

Asian Heritage Month

The Month of May is May is Asian Heritage Month. This acknowledges the long and rich history of Asian Canadians and their contributions to Canada. It also provides an opportunity for Canadians across the country to reflect on and celebrate the contributions of Canadians of Asian heritage to the growth and prosperity of Canada. In December 2001, the Senate adopted a motion proposed by Senator Vivienne Poy to officially designate May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. In May 2002, the [Government of Canada signed an official declaration](#) to designate May as Asian Heritage Month.

Events taking place in Toronto during Asian Heritage Month

These events are not part of Asian Heritage Month Festival, nor are they funded by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage.

1. Textile Museum, Toronto: SHINE Exhibition

Date: March 27th to September 2nd, 2013

Venue: Textile Museum of Canada, 55 Centre Avenue, Toronto

Presented by: Textile Museum of Canada

Description: For highlights, please go to

<http://www.vmacch.ca/Museums/TextileMuseum/textile.html>

2. Embracing Our Art: An Exhibition of Local Asian Canadian Artists

Dates and Time: May 1 -June 30, 2013 (The Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library, Mon. - Thu. 9:00 am - 7:00 pm, Fri. 9:00 am - 6:00 pm; the Robarts Library, Mon. - Thu. 8:30 am - 11:00 pm, Sat. and Sun. 10:00 am - 5:00 pm)

Venue: The Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library & the Robarts Library (first floor exhibition area), University of Toronto, 130 St. George Street, Toronto, M5S 1A5

Presented by: The Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library

Description:

In order to celebrate the Asian Heritage Month in Toronto, the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library (University of Toronto) has invited 25 local Asian Canadian artists to showcase their art works in the library. The artists are from all the three East Asian communities: Chinese, Korean and Japanese. Their art works include traditional ink paintings, oil paintings, photographs, potteries and other art forms. The wide range of art works reflect their unique experiences as Asian artists in Canada.

3. Toronto Masque Theatre Production: "The Lessons of Love: a double-bill of passion"

The Lessons of Love:

1683: Venus & Adonis / 2013: The Lesson of Da Ji

Dates and Time: Friday, May 10th, 2013 at 8:00 pm; Saturday, May 11th, 2013 at 8:00 pm; special Mother's Day matinee, Sunday, May 12th, 2013 at 3:00 pm. A pre-show chat with Artistic Director Larry Beckwith and guests is held 45 minutes before all performances

Venue: The Al Green Theatre; 750 Spadina Avenue (at Bloor).

Tickets: \$40; \$35 (for seniors) and \$20 (for under 30) available from the Al Green Box Office, 416-924-6211 ext. 0.

Presented by: Toronto Masque Theatre

Description:

Lessons of love that are beautiful and tender, comic and tragic. Toronto Masque Theatre presents two masques drawn from two traditions: a baroque classic from the West, John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (1683) and a reimagining of an ancient tale from the East, *The Lesson of Da Ji* (2013), by Alice Ping Yee Ho and librettist Marjorie Chan.

Masque is a fusion of music, dance and theatre and Toronto Masque Theatre is one of the few companies in the world devoted to this form which flourished in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Lessons of Love will be a wonderful introduction to the masque and also show the two sides of our company, the re-creation of works from the canon and the commissioning of new work that redefine and reinvigorate the form.

Under the Artistic Direction of Larry Beckwith, the evening will feature an instrumental ensemble of baroque and Chinese instruments, as well as soprano Vania Chan, tenor Derek Kwan, mezzo-Soprano Marion Newman and baritone Alexander Dobson. They are joined by traditional Peking Opera dancer William Lau. Direction will be by Derek Boyes (*The Lesson of Da Ji*) and Marie-Nathalie Lacourisère (*Venus and Adonis*).

Venus and Adonis

Commissioned by Charles II and written by John Blow, this gorgeous, sensual masterpiece of the courtly masque features some of the most sublime music ever written. It tells how Venus fell in love with the mortal youth Adonis. While the goddess struggles with her amorous entanglements her son, Cupid, receives his own comic, romantic education. Told with a surprisingly feminist slant it tells us how we should "seize the day" in our pursuit of true love. Featuring baroque dance choreographed by the acclaimed Marie-Nathalie Lacoursière.

The Lesson of Da Ji

Toronto Masque Theatre commissioned Ho and Chan to create a new masque based on a major Chinese fantasy novel from the Ming Dynasty. It tells the tale of the concubine Da Ji who falls in love with Bo Yi, a young nobleman from a neighbouring county. They meet under the guise of guqin music lessons, but when the powerful and nasty King finds out about the nature of their meetings, he hatches a plan to put a stop to them, at the same time attempting to conquer new lands. Librettist Marjorie Chan has provided a rich and inventive script which drives to a surprising and powerful climax.

Ho's gorgeous music will blend eastern and western instruments, including the guzheng that Da Ji learns to play. It will feature a performance by traditional Peking Opera dancer William Lau

About Toronto Masque Theatre:

Toronto Masque Theatre was founded by Artistic Director Larry Beckwith in 2003 and immediately became a significant player in the City of Toronto's arts scene. In its nine seasons, Toronto Masque Theatre has produced close to 25 critically-acclaimed multi-media productions, ranging in repertoire from the late Renaissance to the modern day. They have commissioned six new works, two from James Rolfe and one each from Omar Daniel, Abigail Richardson, Dean Burry and Alice Ping Yee Ho, as well as presenting music theatre works by Monteverdi, Purcell, Handel, Stravinsky and John Beckwith, plays by Edna St. Vincent Millay, James Reaney, Patrick Garland, and Moliere and "variety" evenings including Commedia, Tears of a Clown, and Masque of the Muses.

Toronto Masque Theatre takes as its inspiration the rich courtly masque tradition of the late Renaissance and offers clever, intimate, and highly entertaining productions which fuse different aspects of the performing arts. Both historically informed and daringly modern, with each program Toronto Masque Theatre manages to surprise, move, and delight in new and brilliant ways.

Toronto Masque Theatre has appeared at the Guelph Spring Festival, Festival of the Sound, Music at Sharon and the Elora Festival, and has been heard on CBC Radio.

Toronto Masque Theatre is supported by Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, and Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Singers

Vania Chan; Charlotte Corwin; Benjamin Covey; Alex Dobson; Derek Kwan; Marion Newman; Xin Wang; Timothy Wong.

Dancers

Marie-Nathalie Lacoursière, Baroque choreographer/dancer; William Lau, traditional Peking Opera dancer.

Instrumentalists

Larry Beckwith, Artistic and Musical director, will lead an ensemble of baroque and Chinese instruments including Patty Chan, erhu; Kathleen Kajioka, violin; Lucas Harris, lute; Alison Melville, recorder; Ed Reifel, percussion; Wen Zhao, pipa; Ziewin Cynthia Qin, guzheng and others.

4. fu-GEN's 10th Anniversary GALA Celebration and Fundraiser

Date: Tuesday, May 21, 2013

Time: 6 PM welcome cocktail and reception, 8PM show

Venue: Tarragon Theatre, 30 Bridgman Avenue, Toronto, ON M5R 1X3

Presented by: fu-GEN Asian-Canadian Theatre Company

Description: Join us for a memorable evening of great theatre and celebration as we commemorate 10 years of outstanding Asian Canadian theatre. This exciting evening features:

a welcome cocktail and pre-show reception sponsored by diverso by FERRARO silent auction entry a special presentation of Tarragon Theatre's carried away on the crest of a wave, written by fu-GEN's own Artistic Director and Governor General's Award nominee, David Yee and directed by fu-GEN co-founder Nina Lee Aquinoa post-show dessert reception plus meet-and-greet with the cast and creative team \$75.00 (\$53 tax deductible receipt).

Tickets: 416-531-1827 | www.fu-gen.org

About the play: Set in the years following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, carried away on the crest of a wave is a play about causality and the interconnectedness of all things. From an escort in Khao Lak, to a priest in Tamil Nadu, to a housewife in Utah, it asks, "What happens when the events that tie us together are the same that tear us apart?"

Organizer: fu-GEN Asian-Canadian Theatre Company
www.fu-gen.org

5. A 600-Year Cold Case Solved: Chinese mapped the world before Columbus By Dr. Siu-Leung Lee (presenting in English)

Free Admission

Dates and Time: May 31, 2013

Venue: Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave E, at Progress Ave

Presented by: the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, in association with CMC Asians in Ontario and the Toronto Hakka Conference

Description:

In 2010, the University of Minnesota purchased a 1602 world map with Chinese text. This map presented to the Ming Emperor Wanli has been attributed to Matteo Ricci, the Jesuit who went to Macau in 1582 and died in Beijing in 1610. After examining the map and comparing it with 600 maps drawn between the 14th and 18th century, Dr. Siu-Leung Lee concludes that most of the information on this map is not from European sources, but is derived from Chinese sources around 1430, especially from the voyages led by Zheng He. Thus, the Chinese had completed circumnavigation of the world more than 60 years before Christopher Columbus sailed to the Americas. Dr. Lee refutes in great detail three commonly accepted dogma in conventional western history: 1. Columbus discovered America; 2. Zheng He did not go farther west than East Africa; 3. Ricci introduced cartography of the globe to China. Most Western textbooks covering the last 600 years of world history should therefore be corrected, and should give due credit to Chinese navigators as pioneers of world exploration.

6. School Workshop: An Asian Heritage Month Art Workshop of Chinese Calligraphy/Brush Painting and Taichi/Qi Gong

Date: June 24, 2013

Venue: Cummer Valley Middle School, TDSB

Presenters: Dr. Lien Chao and Henry Ho

FREE ADMISSION For specific school only

Description:

This special art workshop introduces traditional Chinese art mediums and art forms to students with or without previous experience. Calligraphy/brush painting will be presented with Taichi/Qi Gong as inter-related cultural practices.

The workshop begins with a brief introduction to Chinese brush painting and its mediums. The students will learn the special features of Xuan Paper (Rice Paper) and how to hold a Chinese brush properly. The instructor will introduce Taichi/Qi Gong as a breathing exercise to strengthen mind/body. He will then demonstrate how to utilize/transform the breathing techniques to a mental focus and powerful brushstrokes on paper.

Students will be involved in various stages of the workshop. They will practise the breathing techniques and meditation; as well, they will learn how to put down a straight line, a circle, or a figurative image on Xuan Paper.

Co-Organizers: Toronto District School Board; Asian Heritage Month—Canadian Foundation for Asian Culture (Central Ontario) Inc.; WE Artists' Group; Social Services Network

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