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Dear friends of Solid State,

Hope everyone is doing awesome and had a wonderful Black History Month! Solid State is crushing it – we currently have 21 co-ops up and running now and all are doing amazing work.

And we've got a whole bunch more en route (stay tuned for news of our new Black Health Centre co-op!) and have just signed an agreement to launch 15 new cohorts over the next three years with workers in precarious, blue-collar occupations. Lots more on that soon!

Until then, here are some quick updates from us:

1/ SOLID STATE MEDIA COVERAGE

Check out this nice article featuring Mahado, WeiChun and Arshi.

<https://thelasource.com/en/2023/02/06/finding-community/>

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2/ BLAC: THE BLACK ARTS CENTRE

It's open! For really real. After an epic struggle with the permitting and licensing departments of the City of Surrey we were finally (finally!) granted permission to open the Black Arts Centre, just in time for Black History Month.

The team has been setting up and furnishing the space, learning how to use it, and testing out opening hours and times. They are already awash with requests to host events, exhibits and meetings, and will be launching a new website this month with calendars, updates and booking information.

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3/ MEDLEY + PUSH FESTIVAL

Our Medley event planning and arts management co-op has just completed one of their major projects: running the [Push Youth Cohort](#). They attended a wall of shows together, went to a bunch of workshops, met arts professionals and artists and hosted an amazing panel at the [PuSh Youth Assembly](#).

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4/ BLACK SCHOOL'D

Our Black School'd cohort hosted a major event this month, a Black Youth Summit on Friday Feb 24th at the Civic Hotel in Surrey.

It was a full-day, free event, from 11:00 - 4:00 with speakers, workshops, tours, food and much else - with the animating question of the day: 'How can we eradicate anti-Black racism in BC schools?'

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main goal of the day was to gather as much information, feedback, ideas

from youth as to how we can confront anti-Black racism - to hear what routes Black youth think are most needed.

Using that research and feedback, Black School'd is going to design some new interventions, initiatives and projects to design an action plan in collaboration with the SSD and community partners.



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Friday, Feb. 24, 2023

HOSTED BY
BLACK SCHOOLS

Black Youth Summit

How can we eradicate anti-Black racism in BC schools?

This space is exclusively for **BLACK YOUTH** ages 15-25

WORKSHOPS! TOURS!
SPEAKERS! CATERED LUNCH!

CIVIC HOTEL
13475 Central Ave.
Surrey, BC
(steps from Surrey Central Skytrain Station!)

Doors open @ **10:30 am**
(see lobby upon arrival);
Programming begins @ **11 am sharp!**

limited capacity

REGISTER HERE FOR FREE

5/ LA LIBELULA

La Libelula - La Libelula has been busy planning and hosting the "Perceptions of Dual Identity" workshops. In these series of art workshops we talked about what it means to be Latino/a and Canadian and explore these concepts through visual art with 13 newcomer Latinoamerican youth. We will celebrate the culmination of this project with an art exhibition at the

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6/ CiC

CiC is pleased to announce that we have been granted a one year funding through the Community Housing Transformation Centre to undertake a project called "Growing Roots: Understanding community housing needs within low income tenants and refugee populations in Surrey" in partnership with DiverseCity and Entre Nous Femmes Housing Society. This will be a busy spring for us, working on this project along with other contracts we initiated earlier this year.

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MEET A SOLID STATER

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MEET MURYAM BABAR!

1. Tell us a little about yourself.

My name is Muryam, I'm in grade 12 and a member of Salam Central. I'm a Pakistani woman who grew up in Surrey surrounded by my extended family. In my spare time I like to read and watch t.v shows. In the future I'm planning to pursue a career in aviation.

2. How did you connected to Solid State?

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our local community and explore our South Asian identities. Since then I have co-founded Salam Central which has been active for over a year and focuses on building community and a safe space among local Muslim youth through events.

3. One thing you enjoy about working with Salam Central and/or Solid State?

The people are what I like best about Salam Central and Solid State in general. Because of this, I like spending time there. Over the years, I have had a chance to get to know a lot of the people and make friends within the family from both spending time at the space, and attending events.

4. What do you like to do for fun?

Coffee and spending time with friends and family are two of my favourite things to do. I try to hang out with the people in my life on a regular basis, and I enjoy going to cafés, and doing activities like ice skating, or visiting the beach at night.



What is the role of art within the Solidarity Economy?

It won't surprise you to know that most of us within Solid State are artists. From drawing, painting, photography, film, theatre and design to cooking, dancing, singing, writing, embroidering and playing instruments – there's no shortage of talented, creative and passionate makers in our community.

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since the inauguration of the Quarterly (in partnership with a group), recently published a series of essays titled “Remember the Future” where queer, trans and BIPOC artists reflect on the role of art and culture in building a solidarity economy.

In one essay, “Imagining New Worlds: Using Science Fiction to Build a Solidarity Economy,” the writer izzy sazak, a member of Applied Mechanics (a cooperative of genderqueer theatre artists) says:

The idea of a solidarity economy resonates with our vision of liberation. Like many artists, our collective members face tensions between our dreams and economic pressures. As Linares and Woolard observed, “It’s clear that artists need a solidarity economy if we are to overcome our status as exploited workers. Likewise, the solidarity economy movement needs artists if it is to prevail.”

This struggle towards the next world is a work of art, one in which it is important to remain brave and vulnerable. At every step on the journey to creating this new world, there is compost—critical to building soil. Every offering—kindness, presence, art, patience—is valuable. There is no such thing as wrong or unfinished.

Each mistake—erasure, self-criticism, tension—is an opportunity to grow closer to each other and our highest selves. Every creation is a seed. The process is the soil. The sun and rain are our joy and conflict. They are inextricable from each other and equally indispensable.

Beautifully articulated! Read more essays from the series over here: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/series/remember-the-future-culture-and-systems-change/>

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