

BEATS

NEWCOMER YOUTH VOICE + PERSPECTIVE

MAKE -IT- COUNT
CAMPAIGN

RACE vs.
JOURNEY
An Uneducated Truth

FREE 2B

CULTURAL

QUIRKS

IGNORANT
QUESTIONS



VOICE
YOUTH
JOURNEY
SUPPORT
CULTURE
REFUGEE
LEARNING
LANGUAGE
IMMIGRANT
EXPERIENCE
SHARE

SPACES OF
RE
SIS
TAN
CE

WHAT
MAKES
YOU
U?



KEEP YOUR CHIN UP

Photography by: Melissa Leong

Yes. You are missing out on our beautiful skies! (it was real clouds. I just added text)

BEATS RECOGNIZES UNCEDED COAST SALISH LAND FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE PUBLICATION



**ACTION
TEAM**



EDITOR'S NOTE

Jennifer Sarkar

Hello, Namesta, **nĩ hǎo**, Sat siri akal, Salaam, Shalom, Hola, chào, Kon'nichiwa, hujambo and welcome back to our 3rd Issue of BEATS: Newcomer Youth Voice + Perspective magazine. We are very grateful to be back and given the opportunity to produce another issue. BEATS started as an undergrad design project however, over the past year with the strong support from immigrant and refugee youth communities and ally members this publication continues.

In this issue youth shares about the spaces of resistance, talks about the education system and the changes need to be in place in order to have better opportunities for newcomer youth. Youth also looks in their past experiences of ignorant questions they had to face as newcomers and continues to do so even today. You will also get to see some amazing art work done by youth artists in the community.

BEATS Magazine provides an open platform to all immigrant and refugee youth in Lowermainland so youth can be expressive and share their perspective and challenges they face with others. This is a publication created by and for newcomer immigrant and refugee youth. For Issue 3 we had five internal editorial members who met eight weeks, every

saturday for three hours. The editorial team brainstormed each section, conceptualized the front and back cover and also copy edited content of the publication. Each youth voice has strong and energetic BEATS and through sharing and collaborating their voices, they can grow and empower each other. This magazine is dedicated to all the newcomer immigrant and refugee youth in the city and to those who pour their heart and soul into helping newcomers.

BEATS magazine issue 3 will not have been possible without the funding opportunity by YPC (Youth Philanthropy Council, A committee of Vancouver Foundation), support from PeerNetBC, Action Team members and Britannia Community Center.

BEATS: Newcomer Youth Voice + Perspective magazine team hopes and wishes everyone enjoys reading this issue and recognizes challenges that newcomers face.

We are always looking for collaborating with other projects in the community. So, please contact us at jrs3322@gmail.com

BEATS ISSUE 3

EDITORIAL TEAM



SIMRAN

My name is Simran Sarwara and I'm a forty-year-old stuck in a seventeen-year-old body. I can be compassionate and mature with an alter ego that loves things like archery and martial arts. I hope to revolutionize history with my motto: "Altruism is my faith, and my faith lies in altruism."



PARNIYAN

My name is Parniyan Hazhir and I am a 22-year old Political Science student at the University of British Columbia. I came to Canada as a refugee from Afghanistan at the age of nine. My passions include reading, dancing and anything that has to do with Migrant Youth issues.



LILO

My name is Lilo Liu. I am from Taiwan and I have living in Canada for 9 years. I like art and drawing. I go to the Fraser Height Secondary school. I have two brothers, I am twin with my second brother who is older than me by one minutes. I am interested in a lot of thing and want to know more about the world.



POOJA

My name is Pooja Lodhia. I am twenty one year old. I am originally from Navsari, India. I moved to Vancouver 5 years ago. I am a volunteer and a science student. My passion is helping people in anyway possible. I always like to try new things and gain experience.



JENNIFER

Hello, I am Jennifer Remy Sarkar. I am originally from Bangladesh. I loved to draw ducks when I was just a little girl. I am an alumni of Emily Carr University. Being expressive about my experiences is as much important as having food or drinking water. I love creative collaborations.

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTORS

MARLIO HERRERA

Make-It-Count

LEO HUANG

Art

JAN PILARES

Digital Art

ZAIN SHIVJI

Poem

PABLO MUÑOZ

Performance Art/ Sculpture

MELISSA LEONG

Photography



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WHAT MAKES YOU?

What makes you U? is a collaborative piece by the youth. Through this piece youth shares some of their thoughts, ideas, feelings, values and wishes.

CONTRIBUTORS

- Simran
- Parniyan
- Lilo
- Marlio
- Pooja
- Jennifer

WHAT DO YOU PERCEIVE?

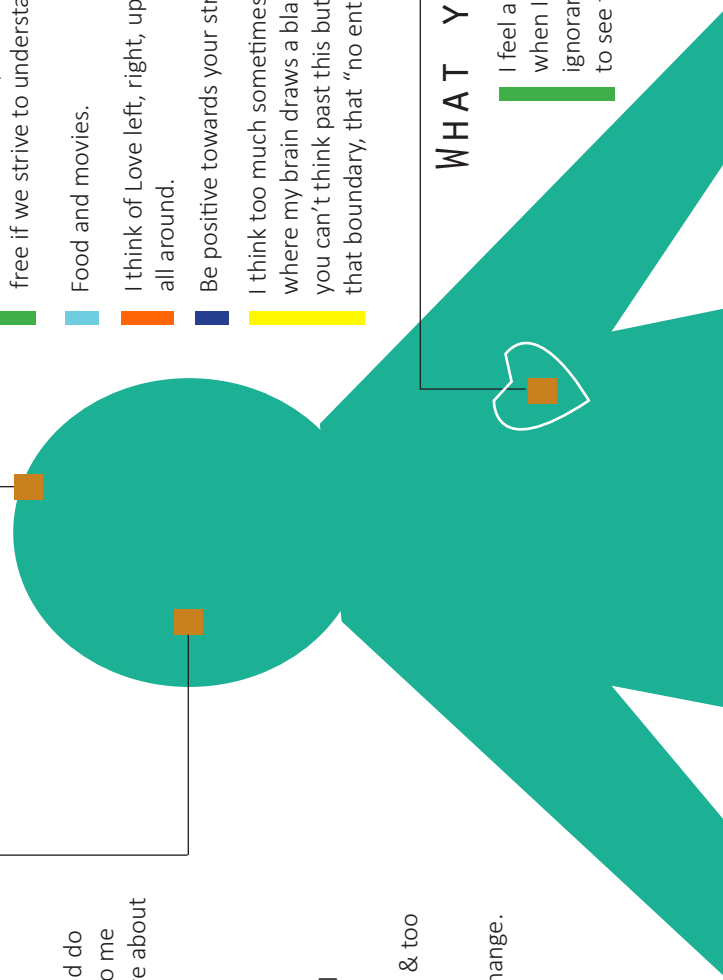
- I perceive everyone to be unique and different, but in so many ways, are also just like me.
- Persuade to learn and do something interest to me and try to know more about different culture.
- Past mistakes and future decisions.
- Respect of individual experiences.
- Too much compition & too much rasicm.
- Injustice, diversity, change.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Think about living life; try to be respectful and environmental to the society or place that we live.
- I think we can be equal while being free if we strive to understand.
- Food and movies.
- I think of Love left, right, up, down, all around.
- Be positive towards your stressful life.
- I think too much sometimes to the point where my brain draws a blank, a limit saying you can't think past this but I want to break that boundary, that "no entry" sign"

WHAT YOU FEEL?

- I feel a connection to others when I close my eyes to ignorance and open my heart to see them for who they are.



WHAT YOU HOLD ON?

I hold on to the good times to face the hard ones.

My beliefs and family/friends.

Good and bad memories.

Support people's right and freedom

Believing in yourself.

My parents, my siblings and my music

WHAT YOU STAND FOR?

I stand for justice because just sitting makes you vulnerable.

Human rights and equality.

Pure joy for every soul in the world.

I stand to become a stronger person and feel free to be anywhere.

Equality and unity.

For myself.

Exited and stressed.

I feel friendship, compassion and passion.

There have a lot of bad thing and good thing happen no matter in life, society or places.

Don't compare yourself with anyone.

Powerful, vulnerable, and human.

MAKE-IT-COUNT

IF LEARNING ENGLISH IS SO IMPORTANT, MAKE IT COUNT.

By: Marlio

When a high school student in BC learns a new language, they get credit towards their graduation. Unless they're a migrant student learning English. Because our hard work isn't valued the same, more of us graduate late or drop out and join the labor force early—In this way we are denied opportunities to strive to support our families. If thousands of us, people from all backgrounds, demand that the hard work of migrant students be given equal value, then the B.C. Ministry of Education will finally realize this system is unacceptable.

With this we created the Make it Count Campaign where we asked people to visit the make-it-count.ca website and to add their names to a petition to make ELL courses count towards graduation. These names gathered by Vancouver Foundation, for a reporting and presenting purposes. Getting credit toward graduation

for ELL courses is first step to the modifying the education system to be more accepting of migrants and refugee, which in turn will help break the cycles of poverty, discrimination and exclusion in a country that prides itself on its multiculturalism.

“Because our hard work isn't valued the same, more of us graduate late or drop out and join the labor force early”

WHO IS THE FRESH VOICES YAT?

We are a group of immigrant and refugee youth called the Fresh Voices Youth Advisory Team. We first met in the summer of 2011. Guided by youth workers, the Vancouver Foundation and B.C.'s representative for children and youth, we examined the strengths and barriers we face in fulfilling our dreams in Canada. These conversations shaped the themes and discussions at the Fresh Voices from Long Journeys Summit in 2011. The Make-It-Count campaign emerged from the recommendations

outlined in the 2013 Fresh Voices Report by the Fresh Voices Youth Advisory Team.

Fresh Voices continues as an initiative to engage immigrant and refugee youth from across the province in dialogue and action. The ultimate goal is to improve the policies and practices that affect immigrant and refugee youths' sense of belonging in British Columbia and Canada as a whole.



CURIOSITY

Drawing by: Leo Huang

RACE vs. JOURNEY:

AN UNEDUCATED TRUTH

By: Simran Sarwara



“WHY CAN’T IT BE ABOUT THE JOURNEY, INSTEAD OF THE DESTINATION?”

Culture, having been passed down from generation to generation, shapes lives and paves paths for whosoever wishes to tread upon them. Could it be then, that as the traditions were taught and minds were molded, that it was forgotten to leave them open? Could this missing element help explain why achieving life goals—something too often manipulated in education systems—has become a race instead of a journey? A race in which there can only be one winner? It is common in collectivist cultures to prioritize education, especially since many are not privileged enough to have access to it. But there seems to be something astray

amongst those who do. From the day we are able to comprehend the word “future”, we are plagued with expectations to win, to defeat, to get ahead of everyone else. We are brought up believing that the percentage on a piece of paper determines whether we are good enough. Why can’t it be an adventure, where everyone has a different goal, goes through different experiences and meets up with other individuals who may go their own way at a fork in the road? Why can’t it be about the journey, instead of the destination?



FREE 2B

By: Simran Sarwara

Bullying - a word worn and torn from misuse and overuse. Overgeneralized by reference to almost any type of conflict, it has become an underestimated concept. This reality is the primary reason for the establishment of a new club, known as Free2B, at Cariboo Hill Secondary School. Free2B (Free To Be) is composed of students from grades 8-12 who are united towards the goal to raising awareness of the reality of bullying, and strive to create an environment within their own school that does not tolerate bullying. Often associated with harassment, bullying occurs where there is an imbalance of power between two individuals and that power is misused to afflict harm. It is targeted, it is repetitive, and above all, it is NOT okay. Often those who do not categorize as being a certain way become “targets” or “victims” – something that many immigrants and refugees can relate to experiencing in a new school envi-

ronment. Free2B believes that there is absolutely no excuse to single out an individual because of how they identify themselves as. Yet 47% of Canadian parents report having a child victim of bullying¹. The facts and figures can label this issue with numbers, but bullying needs to be handled not with a systematic, elimination-based goal, but rather with a process that strengthens and equips an individual with the ability to overcome such situations. Contrary to common belief, bullying occurs not only in the hallways of a school, but within various other spaces including the workplace, at home and even among friends. This proves that we need to create a solution in which the individual is empowered, not victimized.

¹<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45838.html>

IGNORANT QUESTIONS

By: Jennifer Sarkar

"So, I heard you are from Bangladesh. I didn't know you guys know how to speak English. You sound good but I can tell from your accent that you are not from here."

This was at my first art opening show. I was annoyed and felt my hands were tied because my

broken English and my lack of confidence wasn't able to put together a good smacked answer for her. As newcomers and being from another race often makes us target for ignorant and deeply offensive questions for many. Here are some of our true life experiences.

What is on discount on **Taco Bell**?

Aren't you glad to be in **Canada**, where all your nights are protected?

Why don't you eat **butter chicken** for lunch?

How many **Gods** you have?

Do you speak **Mexican**?

Who is your **favourite God**?

Is Jennifer your **real name**?
I thought you were hindu.

Oh you're from **Afghanistan**? - Can you say something in **Arabic**?

How is it to **ride donkeys** to school?

Friend: I am from El Salvador.
Teacher: Which part in Mexico is that?

Why are you **vegetarian**?

Are you going to do **arrange marriage**?

How do you **speak English** so well?

Me: What should I work when I graduate from high school?

Counselor: Why don't you become a building constructor or bricklayer? Mexican people are really good working there, you know!?

■ Marlio

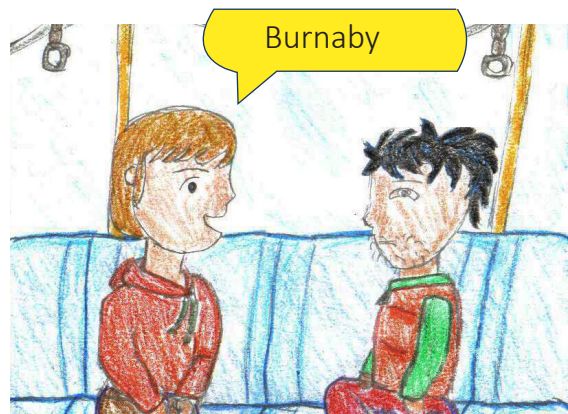
■ Jennifer

■ Pooja

■ Simran

■ Parniyan

IGNORANT QUESTIONS COMIC



QUESTIONING COUNTRY
Comic drawing by: Lilo Liu

SPACES OF RESISTANCE

By: *Parniyan Nazhir*

If you Google the word resist, you end up with this definition, “Withstand the action or effect of.” This might seem confusing but I found all the words within this definition to very relevant to the act of Resistance. Resistance is Action. It is something you do, an action you take for change or for yourself. It is the opposite of remaining passive and accepting—because once you take an action, you’re on the go, you’re defiant. Now let’s look at the word withstand—it is made up of ‘with’ and ‘stand’ because in a space of Resistance, you stand for something, for yourself, for your peers, for your values and you take an action to make sure they are protected. And in a space

of Resistance, you are not alone; you have someone or something with you. Lastly, Resistance creates an effect: it is a step towards change, to alter the situation you are in to a situation you want to be in. Resistance is Action. A space is anywhere, anytime, in any context. Therefore, Spaces of Resistances are beautiful, radical moments or places which are bursting with colours and sounds and music and feelings of change, of diversity into the everyday life, to the overwhelming mainstream. Spaces of Resistance is survival, revival—it is both the dance and the song of the beginning of autonomy, of liberation and cooperation.

Mawj

A SPACE OF RESISTANCE FOR AFGHAN YOUTH

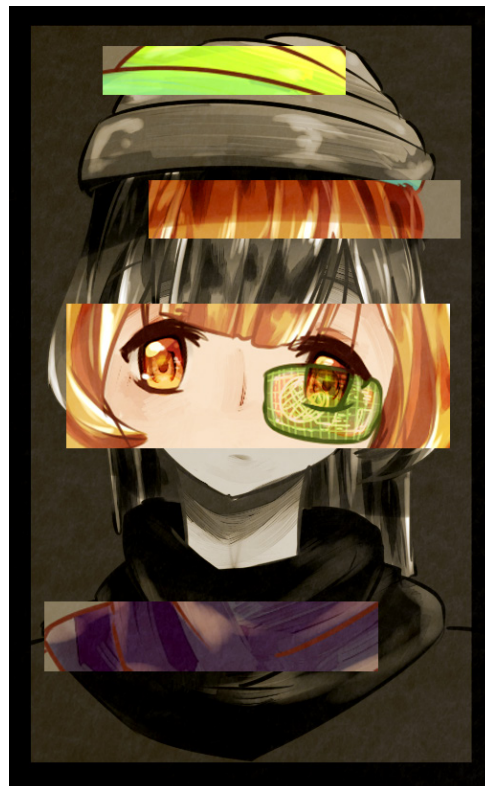
Most Fridays, I go to Mawj, a cultural group for Afghan youth in Vancouver. Mawj means wave in my mother language, Farsi. We call our group Mawj because it describes our lives: we are migrants, mostly refugees. We, like a wave are restless, flexible and on the go—we have journeyed so far, adapting to so many different communities, surviving. That is what we are doing here in Vancouver as well. We are surviving. We come from a past of fleeing war, a past of learning new languages, new customs, a past of being put down for being from Afghanistan, a past of identity crises and being lost. At Mawj we are not refugees, we are not lost and we are not at war. We are Afghan youth, coming together, talking, dancing, discussing, being different,

and being similar. At Mawj, our Afghan identity converges with all our other identities we have picked up along the way. At Mawj, we don’t have labels and stereotypes etched onto our brown bodies, our broken accents. At Mawj, we are resisting those labels, those stereotypes by being our unique selves. At Mawj, we prove that we are different but cooperative. We organize events for our community and try to expand the role of youth in our Afghan culture. We don’t only resist the outside mainstream society but we also resist the boxes our own culture wants to put us in. We don’t allow the political baggage from Afghanistan that each of our families or ethnic groups carry to get in the way of building our community here. We resist.

Being Awkward

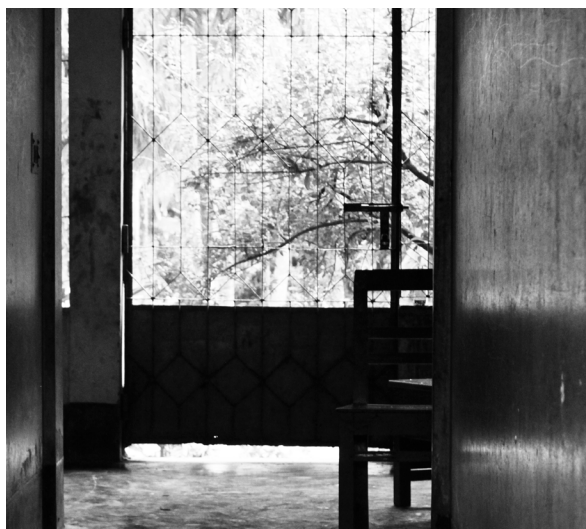
By: *Lilo Liu*

When I first doing my first presentation in an elementary school in Canada, I was freaking out. I didn't know what to do so I kept flipping through a textbook looking stressful. Then a student who was sitting beside me looked at me and the look on her face said "Are you ok?". At the time I felt awkward so I kept flipping the pages and started to draw an airplane from the textbook on piece of blank paper. I took out my pencil and crayon from my backpack while kept drawing and stressing out—suddenly the paper slipped and my pencil crayon fell into a garbage can in front of my desk. After school, I got home and searched around for a book about science. I decided to do an experience using pennies and lemon juice to make electricity and write an essays to bring it to school the next day. When I handed my essay to my teacher to look at before doing the experiment, my teacher somehow didn't seem understand what my it was about—So I explained some parts of it to her, and after explaining she wanted me to redo it and think of another one. After that, I learned that I should be more confident and not afraid of being awkward.



ART & TECHNOLOGY

Digital art work by: Jan Pílares



Photography by: Jennifer Sarkar

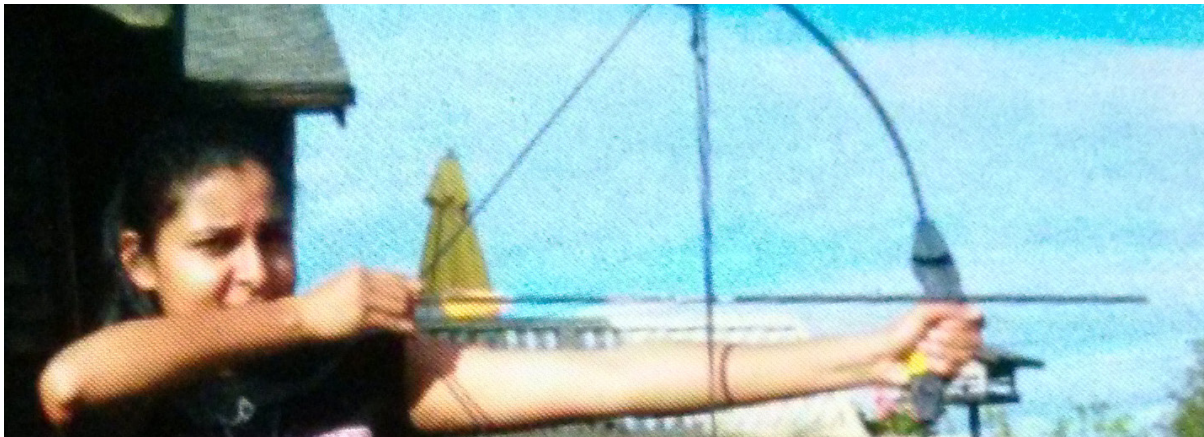
**“I LEARNED THAT I
SHOULD BE MORE
CONFIDENT AND
NOT AFRAID OF
BEING AWKWARD”**

- Lilo Liu

SPACES OF RESISTANCE continue

Archery of Angst

By: *Simran Sarwara*



“AS MY MUSCLES CONTRACT TO PULL THE ARROW BACK, I DO NOT FEEL ANY FEAR”

It's probably the last thing that comes to mind when one thinks of inner peace and freedom. Or perhaps it is the first, as it has been used in battles to obtain this so-called “freedom”. It would be baffling then, to think of it as a way of relieving the pressure that builds from each passing day. But when I release an arrow from my bow, or this “weapon”, I feel that it does just that. As I align my arm with the horizon and focus on a single point on the target, I do not feel violent. As my muscles contract to pull the arrow back, I do not feel any fear. When I watch the arrow

soar and pierce the tin can, I do not feel triumph. What I feel, is the anger of a disappointing mark flowing out to my hand as it holds the bow midair. What I feel is the strength of my fingers, which wipe away tears day after day, pull the arrow back. What I feel is the focus on a single target, the same focus used to score in a netball game. What I feel, is resistance...resistance to the angst in my mind, resistance to the pressure from the race against time, and resistance to what society believes I should be.

FOR MY MOTHER

Poem by: Zain Shivji

My Mother still cries for her home land -

ever since she set foot in a country
that felt loose around her fingertips
she has always been just out of reach of
Mombasa

I can smell Mombasa on the calluses of her
hand like memories engraved in the veins of
her body- If you cut her open,
she would bleed Mombasa

her home land is everywhere;
never not in sight because
when things are out of sight
they are out of mind,
out of heart

I hold her hand on 4am mornings witnessing
her weep; her sacred tears being caressed by
her bed sheets- she is the epitome of Love-

corporations have started to put prices on
home, four thousand dollars is what my
mother and I will pay to be in the only place
that does not feel unfamiliar, the only place
that smells like agaarbati freedom and chah

her old house is slowly sliding off of a ridge
now -how do I begin to tell my mother I love
her when her home land is starting to die?
inflation rates trickling upwards
in the blink of an eye

she often feels lost,
trying to find home in places that can never
replace it-the spice store, in the chutney she
eats with every meal, even her body feels
exhausted from yearning for something that
will never be found-

but she never stops looking,
never stops searching, never stops trying to
find that one place that feeds her

So she makes roti,
speaks Kutchi and Swahili,
goes to prayer to hear the Arabic language
and tattoo it on her tongue instead

because this is what you do in diaspora;
this is what you do when home is something
you are never going to feel-when ancestral
Matriarchs are in every ounce of your body
the only thing you know how to do
is to keep going

it is in my Mother's bloodlines-
no wonder I often feel like
her and I share the same heart in two
separate bodies; because we often feel
broken in the same ways like we are always
lost but never found

we are broken hearts of Brown Beautiful
reaching for the roots of our ancestors
because that is the only thing that matters

when Home is a place
you cannot pinpoint on a map



THE BUTTERFLY SUIT

Artist: Pablo Muñoz

The butterfly suit

- Steel and polyester cage
- Silk wings
- Leather straps
- Sculpture + performance art

THE BUTTERFLY SUIT

By: Pablo Muñoz

**“What are you doing?
What does your color mean?
How long are you doing this for?
Why is your skin showing?
Why aren’t you showing more skin?”**

Monarch butterflies travel every year from various parts of Latin America to the north. Their delicate, yet resilient wings overcome barriers, winds, storms... and they do it all for the success of their off-spring. It is no wonder they are a symbol for migrant justice and peoples right to move freely.

For the critique of this piece “The Butterfly Suit” I asked people to gather around a stool. Once I sat down, people started asking questions to which my fellow artist Giselle Quero responded “all questions will be answered once the suit is off, however, you will not be able to ask more questions after”. Soon enough questions started coming in: “what are you doing?” “What does your color mean?” “How long are you doing this for?” “why is your skin showing?” “why aren’t you showing more skin?”... The fact that these questions resemble the ones a CBSA (Canada Border Services Agency) officer asks a refugee is a remarkable coincidence on which I will not pause to reflect.

At any given time of the year I am aware of one or two refugee claimants being held in prisons for exercising their human right of seeking refuge, no trial.

The interrogation of butterflies,

GULABI GANG

By: Pooja Lodhia



My name is Pooja Lodhia. I am originally from Gujarat, India. I moved to Canada five years ago with my family. I am currently a student and a volunteer. I like to do social work and help people which ever way I can. I like to think all women in our generation has equal opportunities and has the right to stand on their own feet, however in reality we are still not treated as equals by our societies and individuals.

A woman is born with full of sacrifice and compromising for others. Firstly, she is born as a daughter who has to take responsibility of her family. Secondly she has grown up as a strong woman who understands and tries to solve all situations. Thirdly, as a mother who is always guiding for choosing right path and teaching values of life to their children. And yet women's are disrespected and seen as the weakest.

Violence against women has been continuing for centuries. The only difference is that in past few decades women started to raise their voice

against it and fight back for their rights. One particular group of women known as "Gulabi Gang" does just that and stands for local women's right in a village in India. This gang was found by Simpart Pal; a mother and a house wife. She hails from place in India. She stands against violence for all women. This group of strong women does fight back physically and takes the routes of violence towards husbands who thinks it is normal and even in some cases is their right to beat their wives. I found that as a result of this kind of situation the gang thinks it's more effective to cause physical harm to the husbands or the males in order to send a clear message to others husbands in the village.

This gang has more than 40,000 women in their group who stands together and supports single mothers, victims of violence and holds their hands through hard times.

"Making A Strong Inspiration For Other Women "

ART

By: Some awesome artists!



DARK LIGHTNING

Digital art work by: Jan Pilares



SNOW AND SHADOW

Photography by: Melissa Leong

The isolated quite mood brings us the image of winter, sometimes.



FALL

Drawing by: Leo Huang

CULTURAL QUIRKS

Cultural Quirks contribution by: Simran, Parniyan, Marlio, Pooja and Jennifer

MAKE SURE TO SAY “I’LL BE BACK” AND NOT “GOODBYE” BECAUSE IT MAY MEAN YOU WILL NOT RETURN.

WHEN YOU RETURN TO SOMEONE’S HOUSE AFTER A LONG TIME, BEFORE YOU ENTER, THE HOSTS MUST PUT A FEW DROPS OF OIL IN THE CORNERS OF THE DOORWAY.

ENTER A NEW PLACE WITH YOUR RIGHT FOOT.

TO TAKE OUT NEGATIVE ENERGY FROM MY BODY MY GRANDMOTHERS WOULD USE AN EGG, A BUNCH OF A PLANT CALLED “RUDA” AND SOME RUBBING ALCOHOL WITH HERBS. THEN SHE WOULD LIGHTLY RUB THEM ON MY BACK, LEGS, CHEST AND HEAD, AND THAT WOULD ABSORB THE NEGATIVE ENERGY FROM MY BODY.

PEOPLE MAY THINK THIS IS WITCHCRAFT BUT IS NOT, IT IS JUST A BELIEVE, IT DOES NOT INVOLVE ANYTHING WITH WITCHCRAFT AND RITUALS.

IF YOU STEP ON SOMEONE’S FEET, YOU HAVE TO SHAKE HANDS WITH THEM OTHERWISE YOU WILL GET IN TO A FIGHT.

IT’S BAD LUCK IF A BLACK CAT CUTS YOUR PATH.

EVEN IF YOU’RE DRIVING BY THE TEMPLE FROM A DISTANCE, ALWAYS BOW BRIEFLY.

WHEN SOMONE’S LEAVING FOR A TRIP, YOU MUST THROW WATER AFTER THEM AS THEY LEAVE, FOR GOOD LUCK.

DON’T DROP YOUR MILK, IT’S BAD LUCK.



T FOR TEA TIME

Photography by: Melissa Leong

I love tea. Tea time is relaxing time. Even just looking at the floating tea bag.

We don't all see the same thing



**Then why do we all need
to be the same person?**



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