



第49回パウエル祭

49TH ANNUAL

POWELL STREET FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING JAPANESE CANADIAN ART and CULTURE

ART BY MAKOTO CHI

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE!

20 Annual 25 Report

Report Guide

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Since 1977, the Powell Street Festival has stood as a living testament to the resilience, creativity, and intergenerational strength of Japanese Canadian communities. Our mission is simple but profound: to celebrate Japanese Canadian arts and culture while connecting communities across generations and geographies. Guided by values of community, artistic excellence, inclusivity, heritage, and resilience, PSFS operates at the intersection of cultural preservation and social innovation, ensuring that the stories, creativity, and traditions of Japanese Canadians remain visible, relevant, and evolving.

Our vision extends beyond a festival weekend: we envision a society enriched and interconnected through Japanese Canadian arts and culture, where emerging and established artists thrive, intergenerational stories are shared, and the lessons of Paueru Gai (the Powell Street neighbourhood) inform community-building for generations to come. To achieve this, we provide a hub for Japanese Canadian artists and cultural producers, develop partnerships with local and national communities, and offer accessible programming that encourages participation from audiences of all backgrounds.



A 2025 Snapshot

2025 was a year of transition and growth for the Powell Street Festival Society, marked by new leadership and continued preparation for the 50th Powell Street Festival in 2026. The organization delivered its 49th annual Festival alongside a full year of community and arts programming across multiple streams.

Across the year, PSFS continued to build on long-standing relationships with artists, cultural workers, and community partners, while strengthening internal systems and organizational capacity in preparation for the year ahead. These milestones reflect both continuity and change, as the organization works toward its next chapter grounded in community, care, and cultural celebration.



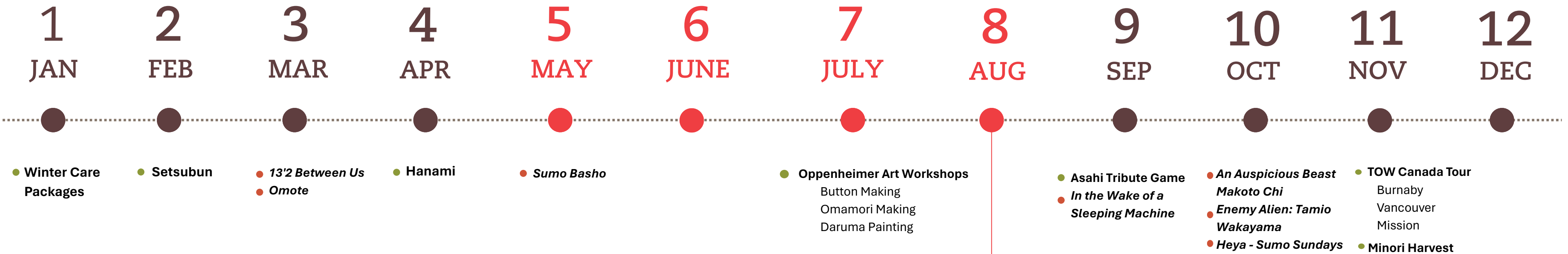
(2025 Production Season Staff)

- Collaborative Presentation
- PSFS Program

From May to August, PSFS entered its Production Season – four months of intensive preparation for the August long weekend. This period focused on finalizing festival production and programming, coordinating volunteers, producing the Bulletin Program, and hosting the Japanese Canadian Youth Cohort. In addition these efforts, 3 Community Care events were held as part of our outreach in the Oppenheimer neighbourhood, strengthening ties with the local community.

During this period we welcomed two seasonal staff members, including a long-time volunteer returning in a staff role, and reunited with 30 volunteer coordinators.

FESTIVAL PRODUCTION SEASON



Building Momentum Through Community

We kicked off 2025 with two Downtown Eastside community care events: our annual Setsubun New Year celebration and winter care package program. These initiatives helped build momentum following the leadership transition earlier in the year.



49th Annual Powell Street Festival August 2-3, 2025



A Season of Continuity and Creativity

The post-festival season brought together our long-standing community care programs and a series of unique, one-time arts & cultural events. This mix reflects our vision for the future – honouring tradition while introducing new initiatives that showcase Japanese Canadian arts and culture. The season highlighted both emerging and established artists and cultural producers, and notably included PSFS's leadership in coordinating the TOW Canada Tour.

Reflections on 2025

2025 was my first year as Executive Director of the Powell Street Festival Society, and a year of stepping into the stewardship of an organization shaped through relationships, memory, and practice. It was a year of accompanying both a full Festival season and a substantial year of year-round programming. From the outset, I worked closely with staff, volunteers, artists, and community members across both, learning how this work is held across many hands and sustained through long-standing relationships and shared ways of working.

As a Gosei who grew up attending PSF in Vancouver, I have long known the Festival as something vibrant and familiar that appears each summer in a seamless way. From within, I came to understand the depth of coordination and care that underpins this experience, months of preparation and a live festival environment assembled in real time through the collaborative work of artists, volunteers, staff, and community members. What became most evident was the continuity embedded in this practice: people returning across years and roles, carrying knowledge forward, and sustaining the relational conditions through which both the Festival and year-round programming are able to evolve.

Beyond the 49th Festival, 2025 was shaped by a sustained program of year-round activity across community and arts streams. This ongoing work extended relationships beyond a singular summer moment, supported continued collaboration with artists and cultural workers, and created space for experimentation, care, and continuity throughout the calendar year. Across both programming and Festival delivery, I worked alongside staff and volunteers in fast-moving, high-trust contexts, moments requiring responsiveness, humour, precision, and shared commitment, while contributing to strengthening the organizational foundation as it moves into a period of increased activity ahead.

I am deeply grateful to our staff, volunteers, Board, artists, funders, donors, sponsors, and community partners for their trust, generosity, and care throughout the year. It has been a privilege to step into this role and contribute alongside this community.

- **Sophie Yamauchi Latimer, Executive Director**



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49th Annual Powell Street Festival in Photos



“Powell Street is such a champion of JC culture, and it feels really special for me to be part of it”
Alison S. M. Kobayashi, Filmmaker, 2025

“My favourite part of the experience was meeting everyone in person and seeing the sense of community the festival has... and to meet people that I want to know for the rest of my life”
- Grace Miyoko Challenger, Japanese Canadian Youth Cohort 2025



Our Festival in Numbers



Celebrating the 49th Annual Powell Street Festival

The 49th Powell Street Festival celebrated heritage, creativity, and community resilience, setting the stage for the milestone 50th anniversary in 2026.

Since its inception in 1977, the Powell Street Festival has grown into one of Canada's largest and longest-running community arts festivals—a vital gathering and annual homecoming for Japanese Canadians, welcoming visitors from near and far.

On the August long weekend of 2025, the Festival once again transformed Oppenheimer Park and its surrounding neighborhoods, that were a part of Vancouver's historic Japanese Canadian neighbourhood, *Paueru Gai*, into a vibrant two-day celebration. Inspired by traditional Japanese *matsuri*, the Festival featured dance, music, film, visual arts, martial arts demonstrations, amateur sumo, children's activities, craft vendors, and Nikkei cuisine.

This year was especially significant, with participation by 592 artists, reflecting the Festival's growing role as a platform for artistic innovation and cultural exchange. In addition, for the first time in our history, **lottery tickets sold out**, with two winners receiving flights to Japan through a partnership with Zip Air.



Volunteer Program

The Powell Street Festival is deeply rooted in the spirit of volunteerism, and we are thankful to the dedicated community of volunteers whose ongoing contributions continue to shape and sustain our programming. Our Volunteer program extends beyond the festival weekend, with long-time volunteers preparing months in advance and taking on leadership roles to coordinate key areas. Volunteers include former staff members, high school students, and retirees, representing a wide variety of experiences and knowledge that make the festival possible.



In 2025, we were especially grateful to welcome one of the largest groups of volunteers in our history, whose collective efforts were essential to the success of the festival weekend:

480+
Festival Volunteers in 2025

120
New Volunteers

86%
of volunteers surveyed indicated plans to return

5000+
total volunteer hours in 2025

\$15,000
Investments in social enterprise and low barrier job creation

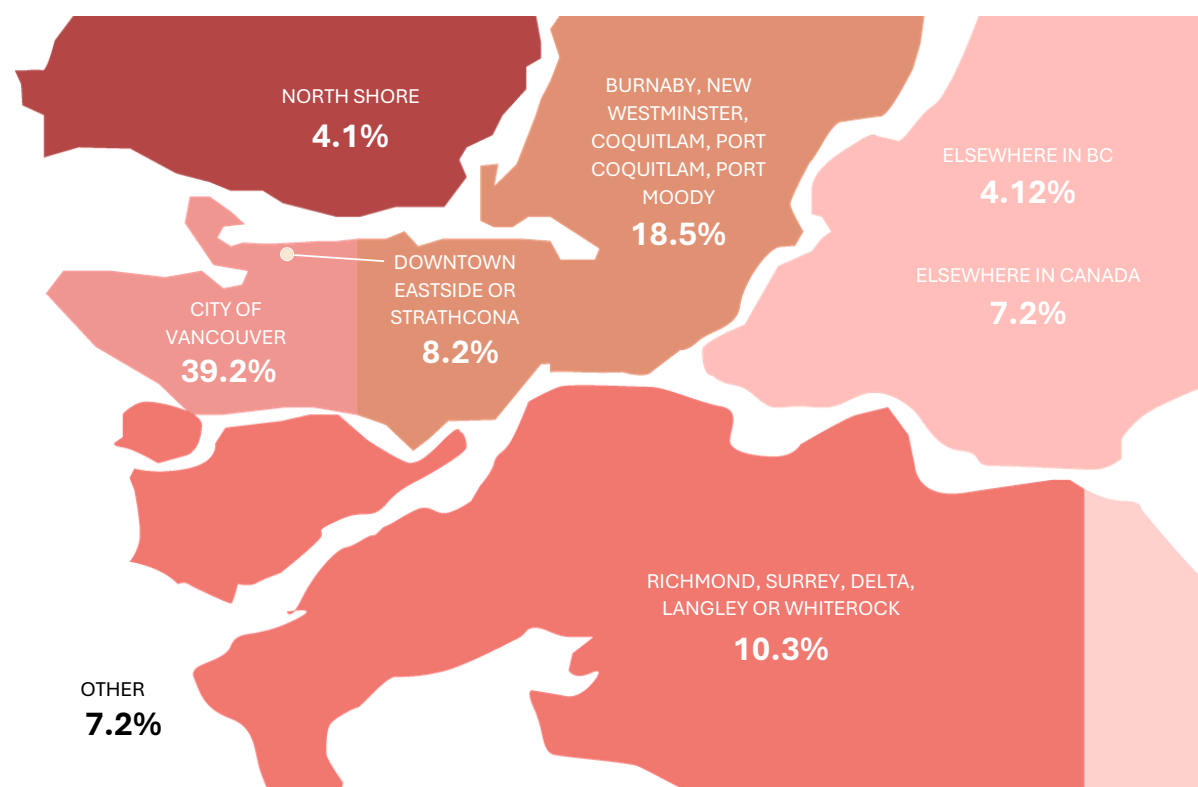
Each year, the festival provides diverse, accessible employment opportunities to members of the Downtown Eastside community. We engage local residents to help foster a welcoming atmosphere for all.



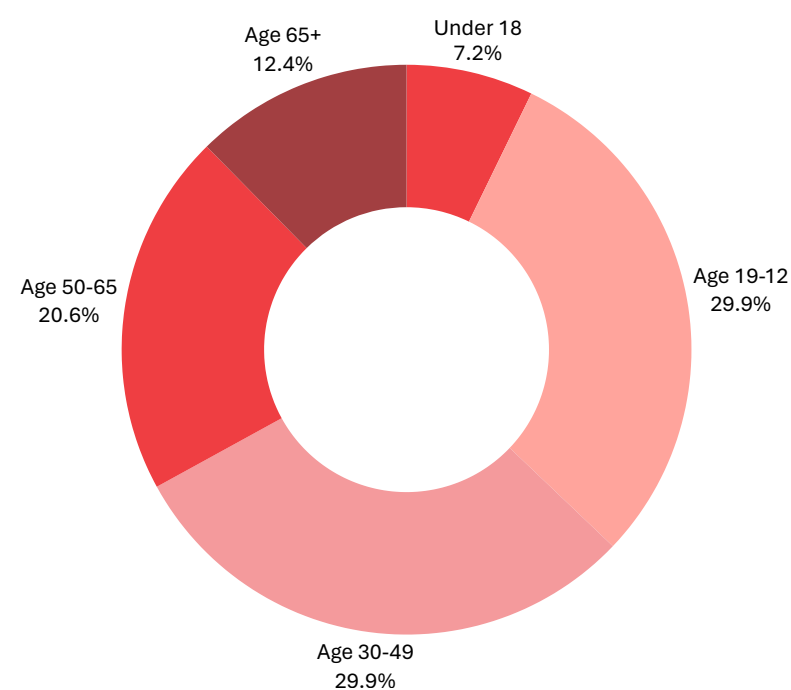
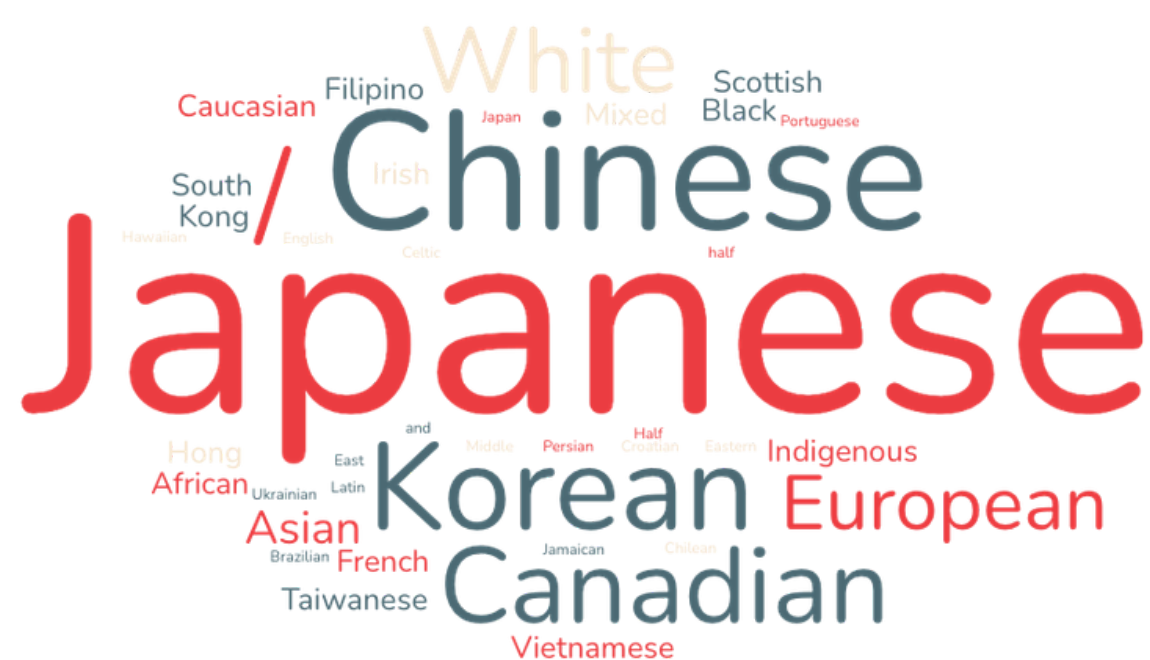
Our Festival Demographics

One of the key strengths of the Powell Street Festival is our ability to bring together a remarkably diverse audience that might not otherwise cross paths. We take pride in fostering a intercultural, multi-generational community, and our audience continues to expand each year:

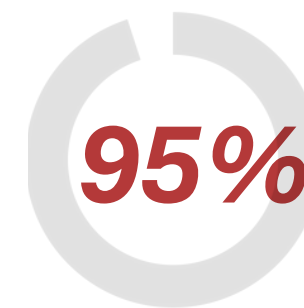
The Powell Street Festival continues to draw a wide ranged audience from near and far. This year, nearly 50% of attendees came from the City of Vancouver, including many from the Downtown Eastside and Strathcona, highlighting the Festival's strong community roots. The remainder joined us from across the Greater Vancouver Area, with additional visitors travelling from elsewhere in B.C. and across Canada, reflecting the Festival's growing reach and its significance as an annual homecoming for Japanese Canadians.



Our festival attendees are equally diverse in ethnic background and age, and self-identified as:



of festival attendees are "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with their festival experience



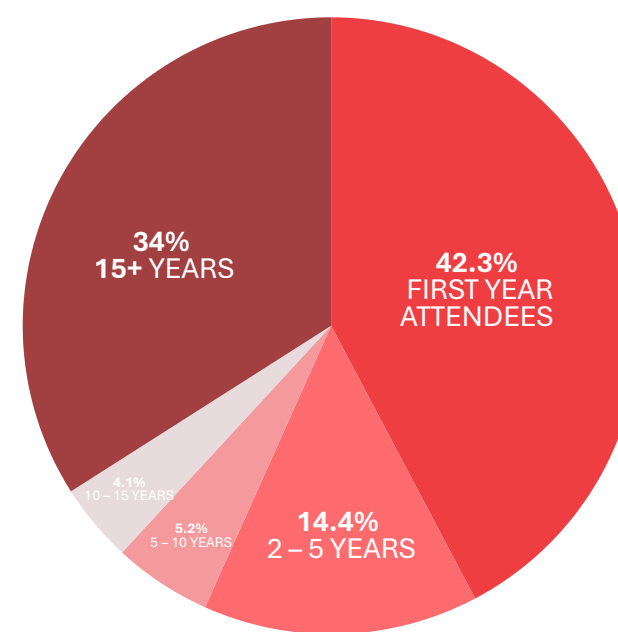
of festival attendees are "Very Likely" or "Likely" to return to the festival in the future



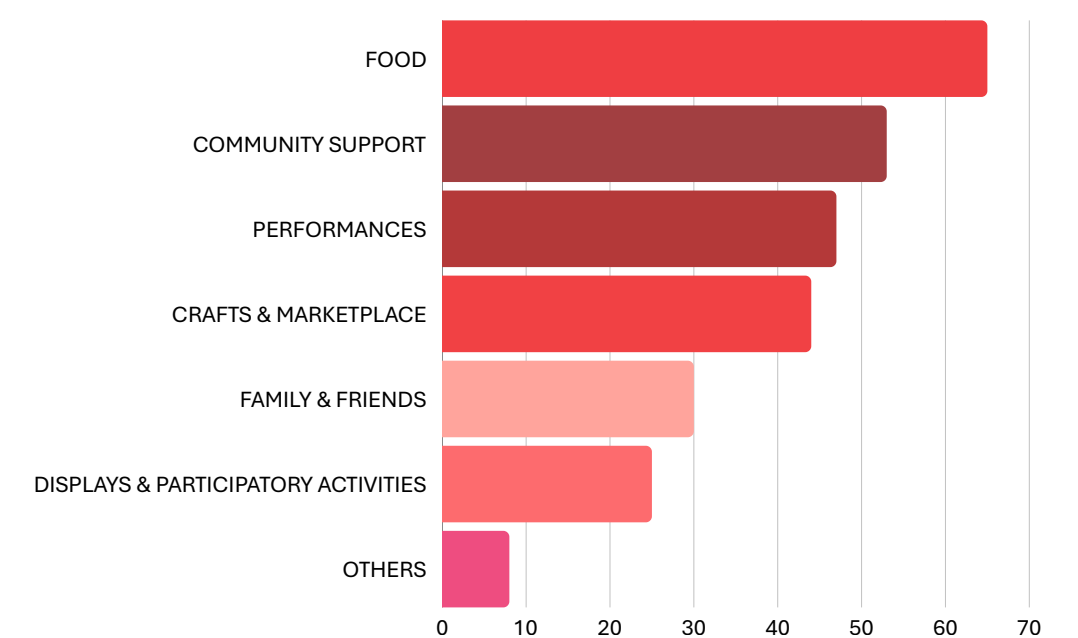
of festival attendees described interaction with volunteers as "Very Good" or "Good"

New & Returning Attendees

How many years have you attended the festival?



What brought you to the festival?



This year, the Festival welcomed a uniquely balanced mix of long-time supporters and first-time visitors. We saw an **11% increase** in first-time attendees from 2024, while many others have been returning for 15 years or more. Many return not only for the food, performances, and marketplace, but for the sense of community support that defines the Festival. This blend of new and returning attendees reflects our identity as a community-run celebration rooted in Japanese Canadian history while being deeply connected to the Downtown Eastside.

Festival Vendors

In 2025, Powell Street Festival welcomed a diverse range of collaborators with Japanese roots from across Canada and abroad. The two-day celebration showcased a wide variety of vendors, including community organizations, craft and marketplace participants, and food booths, that together make the festival memorable and unique.

Our Vendors

Community Tent Booths

- 50th Anniversary PSF feedback booth
- Carnegie Housing Project
- CRAB Park
- DTES Street Vendors
- Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizen's Association
- Japan Market Vancouver
- Japanese Canadian Legacies Society
- JET Alumni Association of British Columbia & Yukon (JETAABC)
- National Association of Japanese Canadians
- Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre
- Nikkei Vancouver for Justice
- Nikoniko Home Care
- Our Community Bikes
- Paueru Gaizette / Tadaima! Collective
- Tonari Gumi
- United We Can
- Vancouver Japanese Gardeners Association
- Vancouver Japanese Language School
- Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice

Foods Booths

- Aiyahno Cafe
- Artisan SakeMaker
- Because We Do - Art Sembei!!
- COCONAMA CHOCOLATE
- GVIJCCA
- Hatchan
- Japanese Crepe SASUKE
- Konko Church of Vancouver
- Manpuku
- Potato san
- Powell Street Salmon Barbeque
- Taco Nori
- Tatchan Noodle
- Tea Lani
- Tenrikyo Yonomotokai
- Teppan-Yaro!
- Teriyaki Boys
- Tochi - New PSF 2025
- Tonari Gumi
- Vancouver Buddhist Temple
- Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall
- Vankoji Foods Ltd.
- Vegan Pudding & Co.
- Wakwakburger
- Whatafood Brazilian Street Food

Craft & Marketplace Booths

- AllyAllyOrange
- ami in the city
- Amrita Designs
- Antler to Shimarisu
- Beads Ya
- Beauty secrets of Japan
- Blue & White
- branches & knots
- Capture+ wire Jewelry
- Club Nikkei (by Hello Yumiko)
- Colour in Memory
- Enn
- Fortiv
- Hazy Bee Studio
- HITOMI MCKENZIE PORCELAIN CERAMICS
- House of Kewpie
- JACLOT
- Japagoods
- Karet
- Kazuko
- Kira Craft and Jewellery
- Mahoroba Design
- Meditating Bunny Studio Inc.
- Minori Takagi
- Mom's Care Natural Handmade Soap
- Motomura Wares
- MO's Pottery Studio
- Mysgreen
- Pac West Kimono
- PAPER FOR YOU
- Picchie Zakka
- Potteruki
- Resin Art Opaque
- Ripple & Rise
- Sasaki Art Gallery
- Scandinazn
- Siamurai Apparel
- Sleepless Kao
- Sun Root
- TEZUKURI VAN
- Thé Vert Jewellery
- Tien the Wizard
- VILKU VILKA
- WaQ's Sushi

*Listed in alphabetical Order



Festival Artist & Performers

Alongside a wide range of vendors, Powell Street Festival takes pride in the diverse artists featured in our programming. This year's two-day celebration showcased a vibrant mix of local and international performers whose contributions enriched our stages, programs, and created a memorable festival experience for all.

Our Artists & Performers

Ceremonial:

- Urasenke Foundation of Vancouver
- Vancouver Mikoshi Rakuichi
- Vancouver Ikebana Association

Children's Programming:

- Kiai Contest
- Suika Wari
- Tug-of-war

Circus:

- Travis Bernhardt
- Yuki the Juggler

Dance:

- APPARE Yosakoi Vancouver
- Kokoro Dance
- Otowa Ryu Japanese Dance Group
- Tenrikyo Joyous Stars
- Wailele Wai Wai
- World Soran!

Film:

- Father of the Milk Way Railroad
- File No. 2304
- In Our Grandparents' Kitchens
- Landscapes of Home

Informative:

- Hastings Park Interpretive Centre

Installation:

- Phone Booth

Interdisciplinary:

- Big Print
- Kisyuu Japanese Calligrapher
- The Labyrinth of Messages

Literary:

- An Afternoon at the Movies: Script Reading with Vivien Nishi
- Genbaku no Uta: Poetry after the Atomic Bomb
- Reflecting Haiku: Reimagining Internment-era Poetry
- The Gate of Memory: Poems by Descendants of Nikkei Wartime Incarceration

Martial Arts:

- Busenkai and Tamiyaryu Iaijutsu Shofu Genkei Ha
- satoha karate do canada
- Shohei Juku Aikido Canada
- Shorinji Kempo
- UBC Classical Bu-jutsu Club
- Vancouver Iaido Club
- Vancouver Katori Shinto Ryu Kenjutsu: Sugawara Budo
- Vancouver Kyudo Club
- Youshinkan Dojo

Music:

- A for Effort
- Asian Persuasion All Stars
- Canada Miyake Taiko Kai
- Chibi Taiko
- CoSei
- Foxgloves
- GO Taiko GO
- Jason de Couto Trio
- JODAIKO
- Kohei Yoshino
- Onibana Taiko
- Rina and the Tohoku Min'yo Band
- Sansho Daiko

Music (Cont):

- Sawagi Taiko
- Southern Wave Okinawan Music & Dance Society
- Tamami Maitland Trio
- Vancouver Okinawa Taiko
- Vancouver Sakura Singers

Participatory Activities:

- Japanese Canadian Youth Mixer
- Radio & Nikkei Taiko
- Sumo Tournament
- Sumo Workshop
- Tanko Bushi
- Vancouver Buddhist Temple Sanctuary Visit

Theatre:

- Hitotose
- Kizuna Theatre
- Za Daikon

Workshops & Panels:

- Mata Ashita
- Fold, Write, Drum!
- PSF Healing Circle

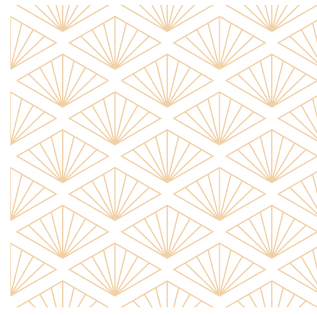
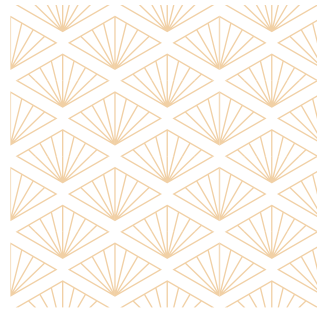
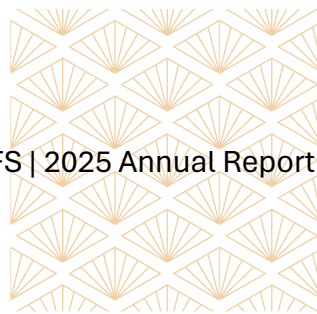
**Listed in alphabetical Order*



Year-Round Programming: Community Care Highlights

In addition to our flagship Festival in August, Powell Street Festival offers a variety of year-round programs, divided into two streams: Community Care and Arts & Culture. In partnership with community experts, the Community Care series aims to provide food and resource support, and cultural activities with the Downtown Eastside (DTES) community that share Japanese Canadian history while highlighting its deep connections with the DTES.

In 2025, we hosted **10 Community Care programs**. Alongside our five annual initiatives: Winter Care Package Distribution, *Setsubun*, *Hanami*, *Asahi Pitch*, and *Minori*, we introduced five new workshop series, including the Oppenheimer Art Workshops and Counter Mapping Series in Oppenheimer Park focused on capacity building and strengthening relationships with DTES community members.



01

Winter Care Package Distribution January 23rd

This year, Powell Street Festival Society continued our annual Winter Care Package distribution as part of our commitment to support and stand in solidarity with low-income residents of the DTES. We assembled and distributed **150 care packages**, created and packaged by community members with lived experience, offering low-barrier employment opportunities. Each package included hygiene supplies, food, winter essentials, and culturally relevant materials.



02

Setsubun February 2nd

This February, we came together for our third New Year's celebration with Elder Veronica's Sacred Fire and a communal Japanese curry rice meal. Even in the snow, we celebrated Setsubun with mamemaki and special touches unique to Powell Street Festival.



03

Hanami April 13th

This year's *Hanami*, our annual celebration of cherry blossoms and the arrival of spring, held special significance as we gathered to honour the late Elder Clint, whose guidance and generosity were central to many of our past Community Care events. Community members shared song and stories celebrating his legacy and attendees created paper cherry blossoms and wrote well wishes for the DTES neighbourhood.



04

Asahi Tribute Game September 14th

The Vancouver *Asahi* Tribute Game commemorated the Vancouver *Asahi*, a legendary Japanese Canadian baseball team who played in the Powell Street area and influenced Canadian history and citizenship rights. The Vancouver *Asahi* Tribute Game is a free, inclusive, and family-friendly place to play ball, enjoy hot dogs and corn, and come together for some summer fun.



05

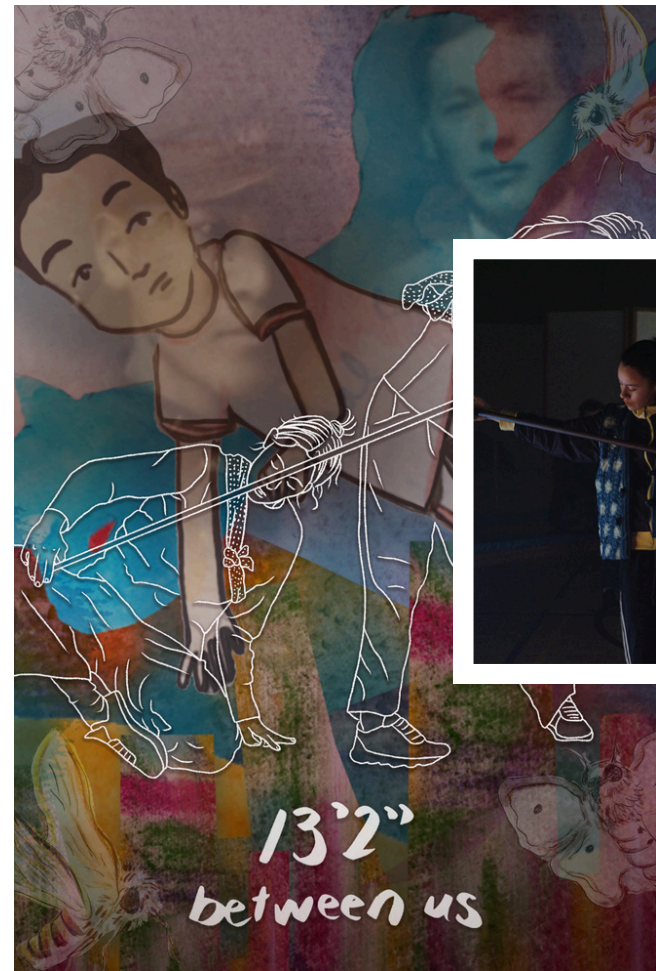
Minori Harvest November 30th

The Minori Harvest celebration welcomed the fall season while honouring the legacy of Japanese Canadian farmers in BC. Hosted in Oppenheimer Park, the event offered free butternut squash miso soup made with locally sourced ingredients in partnership with local farms in British Columbia. The day featured a painting workshop in collaboration with WePress that embraced the spirit of gathering, gratitude, and seasonal abundance with the DTES community.



Year-Round Programming: Arts & Culture Highlights

2025 marked a milestone year for our Arts & Culture programming. We hosted **8 special events**, collaborating with a diverse range of artists while engaging the Japanese Canadian community to foster artistic excellence. From sponsoring exhibitions to coordinating regional tours for upcoming talent from Japan, our programming celebrated both established and emerging artists and cultural producers.



01

Cindy Mochizuki's 13'2" Between Us
March 1st - 2nd

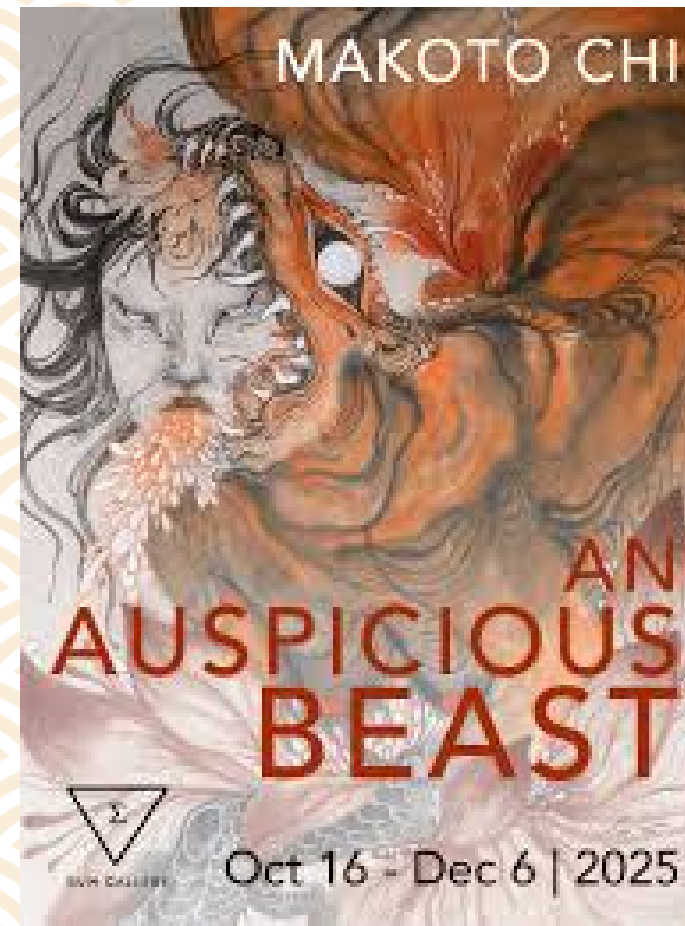


Presenting **13'2" Between Us**, an installation performance from multi-faceted artist Cindy Mochizuki, about her paternal grandfather and his brother, a pole vaulter who placed 5th in the 1932 Summer Los Angeles Olympics. This multi-media performance blended radio play, choreography, and animation to immerse sold-out audiences in these deeply human and intertwining stories.

02

Sumo Basho
May 19th

Co-hosted by Sumo Sundays, this inaugural event took place ahead of the annual tournament at Powell Street Festival. It offered an afternoon of family-friendly sumo in a comfortable, seated venue. Spectators watched competitors from both Vancouver and Seattle participate in four categories open to folks of all bodies, genders, and experience levels!



03

An Auspicious Beast
October 16th - December 6th

Presented in partnership with Queer Arts Festival, we exhibited work from 2025 festival poster artist, Makoto Chi at SUM Gallery. Featuring images of yokai and golems as an exploration of queerness, myth, and cultural heritage, Chi used Sumi ink, blood, and spit to create twelve new pieces. This also included a "Make Your Own Yokai" linocut print workshop and artist talk with proceeds being donated to the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users.



04

TOW Canada Tour
November 6th - 9th



In partnership with the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre, City of Mission, and the Mission Folk Music Festival, PSFS presented TOW: an acoustic duo from Tokyo, Japan for their first-ever Canada tour. Blending voice and visuals, TOW brought their uniquely cinematic sound to Vancouver, Burnaby, and Mission.

Japanese Canadian Youth Cohort (JCYC)

Empowering the next generation of Japanese Canadians

Our annual youth program for Japanese Canadians offers hands-on experience in event production, cultural heritage, and community building, aiming to reconnect them with ancestral roots in Vancouver while fostering resilience and future leaders. This year, we welcomed three cohort members from the East Coast.

Between May and July, the cohort met virtually for **9 sessions** that covered accessibility, Indigenous protocols, and other activities related to PSF and the Japanese Canadian experience. The cohort stayed in Vancouver for **10 days** where they provided production support for the festival and attended cultural excursions. During the festival, the cohort also led the Japanese Canadian Youth Mixer which invited young Japanese Canadians to meet, socialize, and participate in activities about their cultural heritage.

THE 2025 COHORT



Grace Miyoko Challenger
(She/her)

Grace is a *yonse-gosei* based in Ontario, and is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto. She majored in History with minors in East Asian Studies and Caribbean Studies, and also spent a semester abroad at Akita International University in Japan.



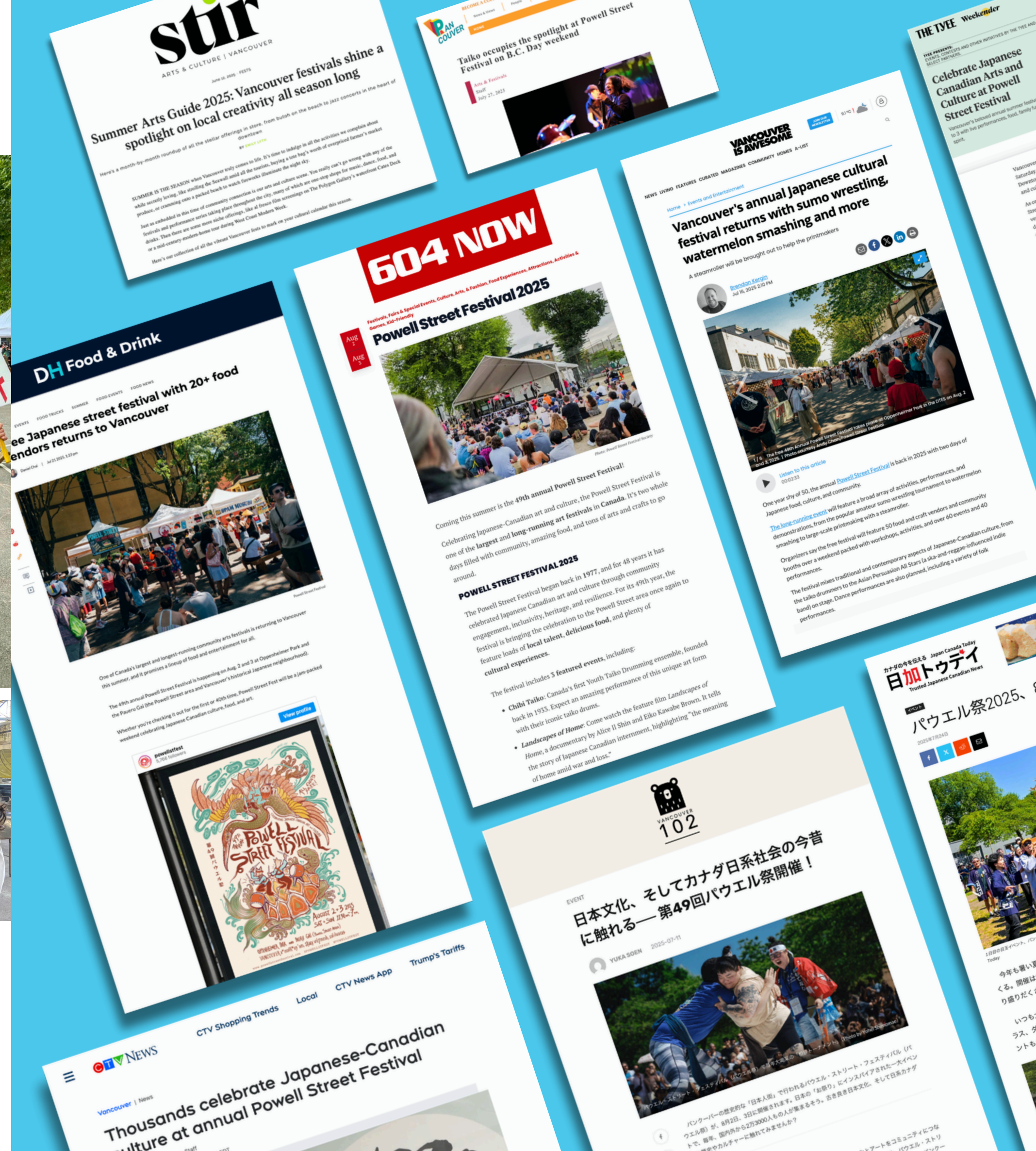
Naomi Kudo
(She/her)

Naomi is a *yonsei* from Guelph, ON. She completed a B.Sc. in Life Sciences at Queen's University and will begin an M.Sc. in Epidemiology there this fall. She recently worked in Okayama, Japan, as a JET Programme assistant language teacher.



Midori Matthew
(She/her)

Midori is a *yonsei* raised in Manitoba and currently based in Ontario. She is currently a PhD candidate at McMaster University in Health Policy, where she studies the health and economic impacts of direct remuneration policies designed for family caregivers.



Our Reach

By the Numbers

- 5,700+ Instagram Followers
- 4,800+ Facebook Followers
- 15,000 "Bulletin" Festival Programs Distributed
- 1,883 Email Newsletter Subscription
- 13.8M Media Impressions for 2025 Festival
- 538,200 Social Media Impressions for 2025 Festival

This year saw steady growth in media impressions and a significant increase in social media engagement and impressions, particularly on Instagram. Our communications strategy focused on ensuring festival programming information was clear, accessible, and effectively targeted to our community in the Greater Vancouver Area. As a result, Powell Street Festival's accounts successfully reached their intended audience, with individuals aged 25-44 making up **65.3%** of our demographic.

Our Sponsors

We sincerely thank our sponsors, donors, and partners for making the Powell Street Festival possible. Every contribution plays a vital role in our success and our ability to serve the community. With rising costs and reduced government funding, your generosity matters more than ever. The Powell Street Festival Society is deeply grateful to the individuals, corporations, foundations, and agencies whose support made 2025 a success.

Learn more at powellstreetfestival.com/donate

\$20,000 AND MORE



(Media Sponsor)

\$8,000 - \$9,999



(Media Sponsor)

\$5,000 - \$7,999



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- Georgia Straight (Media Sponsor)
- Simon Fraser University David See-chai Lam Centre
- Strathcona Business Improvement Association
- Zipair Tokyo Inc.

\$1000 - \$2999

- Modo Car sharing Co-op
- Oritani Management Corporation
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- Public Service Alliance of Canada BC Region
- The Tyee (Media Sponsor)
- Stir (Media Sponsor)

\$300 - \$999

- Contact Canada Educational Services
- Do604
- Guu Izakaya
- Japan Canada Today
- Mint Records
- Nikoniko Homecare
- Oomomo
- Pac West Kimono
- Sunrise Soya Foods
- The Postcard Place
- Vancouver 102 (Media Sponsor)
- Vancouver International Dance Festival
- Zenya Japanese Kitchen

Our Community Event Partners

- Aboriginal Front Door (AFD)
- Athiana Acres
- Canada Council
- Carnegie Community Centre
- Carnegie Housing Project
- City of Mission
- City of Vancouver
- City of Vancouver Arts and Culture
- Clarke Theatre
- DMCL Chartered Professional Accountants
- DTES Community Land Trust
- DUDES Club
- Forstbauer Family Natural Food Farm
- Fujiya
- H.R. MacMillan Space Centre
- Mission Folk Festival
- Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre
- Oppenheimer Park
- Overdose Prevention Site (OPS)
- Queer Arts Festival
- SUM Gallery
- Sumo Sundays
- The Heart Tattoo Society
- Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU)
- Vancouver International Dance Festival (VIDF)
- Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall
- Watari Counselling Services
- WePress
- Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction Society (WAHRS)

Our Donors

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- Carole & John Wevers
- Colin Yakashiro
- Craig Natsuhara
- CUPE Metro District
- Council
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- Edward Takayanagi
- Eileen Kage
- Emily Yakashiro
- Fumie Kuramoto
- Greg Soone
- Ian Goldman
- Ivy Tsui
- James Garry
- Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
- Jennifer Adachi
- Jo-Ann Chiu
- Kathy Shimizu
- Kevin Kondo
- Kyle Yakashiro
- Laura Ishiguro
- Linda Hoffman
- Matthew Halverson
- Maureen Adams
- Megumi Yamaguchi
- Michael Thomson
- Midori Matthew
- Mutsumi Tani
- Naomi Kudo
- Naomi Mishima
- Nina Inaoka Lee
- Rachel Enomoto
- Randi Edmundson
- Rebecca Ho
- Rika Uto
- Ryan Chan
- Satoshi Schulte
- Shaena Kobayashi
- Shaunn Watt
- Shayne Kasai
- Susan Doi
- United We Can
- Wayne Okamura