

# MEDIA ADVISORY/ PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2009

**Internationally renowned author and award-winning journalist Jan Wong kicks off Vaughan Public Libraries' 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Asian Heritage Month Celebration, May 5, 10 a.m. at Dufferin Clark Library, 1441 Clark Ave. W.**

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**WHAT:** Internationally renowned author and award-winning journalist **Jan Wong** launches **Vaughan Public Libraries 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month**, Tuesday, May 5, 10 a.m. at **Dufferin Clark Library**. This program will be enjoyed by a Grade 9 class from **The Waldorf School**, a Grade 12 class from **Vaughan Secondary School** (approximately 45 students in total) and members of the public. Jan Wong will speak about her experiences and challenges as a journalist in China, as well as how her own Asian heritage (Chinese) has influenced her life. Following her discussion, she will answer questions from the audience. All are welcome.

**WHEN:** **Tuesday, May 5, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.**

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome Remarks – Margie Singleton, Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan Public Libraries
- 10:02 a.m. Introduction to VPL's Asian Heritage Month Celebrations- Gino Rosati, Chair, Vaughan Public Library Board
- 10:05 a.m. Jan Wong Speech
- 10:40 a.m. Jan Wong – Question and Answer Session

**WHERE:** **Dufferin Clark Library, 1441 Clark Ave. West, Thornhill, 905-653-READ (7323).**

**WHY:** To launch **Vaughan Public Libraries' 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of Asian Heritage Month**. Throughout May, VPL will host a series of programs and cultural events to celebrate the vibrancy of Canada's Asian Heritage.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Background Information on Jan Wong, Asian Heritage Month at Vaughan Public Libraries, Asian Heritage Month Art Exhibit at Dufferin Clark Library and Asian Heritage Month Program Listings.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Jan Wong**

Jan Wong is an internationally renowned author and award-winning journalist. She has written *Beijing Confidential: A Tale of Comrades Lost and Found* (2007), *Lunch with Jan Wong* (2001), *Jan Wong's China* (1999) and *Red China Blues: My Long March from Mao to Now* (1997). Jan was the Beijing Correspondent for *The Globe and Mail* from 1988 to 1994. She has also written for *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Jan is the recipient of a George Polk Award and a National Newspaper Award. She is a graduate of McGill University, Beijing University, and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

Please note: Copies of Jan Wong's books, including *Beijing Confidential*, *Jan Wong's China*, and *Red China Blues* will be available for sale by a representative from Indigo, Richmond Hill, during VPL's launch of Asian Heritage Month Celebrations at Dufferin Clark Library, May 5<sup>th</sup>, from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

**Asian Heritage Month at Vaughan Public Libraries**

Throughout the month of May, Vaughan Public Libraries celebrates its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Asian Heritage Month. Cultural events will be held at the various branches of Vaughan Public Libraries. These events will include an art exhibition, music, dance, a puppet show, as well as multilingual storytimes, a workshop that can help you learn how to make sushi and much more.

“Asian Heritage Month provides residents with an opportunity to celebrate the unique social fabric of our communities and explore aspects of our country's rich, cultural diversity,” says, Gino Rosati, Chair, Vaughan Public Library Board. “During Asian Heritage Month, Vaughan Public Libraries offers a variety of creative displays and fun activities to create awareness of the vast contributions, interesting customs and distinctive traditions of the Asian community.”

Asians in Canada began celebrating their heritage during the month of May unofficially in 1993. In May 2001, Senator Vivienne Poy introduced a motion to designate May as Asian Heritage Month. In December of that year, Canada officially declared May as Asian Heritage Month. This is an important initiative which acknowledges the diversity of Canadian communities.

According to Statistics Canada, people of Asian descent made up 16.8% of the population of Vaughan in 2006, a number which continues to grow. Vaughan Public Libraries serves the needs of a growing multicultural community by building multilingual collections. Currently VPL stocks Asian materials in Chinese, Gujarati, Hindi, Korean, Punjabi, Bengali, Tamil, Farsi and Urdu. Types of materials include books, periodicals, newspapers, videos, DVDs, audio cassettes, CDs, book kits and talking books.

### **Asian Heritage Month Program Listings at VPL**

In addition to the following programs, VPL is pleased to announce that renowned artist, Reeta Saeed, will have an art exhibit in the lobby of Dufferin Clark Library from May 1-31. Reeta has participated in numerous exhibitions around the world, representing contemporary Pakistani art. Her works of painting and textile have been featured in *Regeneration* by the South Asian Visual Arts Centre at the Harbourfront Centre of the Arts and in *Dyed Roots: The new emergence of culture* at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art.

This year, Reeta will be participating in the Mosaic Festival at the Art Gallery of Mississauga and at Nuit Blanche in Toronto. Her work is represented by Davide Gallo Gallery, Berlin and the South Asia Gallery of Arts, Canada. Dufferin Clark Library is located at 1441 Clark Ave., W. in Thornhill.

#### **ANSLEY GROVE LIBRARY – 350 Ansley Grove Road**

##### **Chinese Brush Painting**

Wednesday, May 6, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

See a demonstration on Chinese brush painting and then create a landscape or flower using techniques from this ancient art. Space is limited. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

##### **Dragon Tales**

Saturday, May 16, 2 – 3 p.m.

Join us at the library as we celebrate Asian Heritage month by exploring mythical monsters from ancient China. For ages 8-12. Please drop in.

##### **Origami – Yes You Can!**

Tuesday, May 19, 7 – 8 p.m.

Learn the ancient art of Japanese paper folding in this program presented by the Origami Society of Toronto. Fun for the whole family. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

#### **BATHURST CLARK RESOURCE LIBRARY – 900 Clark Ave. W.**

##### **A Splendid Chinese Morning**

Saturday, May 23, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join the New Canadian Community Centre for a morning of singing, folk dancing, martial arts, Tai Chi and more. Please drop in.

**Brain Beat Dance**

Wednesday, May 27, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Join Brain Beat Dance Canada Senior Association for a demonstration of a special kind of dance that stimulates short-term memory and body balance. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

**Farsi Storytime**

Tuesday, May 19, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Farsi storyteller Ariel Balevi will be sharing popular stories and tales from the Shahnameh, the Haft Paykar and the Thousand and One Nights. Please drop in.

**Sushi Made Simple**

Tuesday, May 12, 7 – 8 p.m.

It's easy to make your own sushi when you have participated in our sushi workshop. Learn to make sushi and impress your friends with your talent! Admission is \$15.00 (includes materials). Please pre-register at the Check Out Desk.

**DUFFERIN CLARK LIBRARY – 1441 Clark Ave. W.****Art Exhibit: Reeta Saeed**

May 1 - 31

Works of painting and textile by renowned artist Reeta Saeed will be on display in the lobby for the month of May. Please drop in.

**Chinese Brush Painting**

Wednesday, May 13, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

See a demonstration on Chinese brush painting and then create a landscape or flower using techniques from this ancient art. Space is limited. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

**MAPLE LIBRARY – 10190 Keele Street****Origami – Yes You Can!**

Thursday, May 21, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Learn the ancient art of Japanese paper folding in this program presented by the Origami Society of Toronto. Fun for the whole family. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

**Tamil Storytime**

Saturday, May 30, 2 – 2:30 p.m.

Let storyteller Selvi Ganeshan take you to a fascinating world through stories and tales celebrating Tamil culture. For all ages. Please pre-register at the Information Desk.

**PIERRE BERTON RESOURCE LIBRARY – 4921 Rutherford Road****Asian Heritage Storytime**

Wednesday, May 13, 10:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Join us for a half-hour of Asian stories! We will enjoy a folktale straight from Japan, Chinese nursery rhymes and other traditional tales, fingerplays and activities. For ages 3 – 5. Please drop in.

**Mahtab Narsimhan**

Thursday, May 7, 10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Celebrate Asian Heritage Month with a visit from children's author Mahtab Narsimhan, author of the Silver Birch nominated title *The Third Eye*. This presentation is offered with support from the Canada Council for the Arts. For ages 9-11. Please pre-register at the Welcome Desk.

**WOODBRIIDGE LIBRARY** – 150 Woodbridge Ave.

**Buddhist Mediation Workshop**

Saturday, May 2, 2 – 3 p.m.

Participate in a unique opportunity to practice mediation with Monk Bhante Saranpala, a Buddhist Studies Specialist and Chaplain to the University of Toronto. Please pre-register at the Check Out Desk.

**Indian Family Fun with Music and Puppet Show**

Saturday, May 16, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Experience the spice and excitement of Indian life in this hour of stories, games, and activities from India. An English language program the whole family can enjoy. Please pre-register at the Check Out Desk.

**Indian Storytime**

Saturday, May 30, 2 – 3 p.m.

Come and enjoy stories, play games, sing songs, and participate in activities from India with your whole family! Please pre-register at the Check Out Desk.

**VAUGHAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

Vaughan Public Libraries contribute to the success of our growing diverse community; serving its information, learning, leisure and cultural needs in a welcoming and safe environment. In 2008, VPL welcomed over 1.7 million visitors making it one of the top leisure and information destinations within the City of Vaughan. For more information on all of VPL's programs and services call 905-653-READ (7323); pick up a copy of *@ The Library, Your Guide to Programs, Special Events and Using Your Library* at your local library or visit the website at [www.vaughanpl.info](http://www.vaughanpl.info).