gift to support research at UVic reflects Hess's lesser-known strong personal interest in earth and ocean sciences.

With no prior connection to UVic, Hess's gift was largely based on UVic's reputation for innovative and impactful research in marine and land ecosystems and climate action. UVic's research strengths in these areas contributed to it ranking as one of the top universities in the world for advancing and living up to the commitments of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the SDGs of climate action, life below water and life on land.

"We're so grateful to Marmie Hess and the executors of her will for facilitating this generous gift," says Lisa Kalynchuk, vice-president of research and innovation. "It enhances our ability to recruit and retain bright stars in a competitive environment and provides a significant investment in post-doctoral talent to advance research in grand questions of science and global challenges such as climate change."

Five research grants awarded

In 2022, the Dr. Margaret "Marmie" Perkins Hess Research Grants in Earth, Ocean, Astronomy, and Environmental Sciences were awarded to five post-doctoral fellows joining UVic research

programs related to climate change, seismology, astronomy, sustainability and renewable energy. The post-doctoral fellows funded were Jolie Lam (civil engineering), Federico Sestito (physics and astronomy), Alexandre Milovanoff (civil engineering), Sarah Jaye Oliva (earth and ocean sciences) and Matthew Ramirez (biology).

Investment in early career researchers to build the capacity of the next generation is a key outcome identified in the university's research and creative works strategy *Aspiration 2030*. "Post-doctoral fellowships provide a critical stepping stone in a researcher's career," says Fraser Hof, associate vice-resident of research. "Post-doctoral fellows bring advanced expertise to our research teams and have the experience and time to dive deeply into research questions. A philanthropic investment in post-doctoral fellows is a win-win for UVic researchers and our larger community, and directly advances our work in creating a better world through curiosity, engagement, and innovation."

First two grad fellows grateful for opportunity

The first two recipients of the Dr. Margaret "Marmie" Perkins Hess Grad Fellowships in Earth, Ocean, Astronomy and Environmental Sciences were Shoshanah Byrne-Mamahit and Daisy Buzzoni. Byrne-Mamahit says the

fellowship allowed her to finish her master's degree debt-free and launch directly into her PhD in physics and astronomy in January 2023. Daisy Buzzoni is working towards her PhD in UVic researcher Julia Baum's marine ecology and climate change lab. Buzzoni's research addresses coral's resistance and resilience to mass bleaching events (the largest global cause of coral mortality) caused by marine heatwaves.

"I am extremely grateful to be one of the first recipients of the Dr. Marmie Perkins Hess Fellowship—the legacy of an intrepid explorer and a trailblazer for female higher education in Canada," says Buzzoni. "This is an especially meaningful award for me as someone who is both an immigrant to Canada, trying to familiarise myself with Canadian history and culture, and a passionate advocate for the advancement of women in STEM."

More about Marmie Hess

Born in Calgary in 1916, Margaret Perkins Hess studied at the universities of Alberta, Toronto and Iowa. She worked as an art history teacher and an adjunct professor at the University of Alberta and University of Calgary. She was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1993 for her contributions to the body of knowledge of Canadian Indigenous art and to community generally.

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Mathematical ecologist returns to UVic as Kennedy Chair

Legacy gift from former professor Betty Kennedy and husband Gilbert established chair in critical area of study where mathematics and biology intersect.

BY SARAH TARNOPOLSKY

From predicting the spread of COVID-19 to protecting polar bears in the wake of climate change, mathematical biology is quickly becoming a vital tool for addressing world problems. During his 30 years in the field, Mark Lewis has been part of its explosive growth. Joining the University of Victoria in 2022 as the inaugural Gilbert and Betty Kennedy Chair in Mathematical Biology, Lewis is well-positioned to strengthen the discipline at UVic, while his numerous research projects continue to have extensive impacts around the world.

“[The field has] grown immensely and I’ve been fortunate to be part of that growth,” says Lewis about this critical intersection between two areas of science. “I think it’s because a lot of the exciting new problems in mathematics are coming out of biology.”

The UVic grad and 2012 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient will be teaching undergraduate students in a new undergraduate offering at UVic that combines biology with mathematics and statistics—a course Lewis wishes had been available when he started his academic journey. A Vancouver Island native with a love of the environment, Lewis enrolled primarily in ecology courses, but quickly discovered an aptitude for mathematics and veered more in that direction. After graduating with his bachelor of science in biology and math/computer science, Lewis earned a doctorate in mathematical biology at Oxford University in the UK. He then spent 12 years in the US before returning to Canada as a Canada Research Chair at the University of Alberta. Over

the next two decades, he developed a prolific research program applying mathematics to problems in a wide range of subjects, including ecology, public health and environmental sciences.

“Mathematics is a powerful lens through which we can understand complex processes in biology,” explains Lewis. “It has helped us discover there’s all these connections between, for example, cancer biology and ecology—between a growing tumour and an invasive species. Even though they come from very different places, the equations actually look very similar.”

Applying math to ecological problems

Perhaps owing to his love of the environment, Lewis has been drawn to work on real-world problems caused by humans, including the impacts of climate change, habitat destruction and industrial salmon farming.

His calculations regarding the movement patterns and energy reserves of polar bears helped prove the connection between changing ice conditions (typically driven by climate change) and the productivity of polar bear populations, resulting in the species being added to the IUCN Red List in 2015. He’s applied similar models to data on grizzly bears, wolves, caribou, Amazonian birds and pandas.

Lewis was part of an interdisciplinary team working on two decades’ worth of data collected from the Broughton Archipelago (off the coast of northern Vancouver Island) examining the impact of sea lice from fish farms on wild salmon populations. That research showed that fish farms situated in salmon migration



Lewis. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

corridors increased the transmission of parasites from the farms to out-migrating juvenile salmon. By the end of 2022, 14 fish farms in the Broughton Archipelago closed.

A different pest, the mountain pine beetle, is an invasive species that causes severe damage to trees in BC and is spreading into Alberta and Saskatchewan. Changing temperatures, caused by climate change, affect the development of the beetle and its reproduction, as well as the resiliency of the trees to the beetles. Lewis is using machine-learning to predict insect outbreaks, informing forest management practices, and ultimately helping save forests.

“I get a lot of motivation from working on these [ecological] problems as I find them super interesting,” Lewis says. “The hope is that we can modify what we do or how we interact with our environment to be better stewards.”

An exciting time for new scientists in the field

Lewis’s first taste of research as an undergraduate student at UVic was working with renowned mathematical epidemiologist Pauline van den

Driessche. Almost 30 years later, he was part of a team helping address one of the greatest epidemiological problems of our time—the COVID-19 pandemic. Lewis now leads a network of scientists dedicated to modeling emerging infectious diseases in Canada to assist with developing what’s proven to be a crucial public health tool.

“When a field is growing there is much more opportunity,” says Lewis. “When I train people now, I am training them for emerging opportunities. It’s like riding a wave.”

It’s a wave that needed an anchor at UVic, which is exactly what Peter Lookock, the dean of science, was looking for when he hired a chair in mathematical biology at UVic. The creation of a chair position brings a distinguished scholar to the university who will contribute to academic programs through research, teaching and service. This endowed chair position is funded through a \$3 million gift from the estate of Betty Kennedy.

“We’re fortunate the generous gift from the Kennedys’ estate has allowed us to bring someone as accomplished and respected as Lewis to UVic,” says Lookock. “His passion

for teaching the next generation of mathematical biologists, combined with his diverse research portfolio will ensure the Kennedys’ gift will have truly global impact.”

The Kennedy legacy

For Lewis, the chair position was certainly the right opportunity at the right time in his career, and he isn’t shy to admit he’s delighted to be back on Vancouver Island. “I thought it would be fun to try a new set of challenges in a place that I love,” he says.

The funding supports a lab manager and reduced teaching schedule that increases his ability to develop research collaborations and contribute more to the growth of his field while establishing a hub at UVic. Although the name recognition and prestige of the position is important to him, Lewis is primarily motivated by the work itself.

“A lot of people don’t relate to math, but we all care about the environment and how it is changing. Putting these things together is what makes my job really exciting. It’s not purely intellectual. It’s a way of connecting to the world... and using the skills I have to improve things.”

CISUR researchers inform new Canadian alcohol guidance

BY AMANDA FARRELL-LOW

Three researchers at UVic’s Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR)—director Tim Naimi and scientists Adam Sherk and Tim Stockwell—were part of an expert panel that helped create the new Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health.

The guidance, released by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction January 17, reviewed the latest evidence on alcohol’s health harms. The 22-member expert panel concluded that overall, less alcohol is better for your health, and presented a continuum of risk based on how much a person drinks per week. No alcohol was the safest, and one or two drinks per week is low-risk. Beyond that, three-six drinks per week put people at moderate risk of

developing several different types of cancer, and seven or more weekly drinks increased risk of heart disease, strokes, and other illnesses or negative consequences.

“It’s certainly different than the previous guidelines that came out 10 years ago,” CISUR’s Adam Sherk told CTV News. “The evidence regarding alcohol use and health has evolved over the last decade.”

In addition to informing people of the risks associated with alcohol consumption, the new guidance points to potential policy changes that could help reduce consumption, including stricter marketing and advertising rules, decreasing alcohol’s availability, and labelling alcohol containers with health warnings, standard drink information and the new guidance.

“A can of peas in a supermarket has

information about how much magnesium or calcium is in the peas, and those aren’t even toxic carcinogenic products,” Tim Naimi told CBC News.

Alcohol labelling is an area CISUR researchers have studied in the past. A 2017 study in the Yukon that placed bright labels on alcohol containers got widespread attention after the alcohol industry threatened the Yukon government with legal action over a label warning of alcohol’s cancer risk. The study was temporarily halted and then resumed—without the cancer labels.

Findings from the experiment showed that people who saw the labels better remembered information on cancer risk and drinking guidelines, and even bought less alcohol.

The new Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health has garnered



Naimi. PHOTO: DARREN STONE

considerable media attention both here in Canada and abroad, with extensive coverage on CBC (including

the National and Frontburner), the *New York Times*, the *Guardian* and many other outlets.

CLEAN, SAFE WATER

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

treatment to provide clean drinking water, she notes that using chlorine in ROMT systems also means there’s a dechlorination process as well.

“The dechlorination step is not particularly hazardous, but any time you’re using more steps and more chemistry, you have more waste, you have the environmental footprint associated with extracting and purifying those chemicals,” she explains. “So, we’re really thinking about this on a systems level: How can we bring something into the system that makes it safer for humans, that makes it safer for the environment and lowers the system-level footprint

of what we’re doing?”

As well, because dealing with biofouling accounts for about 10 per cent of the cost of ROMT operation, a new solution is one step toward making plants more widely affordable.

The impact of the team’s research could be felt both locally and globally. For instance, about half of Israel’s water comes from unconventional sources, including reclaimed water and desalination, and there are remote communities around the world that struggle with unsafe and unsustainable water supplies.

“One of the huge pieces of this project that resonates for our re-

search team is the environmental justice angle of recognizing that Canada has broadly failed its rural and northern First Nations with the sheer number of boil water advisories still in place, and the fact that’s often cited that technologies that could address that are too expensive.”

Buckley, who is also associate director of the Centre for Advanced Materials and Related Technologies, says the NSERC Alliance Missions research will run two years and the goal is to produce several promising chemicals that BI Pure can pilot in the field.

In addition to the partner groups, she notes the crucial role of the PhD student leading the project, Luiz Da Silva Correa, and the efforts of master’s and undergrad co-op students who are involved under their collective mentorship.

UVic Green Safe Water Lab

Other research underway by Buckley and colleagues at the UVic Green Safe Water Lab includes:

- Developing photodynamic antimicrobial surfaces and foul-release coatings: surfaces that prevent biofilm formation. These have potential applications in

clinical, environmental and food packaging contexts.

- Exploring precious-metal-free materials for electrocatalysis. New composites could enable metal-air batteries, which are an attractive energy storage option because they have high theoretical energy densities and because they’re made without using precious metals.
- Designing and synthesizing materials for low-cost in-field detection of contaminants in water.

UVic video: tiny.cc/22-h2o

2022 REACH AWARDS

RECOGNIZING RESEARCH & TEACHING EXCELLENCE

"These awards celebrate faculty and graduate students who are dedicated to excellence in teaching, research and creative activity. This year's distinguished honourees are game changers in their fields—they are leaders creating true and lasting impact through their innovative learning experiences for our students, and their research empowers and supports change in our community and beyond. Congratulations to the award recipients and nominees and thank for your passion and commitment."

—UVic President and Vice-Chancellor Kevin Hall, PhD

HARRY HICKMAN ALUMNI AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP



Dr. Rebecca Gagan
Professor | Department of English

Rebecca Gagan is an innovative and compassionate instructor, who approaches teaching as a labour of love. Students value how her teaching practices affect their holistic learning experience and resonate for years to come. Rebecca adds an element of inclusivity and engagement to each of her classes—from presenting group projects in a circle to hosting evening movie screenings. Colleagues say that she "meets students where they are." Acknowledging that the pandemic learning environment was difficult for many students, Gagan designed UVic Bounce, a resource of videos, blogs, social media and podcasts to help students feel less alone in their challenges and to further de-stigmatize conversations about mental health and academic struggle.

DAVID H. TURPIN GOLD MEDAL FOR CAREER ACHIEVEMENT IN RESEARCH



Dr. James Young
Professor | Department of Philosophy

Like a composer layering instruments, riffs and notes into a score, James Young grapples with fundamental philosophical issues while illuminating broad contemporary social and political concerns. He is a world authority on philosophical issues in cultural appropriation, the philosophy of music and the view that fine arts contribute to knowledge. Engaging with material and scholars from fine arts, anthropology, psychology, politics, literature and law, he deftly demonstrates how reflection on philosophical issues can advance both academic and public debate. A true scholar, James follows arguments regardless of where they might lead, bounded not by popular opinion but by the harmonies of rigorous intellectual debate, curiosity and creativity.

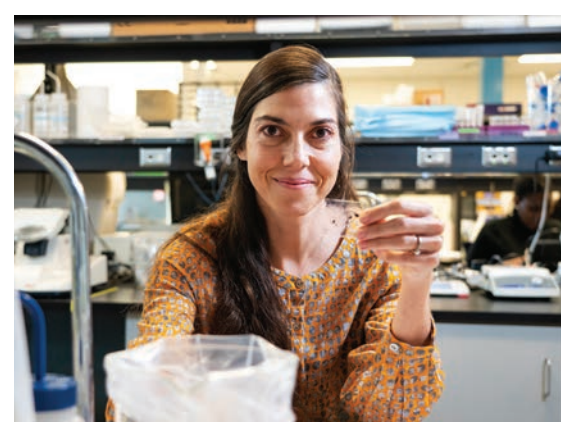
GILIAN SHERWIN ALUMNI AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



Dr. Michael Reed
Sessional Lecturer | Medieval Studies Program

Michael Reed is a distinguished scholar/teacher who contributes to multiple degree programs across faculties at UVic. He creates safe and engaging learning spaces, weaving interdisciplinarity into his teaching of philosophy, art, archaeology and literature. An instructor at UVic since 2016, he began as a sessional lecturer who quickly built a strong reputation among students as a result of his engaging demeanor. His teaching is dialectical, emphasizing discussion and critical reflection. He excelled in the digital learning environment, incorporating virtual site visits and discussion into online lectures, creating innovative and impactful learning experiences.

SILVER MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



Dr. Marie-Ève Tremblay
Associate Professor | Division of Medical Studies

Ève Tremblay has sparked a paradigm shift in what we know and how we look at microglia in the healthy brain. She has revealed that these immune cells are crucial for brain development, activity and plasticity, as well as learning, memory, behaviour and cognition. She has also discovered the dark microglia, which we now know are linked to pathological changes in the brain across neurodevelopmental, neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative disease conditions. Ève is studying how these cells help the brain adapt to challenges like chronic stress, sleep disturbances, unhealthy diets and infection, forming an important link between environmental risk factors and genetic vulnerabilities throughout our lives.

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION AND MENTORSHIP



Dr. Fraser Hof
Professor | Department of Chemistry

Fraser Hof is an enthusiastic and empowering supervisor and graduate advisor. He has supervised 16 graduate students and served on almost 40 student committees and 10 external examiner committees, as well as serving as Canada Research Chair of Supramolecular and Medicinal Chemistry. His students feel empowered and supported as owners of their own research, with friendly challenges to "prove him wrong" through experiment. Encouraging students to learn by doing and to find the lessons hidden even in "failed" experiments has driven discoveries in areas ranging from cancer therapies to drug sensors. His students have won Canadian and international awards and have gone on to careers that are personally and professionally satisfying. He supports his students not just as scientists but also as individuals and independent thinkers.

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION



Dr. Janelle Jenstad
Professor | Department of English

Janelle Jenstad's Map of Early Modern London is a pre-eminent example of creativity, vision, reach, commitment to knowledge mobilization and, thus, impact. The map's layers of linked documents and data let us think about Shakespeare's London as a place of physical, social, emotional and economic connections, like our own cities. No other project had done this before, and no other project does it as well. Two hundred thousand visitors from nearly 140 countries visit 7.7 million pages every year. Janelle has set the standard for rigorous scholarship and at the same time created a worldwide go-to site for students, teachers, researchers, genealogists, writers and historians.

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CREATIVITY AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION



Dr. Chase Joynt
Assistant Professor | Department of Gender Studies

Chase Joynt, one of the most outstanding artist-scholars working on issues of trans representation today, is redefining documentary and trans scholarship. His films, including most recently *Framing Agnes*, seamlessly blend cinema and media, gender and feminist studies, trans studies and queer theory. They have been shown at venues and festivals around the world, including Cannes and Sundance. His work is consistently received with acclaim. By addressing conflicting and contentious historical subjects with courage and creativity, Chase's publications and films animate, inform and shape the contemporary moment in the academy and amongst the global public.

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS



Dr. Zuomin Dong
Professor | Department of Mechanical Engineering



Bruce Paterson
Director Naval Architecture, Engineering | BC Ferries

Zuomin Dong and Bruce Paterson are mixing it up for smoother sailing. To eliminate strict diesel dependence, Zuomin's partnership with BC Ferries has identified hybrid technological pathways and—crucially—how best to harness them for the most powerful and reliable combinations of shore-supplied electricity, natural gas, hydrogen and battery electric storage. Managing these hybrid systems is complex, relying on detailed knowledge of ship operations as well as computer algorithms to design and then control the propulsion system for peak efficiencies. Through this innovative partnership, Zuomin's instrumentation and simulations have charted a course for BC Ferries in the pursuit of cleaner, greener operations.

ANDY FARQUHARSON TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS



Claude Beauré
PhD student | Department of Political Science

Claude Beauré is committed to student-centred learning and is highly curious about different instructional strategies. She focuses her time designing tutorial exercises that link concepts to broader academic skills and offers high levels of feedback throughout the term. Claude makes time for each student through a flexible office hour structure and extra-curricular writing support, ensuring support beyond the classroom.



Hannah Brown
PhD student | Department of Anthropology

Hannah Brown integrates the scholarship of teaching and learning into their work with students through continuous feedback mechanisms. A graduate of the Learning and Teaching in Higher Education graduate certificate (LATHE), they helped to create an exam-marking rubric as well as integrate informal surveys throughout the course. Students commented on Hannah's ability to adapt the course to student feedback, exhibiting care while creating an accessible learning experience.



Shervin Shamedi Derakhshan
PhD student | Department of Civil Engineering

Shervin Shamedi Derakhshan is patient, approachable and encouraging in his interactions with students and colleagues. He has a methodical style of instruction: breaking down concepts into smaller examples and then encouraging active experimentation. He continues to increase his skillset as an instructor, and mentored other Teaching Assistants as a Teaching Assistant Consultant for his department. He integrates research into his teachings and is not afraid to ask for help or adapt his teaching to student needs.

PROVOST'S ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM AWARDS IN EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



Dr. Jeff Ganohalidoh Corntassel
Associate Professor | Indigenous Studies

Jeff Ganohalidoh Corntassel is an internationally recognized Indigenous activist scholar whose research, teaching, supervision and community engagement are guided by the concept of working together for the benefit of all. The heart of his work is grounded in Indigenous communities and experiences, reflecting his commitment to removing institutional barriers for students and ensuring that what happens at the university has meaning and impact far beyond the classroom. He has mentored numerous Indigenous students in scholarly advocacy over the past two decades and facilitated their connections locally, nationally and internationally. He has actively supported the self-determination of Indigenous nations through both research and grassroots activism.



Dr. Marilou Gagnon
Professor | School of Nursing

Marilou Gagnon is known nationally and internationally for her advocacy and ability to bring nurses together to advocate on issues related to HIV, harm reduction, drug policy and health. Her scholarship seeks to address gaps in knowledge that have the potential to inform public debate and policies, while also advancing the rights and the health of marginalized communities. She has received several awards for her advocacy and activism in HIV and harm reduction nursing, including the Hero Nurse Award, Leadership in Political Action Award and Outstanding Advocate Award. She actively participates in debates in her fields, writes for media, engages policymakers and uses her voice to speak truth to power.

The Reach Awards will be celebrated at an in-person ceremony on Feb. 16, hosted by President Kevin Hall, VP Research and Innovation Lisa Kalynchuk and Acting Deputy Provost Helga Hallgrimsdóttir. Recipients of the Provost's Advocacy and Activism Awards will also be honoured. Event is by invitation only; please contact RSVPcerc@uvic.ca for details. You can also watch a livestream of the event at tiny.cc/23-reach.

HOLOCAUST

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

ing in detail its businesses and the families that operated them while describing the buildings, forests and rivers that surrounded them.

When a search for what Abram thought was her great-grandmother's given name, Leah Pearl, returned no results, she tried without luck her maiden name: Schwartz. Wondering if the names of her grandmother's brothers might work instead, she unsuccessfully searched for Sam and then Nathan Chitaru, then forwarded the memoir's link to her sister with a note that, though interesting, the document contained nothing about their family. All told, it was five years before another clue emerged.

A new mourning

Throughout the week after Abram's father had died in August 2021, Abram spent countless hours at her parents' home sitting with visitors, sharing memories with family and friends, and sifting through the boxes of her father's files that had been moved from his office and now filled the family's house.

Alvin Abram was a serial entrepreneur, art dealer and author who wrote a couple of award-winning books and self-published some 20 more. Among his works were stories of Holocaust survivors that he began writing after a friend's mother shared her own experiences with him.

"I wasn't interested in the Holocaust at that time, but what happened at that meeting changed my life forever," Alvin Abram wrote in one of his unpublished stories. "I expected to hear a story of pain and death; about loss and anger. I was wrong. I listened as Ibi read to me love letters she had sent to her husband in a labour camp which were returned to her by mail, unopened, when the war ended. He had died and she had been unaware. When she read me those letters, I then realized that the Holocaust was not about numbers but about people and each one had a story that needed to be told."

It is no small irony that a member of Alvin Abram's own family had a story from the Holocaust that needed to be told, and that it was during shiva—the week of mourning following his death—that his daughter would learn about it.

Among the visitors who came to pay their respects to Lisa Abram's father was her older cousin, Bryon, who then told Lisa about their great-grandmother's murder in the Holocaust. Bryon said that he had learned this story directly from their uncle Nathan—the son of Leah Perla and brother of Lisa's grandmother, Annie—in the 1950s, when he was still a child.

"It's unfortunate that my dad had to pass away for all this information to come out. That's something he would have wanted to know," Abram

reflects. "But I don't think I would have wondered what had happened to my great-grandmother otherwise. I had moved on from that; then my dad's death brought me back to that question."

Pursuing that lead led Abram to the Ontario Jewish Archive, where her father had donated a small trove of personal effects. Several photos there stood out: a series showing Abram's grandmother Annie standing with a man and a woman outside an airport — Leah Perla's youngest son, Moshe Itzak, and his wife Seindla in Israel. This was a complete shock to Abram. She had grown up with her grandmother and heard stories about two brothers—Sam in Canada and Nathan in Israel, both of whom she had met. But here was a third, who also lived in Israel, about whom Lisa had never heard.

Why had Abram never heard of this younger brother? Was this the missing son of Leah Perla who had been forced to bury her in the forced labour camp?

Expert advice

Coincidentally, around this time, Abram began working with internationally renowned Holocaust historian Charlotte Schallié on a campaign for UVic Libraries.

Schallié was at the time in mid-production of *But I Live: Three Stories of Child Survivors of the Holocaust*, an award-winning collection of graphic novels co-created by Holocaust survivors and accomplished graphic artists that was published in 2022 by University of Toronto Press.

"I was very excited about Lisa's research and immediately wanted to support it," says Schallié. "I warned her, though, that unearthing such violent histories risks intergenerational trauma for the descendants of survivors. Breaking a wall of silence within one's family can also prompt unexpected feelings and expressions of anger and resentment, which can be difficult to navigate."

Along with this advice, Schallié offered to connect Abram with a network of people who were formally or informally connected to UVic's Holocaust Studies program and who might be able to help with her search. Among them was David Schaffer, a Holocaust survivor of Romanian descent whose story is shared in the *But I Live* collection. Schallié also recommended a number of resources that might aid Abram's research, including the publicly accessible websites for institutional repositories like the Arolsen Archives, the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and Yad Vashem.

That evening, Abram began searching her grandmother's family name online once more, this time filled with hope that the archives suggested by Schallié would lead to new results. "Schwartz," she searched, without success; then "Leah Pearl." "Chitaru" she typed, still optimistic, but was once again left frustrated and without a

clear way forward.

Changing names

Abram began reaching out to other members of her family for clues. From a second cousin, Abram learned that the Chitaru family name had multiple variations—Kitaro, Kataru, Chitaro—that, over the decades, had been orally transmitted and recorded in different ways by different people.

Returning to her search once more, Abram began plugging every conceivable variation into the US Holocaust Memorial Museum database, "and there it was! My great-grandmother's name—spelled *Lea Perla Chitraru*, with an added 'r'!" Abram exclaims. "It was like a punch to the gut."

Among the archive's files was a "list of Jews recruited for forced labour in Moghilev, [Ukraine], Dec. 1, 1943" that contained Leah Perla's name and, just above it, those of her son, Moshe Itzak and his wife Seindla—evidence at last that promised to help set the facts straight.

"I had only heard the story from my cousin Bryon, so it was easy to wonder... how could it be true? How could I not have known?" Abram says with bewilderment in her eyes. "But there it was. When I saw their names... it was just an 'oh my God' moment. Not like jubilation, though. It was more like horror."

From Mihaileni to Moghilev

In a moment of inspiration, Abram returned to the memoir of Mihaileni that she'd found years earlier and, much to her surprise, there they were too. Among the "friends and neighbors" described were "Moise Itzic [sic], Perla's son" along with rich, detailed stories of the family in better days.

These anecdotes connected Abram to her past in a way that she'd never felt before, as they began to outline a family history that she could never have imagined. Smudging these lines, though, was a pervasive sense of horror that she could not shake. With half her imagination replaying scenes from Mihaileni, she could not help but wonder how her family had ended up in Moghilev.

Imagine her shock, then, when she began reading an advanced copy of Schallié's edited collection, *But I Live*, and found fragments of exactly that story told in the first-person by David Schaffer, whose contact information Schallié had provided to Abram some weeks earlier.

"It's an amazing connection that Charlotte [Schallié] made for me. David was from Romania and had been in the same forced labour camp in Ukraine where my family was. His story ends with him moving to Mihaileni, where my family is from. I'd been searching for that village for years, and there it was on the map tracing his journey. For the first time ever in my entire life, there it was in print. I knew I had to talk to him. It was all coming together!"



An excerpt from David Schaffer's story in *But I Live: Three Stories of Child Survivors of the Holocaust* detailing the moment when his family was deported from a ghetto in Gura Homorului to Ataki, en route to Moghilev—the same route taken by Abram's family. REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

Picking up the pieces

When Abram finally spoke with David Schaffer over Zoom last spring, she could never have anticipated how transformative the conversation would be for her.

He was able to provide valuable insights into how life had been for Jewish people in Romania during the early 20th century, including key information about why Abram's search for her ancestors had turned up so many family names. He explained that antisemitism had been on the rise in Romania for decades before the nation-state fell into the orbit of Nazi Germany in 1940, when state-sanctioned massacres of the Romanian Jewish population began. Survivors of these pogroms were herded into transit camps, then deported to the recently-annexed Transnistria region, where they were often murdered, worked to death, or left to die from neglect and malnutrition in ghettos and camps like the one where Abram's family had been in Moghilev.

Among those killed in that terrible synergy was Leah Perla, whose forced transit through Romania is recorded in a series of ledgers found by Abram in the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and Yad Vashem archives. Where one document from 1943 suggests that she, her son and his wife were transferred from Moghilev to another camp in the nearby city of Tulcin, another document from that same year suggests that only the son and wife arrived. Changes to their family name, Schaffer conjectured, were very likely made in attempt to hide their Jewish ancestry during a time of heightened persecution.

During their conversation, Schaffer also retraced for Abram his own path across Romania during the Holocaust, which aligned at many points with the route on which her family had been taken, helping her visualize their harrowing journey.

"Talking with David was like touching the past. From his story I was able to imagine the transportation of my great grandmother, Moshe and Seindla to the forced labour camp. In a lot of ways, his story is their

story, because almost all the Jews were taken on the same trains; they were all marched across these same vast distances," Abram recounts with rising intensity. "I told David, 'I wish I could see through your eyes. I wish I could see what you saw when you were there, terrible as it was.' This was the closest I was ever going to get to understanding what life in the Holocaust was like for my family!"

Connections for the future

Today, Lisa Abram's family history project spans 52 pages of text, a plethora of photos, news articles and archived documents about family members she had never known existed, and a family tree with several branches and more than 100 names newly added.

Sometimes she daydreams about going back to her childhood home, walking up to her father, and handing him her files. "Here, Dad," she wants to say. "Here's this massive file on our family's history that I've built. I want to share with you this story that you would have been writing about yourself."

Among the relatives with whom Abram shared her findings, none among her father's living cousins and their children had known about their connection to the Holocaust and the intergenerational disconnections it had caused within their family. Many were stunned by how much of this history had been withheld from them, but not all were interested in learning more.

"One newly found cousin in Israel in particular—a descendant of Moshe Itzak—asked why I'm so interested in these terrible things that happened in the past," says Abram "We're in the future now, he said. I told him that I need to understand my past to understand my family's history and who I am. Connecting with him was the future for me."

"Besides that, I just want to honour the story of my great-grandmother, Leah Perla Blumenfeld. I just want to keep her name alive."

This story has been edited and abridged. To read more, visit tiny.cc/23-puzzle.



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Teaching Black history

BY PHILIP COX

Adebisi Alade is a UVic historian who specializes in African history. He was born and raised in Nigeria and has lived in Canada for six years.

This year, he designed two new courses on Black history for the Department of History, both of which focus on Africa and Black diasporic communities around the world.

In honour and celebration of Black History Month, we asked Alade to share with us his thoughts and insights into Black histories and Black History Month as he understands it.

Can you tell us about the two new courses on Black history you're teaching at UVic right now?

I am currently teaching "Africa in the World," which examines the varied experiences of Black people in the African diaspora across the globe going back to the 16th century; and "Africa since 1800," which focuses primarily on modern Africa in the context of world history.

Through regional and local case studies, these courses provide students with an understanding of key themes and debates in African and Black diaspora studies, including the historical origins of voluntary and forced migration of Africans, European colonial rule, racial domination, the rise of nationalist movements, ideas and achievements of key Black figures, and the continuous struggle for racial and social justice.

From a global perspective, these

courses teach students to think critically about how Africans responded to slavery and colonialism and how they coped with centuries of white exploitation. More importantly, the courses help students place the successes of Black people in the diaspora and the challenges of nation-building in modern Africa in historical contexts.

What do you think students gain from learning these histories?

UVic attracts students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds; however, there are very few courses on Black and African history compared to European and American history.

Recorded Black history and presence in Canada date back to the early 1600s, but relatively few Canadians know a lot about these people, their roots, what brought them here, and how they have been treated over the years. Very little is known about the histories that tell the story of significant African civilizations and Black contributions to world history.

I believe that it is important that people have a basic knowledge of human diversity and a critical understanding of how contemporary issues of racial discrimination, exclusion and inequality are rooted in our past actions and inactions.

Generally, Black history addresses these questions in ways that enable students to rethink conventional understanding, assumptions and dangerous notions of Africa and Black people. It also equips students with skills to engage topics of con-



Alade. UVIC PHOTO SERVICES

temporary relevance, including race and racism, gender-based violence, social justice, decolonization and human rights.

As a Black historian, what do you think people get right or wrong about Black History Month?

In my experience, the common narrative of Black history in Canada revolves around slavery, abolition and the struggle for civil rights. Black History Month, to me, is not just about retelling the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade or promoting Black films depicting the oppression that Black people have experienced in their quest for recognition. Indeed, hardship has influenced Black histories, but it does not define it.

I believe it is more important to learn more about the recent achievements and contributions of Black people to the development of our communities, and to shine a spotlight on Black-led projects and initiatives and Black people who have revolutionized our society in fields like medicine, law, music, sports and the sciences. Ignoring or denying these histories is not only harmful to students' learning—especially Black students, who could look up to these individuals for inspiration—but also dangerous for our society.

Most importantly, Black History Month should be a time to reflect on how we can further dismantle systemic racism and oppression by changing historical attitudes that

perpetuate inequality and marginalization. Failure to support and celebrate Black youths can exacerbate the contexts whereby their history, experience, and perspectives go unrecognized—which would make Black History Month meaningless for the very people it's meant to recognize.

Adebisi Alade is founding member of the Nigerian Health Historians Network. He has designed and taught courses at McMaster University on African history, peace and conflict studies, the rise of empires, and historical roots of contemporary global issues. Before joining UVic last fall, he was a fellow at the United Nations University's Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

RESEARCH IN THE ARTS

Scholar of Islamic art practices headed to England

AHVS chair the only academic in Canada selected for British Academy Global Professorship

BY JOHN THRELFALL

Art History and Visual Studies chair Marcus Milwright has been named a recipient of the British Academy's 2022 Global Professorships. This four-year research professorship—valued at £898,000 (about \$1.48 million CDN)—will begin in February 2023 and will see him working at the Department of History of Art at England's University of York through to 2027.

One of only eight professors selected for this prestigious international professorship—and the only scholar in Canada—his research project is titled Making Meaning: Craft Practices and the Process of Change in Islamic Art.

"It's based on the idea that we understand objects when we understand the processes of making them, and the people responsible for doing that—how they develop their

skills, the environments they work in," Milwright explains. "It's not simply a question of how something gets made: it's through the process of making that we understand the meanings those objects have in their societies."

Understanding the lives of craft workers

Milwright has spent more than 20 years studying Islamic art, archaeology and traditional craft practices in the Middle East, and is the author of seven books on the subject. For Making Meaning, he'll still be working with archaeology, excavated artifacts and museum objects, but he will also broaden the focus to include textual and photographic sources.

"It's about how we can extract aspects of the lives of people who are often not well documented," he says. "It's the elites of society who tend to write—and be written about—so this



Milwright. PHOTO JOHN THRELFALL

is a way of finding out more about the lives of people who actually created the objects and made those societies work."

Exploring new partnerships

In addition to working on his Making Meaning project, Milwright will also seek to establish new pathways

for UVic students and faculty to undertake exchanges and research op-

SEE MILWRIGHT, P. 8

Long-time residents and UVic grads, Dave and Tara are helping to guide local residents and new-comers on their way through the real estate market.

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Exhibition celebrates the great dance of life

BY STEPHANIE HARRINGTON

When Devi Mucina left Africa as a young man, he had no intention of returning to the ways of his people. But years later, he found himself learning from the struggles and resistance of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

After watching the masked dances of the Coast Salish peoples, Mucina, director of UVic's School of Indigenous Governance, felt inspired to reconnect with his past and his family.

"That was a moment of feeling like, I need to go home and take up my responsibilities within my culture and reclaim the things colonialism was trying to fragment me away from," Mucina says.

A trip home to the border of Mozambique and Malawi in 2018 proved to be an act of resistance for Mucina, a journey that sparked the beginnings of a new exhibition running at UVic's Legacy Art Gallery (630 Yates St.) until April 8.

Gule Wamkulu: Dancing Indigenous Governance is a powerful exploration of Mucina's roots as an Indigenous Chewa man and an honouring of African ancestors and culture. Mucina is guest curator of the exhibition, along with UVic Social Dimensions of Health alumnus and artist Kl. Peruzzo de Andrade, who filmed and photographed their 2018 journey to southern Africa.

The exhibition also looks forward, seeking ways to connect the region's Black diaspora and build community



Gule Wamkulu: Dancing Indigenous Governance runs at Legacy Art Gallery until April 8. CREDIT: KL. PERUZZO DE ANDRADE

wellness while being respectful of Coast Salish expressions of sovereignty.

"*Gule Wamkulu* means, 'the great dance of life.' It's a totalizing world view. It is the time when we are coming together with our ancestors," Mucina says.

An opening celebration featured *Gule Wamkulu* masked dances and ceremonies to honour Ubuntu ancestors and Elders. The event also

included speaker Barbara Hudlin, from the BC Black History Awareness Society, and UVic alumna Simone Blais, director of the documentary *Dance Like Everybody's Watching*, alongside a contemporary dance performance.

Speaking ahead of Black History Month, Mucina said *Gule Wamkulu* is about creating space for the Black community to come together to talk about community wellbeing and

health.

"That's about helping folks understand we're connected as Black people who come from diverse backgrounds and diverse communities," he says. "By sharing this work, I am saying to our diverse African Canadian families, 'We can hold you as whole beings.'"

As an Indigenous governance scholar, Mucina says he tries to think locally but act globally, or vice versa.

The exhibition examines this concept, by considering how the African diaspora might address and engage in traditions while being respectful of the laws of these territories.

"We are relationally and globally connected to each other," Mucina says. "When we are aware of that we have a better chance of resisting colonialism and making change benefiting all of us."

legacy.uvic.ca

PHOENIX THEATRES, FEB. 16-25

Fighting disinformation with theatre

BY JOHN THRELFALL

When is a witch not a witch? That was the question facing famed British playwright Caryl Churchill back in 1976 when she penned *Vinegar Tom*, a scathing feminist satire that re-examines the social motives behind the accusation and persecution of those who were branded as witches. Her solution? Write a play that has no witches . . . but plenty of persecution.

Yet while we would like to think those days are behind us—be they 17th-century history or the protest-oriented '70s—current Department of Theatre MFA candidate Francis Matheu feels *Vinegar Tom* is a distressingly contemporary piece of political theatre ideally suited to our tumultuous times.

Who benefits from inequality?

"There's a lot of disinformation happening in our society right now, both here in North America and at home in the Philippines, my own country," says Matheu, who is directing *Vinegar Tom* as his thesis dissertation. "I'd like to use theatre to combat that. When I was reading the play, I kept asking myself, 'How can this be so relevant to our society today? Who benefits from inequality?' As a theatre artist, it became a calling for me—I needed to do something."

MILWRIGHT

CONTINUED FROM P. 7

portunities at the University of York's Department of History of Art, with a memorandum of understanding already in process.

More than just producing research, however, Milwright sees this global professorship as an opportunity to share his findings in different ways through articles, books, websites, podcasts and public engagement—as well as more open-source methods of information dissemination.

"There's an urgent need to try and

Running Feb. 16-25 at UVic's Phoenix Theatre, *Vinegar Tom* has lost none of its raw power over the years; indeed, it seems eerily prescient today given the recent spate of right-wing uprisings, the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* in the US, and an ongoing frenzy of public accusations on social media.

"Churchill depicts not only gender inequality and misogyny in this play, but also how ordinary people and those in power are coerced to fabricate baseless stories against the powerless, the innocent and the marginalized," he says. "That's powerful material to move forward with."

International connection

The latest Filipino graduate student to select UVic's theatre department for their master's degree (alongside the recent likes of Dennis Gupa and Chari Arespachaga), Matheu has directed 40 shows over the years and, as an actor, has appeared in nearly 50 more.

It was his participation in a local production directed by then-Theatre PhD candidate and friend Dennis Gupa that brought Matheu to Victoria.

"That was my first time in North America and I got attracted to the people here—their respect for each other, for the First Nations—as well as the weather," he laughs. "When I learned I could do this as a cultural



Matheu. PHOTO JOHN THRELFALL

worker and an international student, I decided to take the chance."

A cautionary tale

Made possible in part by funding from the Philippines National Commission for Culture and the Arts, *Vinegar Tom* also sees the interdisciplinary

participation of School of Music undergraduates Naomi Harris (as music director) and Naomi Sehn (music arranger) who help bring the play's musical component to life.

Ultimately, says Matheu, *Vinegar Tom* should be seen more as a cautionary tale than a historical allegory.

wright has always been interested in the relationship between an object and its making. But it was on an early archaeological excavation in Jordan that his relationship with the past first came alive.

"I remember one of the objects we found was a little cup used for drinking tea or coffee," he recalls. "It was just a disc of clay which had been turned up at the edges then fired in an open bonfire, but you could see the finger marks in it. That was my first

connection with someone I'd never know anything else about . . . a human being making decisions, using their expertise to make a cup. Even if we can never give people their names, we can still start to reconstruct their lives by knowing how they made things."

All too often, our knowledge of the past is based on objects and structures celebrating the rich and powerful—coins, ceramics, mosaics, temples. But, as Milwright reminds us, "kings, sultans and emperors were

dependent on the craft sector to make these great objects."

"Even when these people seem infinitely powerful, there are logistical concerns which come down to the aspect of crafts and resources," he says. "It's these things I keep coming back to, because they have an impact on meaning: if you don't take practical concerns into consideration, you can be persuaded by the rhetoric of rulers that they have infinite power—but they really don't."