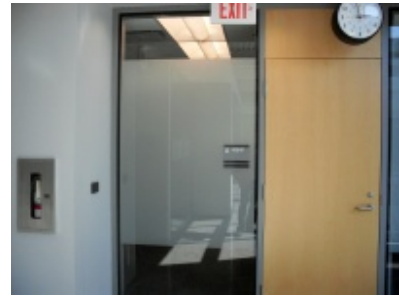


Spring in Vancouver

Every start is hard, although I knew a few things about Canada and my new environment from Bertram. He participated in the C&CofMARS program at SFU in Vancouver for the last semester, and now I got the opportunity for spring 2009.



Flight tickets around Christmas and New Year is difficult, so I arrived to Vancouver in the afternoon 1st January. It was snow everywhere, and I went to my hostel by bus with my heavy luggages. It was in Chinatown, and it was okay, but some of my friends I made later told me, that that this part of the city is dangerous (2 blocks from Hastings at Main), and I was lucky not to have any conflicts there.

I started to discover the downtown. I went to the campus for the first time to the orientation. It was interesting, I heard a lot of the university, the most important buildings, and had fun with the others, but after all day of listening, I got really tired, and in spite of the snow I was able to get back to my room.

I moved in my townhouse in the residence after the 3 days, and figured out, that my roommates are very nice. We ate pancakes and did "crazy carpet", an alternative way of sledging, it was fun!

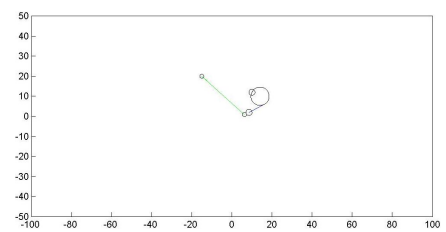


The school started with a snow day, but we were too excited about it to enjoy the snow. On Tuesday the school started finally, and I met professor Shahram and got my place in the IRMACS, which is the best place to work! I worked on optimal path finding for high level robot strategy. My classes has started soon. The Modern control systems seemed to be easy in the beginning, but after a while it became similar to an average BME class, especially because of the assignments. The Canadian cultural class: The social

background of Canada seemed to be hard, because I was too far away from the subject, I'm an engineering guy. But after a while I learned a lot about Canada, and the whole theme started to be interesting. Our professor, Cara Camcastle was always very nice.

I wasn't the only Hungarian, Bao was there from BME too, and Misi from SHUT, Romania. Both are very nice. They lived in the townhouses too, and we had a good time together.

The next turning-point was the clubs' day. This is a very large difference between the BME and the SFU. It is much easier to find the people with the same interests at SFU because of the clubs' system. I talked to many people, and joined to the Guitar Club, the Jazz Band, the Vocal Jazz, and the Kung fu group.



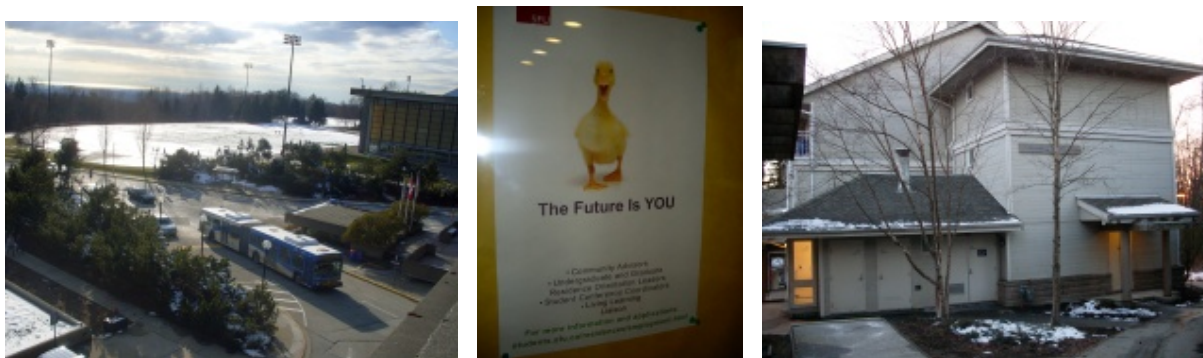
We participated in many international events organized by the Global Partnering System (GPS) or the Mentorship

Program. GPS Welcome event, Vancouver Art Gallery, a Vancouver Giants hockey match. These events were perfect occasions to meet the other international students, and to have fun. The Gallery is a very interesting place, and the hockey in live from the stadium was very impressive.

The weather of Vancouver was a little bit weird for me. It snowed so many times, that I saw more snow in 4 months, than in half of my life before. My friends told me, that it was particular, it used to be much less snow than that. I liked it anyway, I prefer snow instead of rain, and we had a lot of rain too.



I liked, that there were interesting events at SFU from time to time, for example the Gung Haggis Fat Choy festival, the Chinese new year in the Convocation mall. We have seen the lion dance performed by the members of the Kung fu group, pulled for the Dragon Cart Racers and tried the Human Curling.

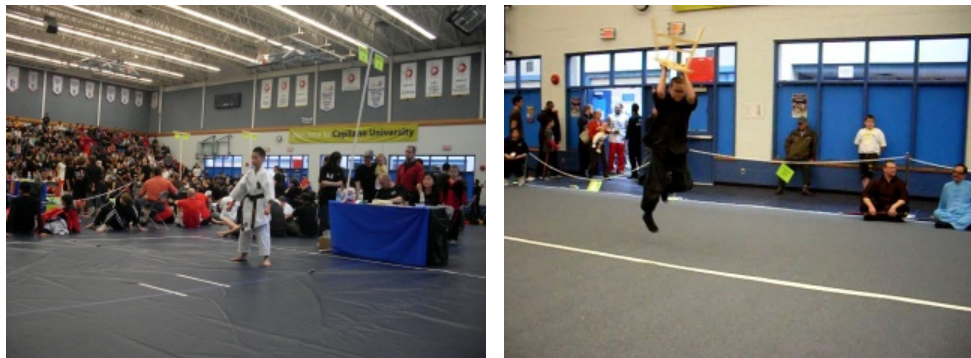


In the first week of school I discovered the best "restaurant" on campus: "The Veggie Lunch" at the Arcade on every Tuesday and Wednesday. It was very good food, for a very an extremely competitive price, and a good place to meet other students, or talk to my friends I have had there already. For diners and other days' lunch, unlike most of the others, I



cooked for myself. At home I live with my parents, so it was a perfect possibility to improve my self-sufficiency.

On the weekends I tried to move somewhere. I went either with my roommate Jenny, or with Misi, or if everyone was busy, and I had some time, I went alone. We went to Stanley Park at first. It was snowing, so we haven't spent too much



time in the park, but went to the Vancouver Aquarium. It's an amazing place with all the various animals they have. We have seen a beluga show. These white whales are smart and playful like dolphins, so they study and train them.

One weekend we had a kung fu competition called Tiger Balm Tournament at the Capilano university, and they asked us to volunteer. I did, I was a score-keeper. It was a very nice event, I have seen many amazing forms and good fights, and



enjoyed the feeling of martial arts. Even one of our Sifus, Melissa asked me for my recording of the form with a bench as a weapon.

While the end of the semester was coming closer, we had our performances with the music orientated clubs. We had 3 gigs with the Jazz Band. Only one person played on guitar at the same time, I played Gimme some lovin', and Dancing



man, Bao had 2 songs too. We had 2 performances with the band formed by members of the Guitar Club. We played Hotel California from the Eagles, Deep Purple Smoke On The Water, Sweet Child'O Mine originally by the Guns N' Roses, and The Spirit Carries On by the Dream Theater.

We wanted 2 other songs, but we didn't have enough time for them. I was the singer, and I played rhythm guitar in Hotel California, Bao played the guitar. The Vocal Jazz concert was the last one. We had 4 songs: Under The Sea from The Little Mermaid, Just In Time, My Funny Valentine, and I Got Rhythm. There were many solo, and other group performances as well, my personal favourite was the group Voce formed by 4 girls and 4 boys, they sang 3 Beatles song: Come together, Because, and Ob-la-di, ob-la-da.

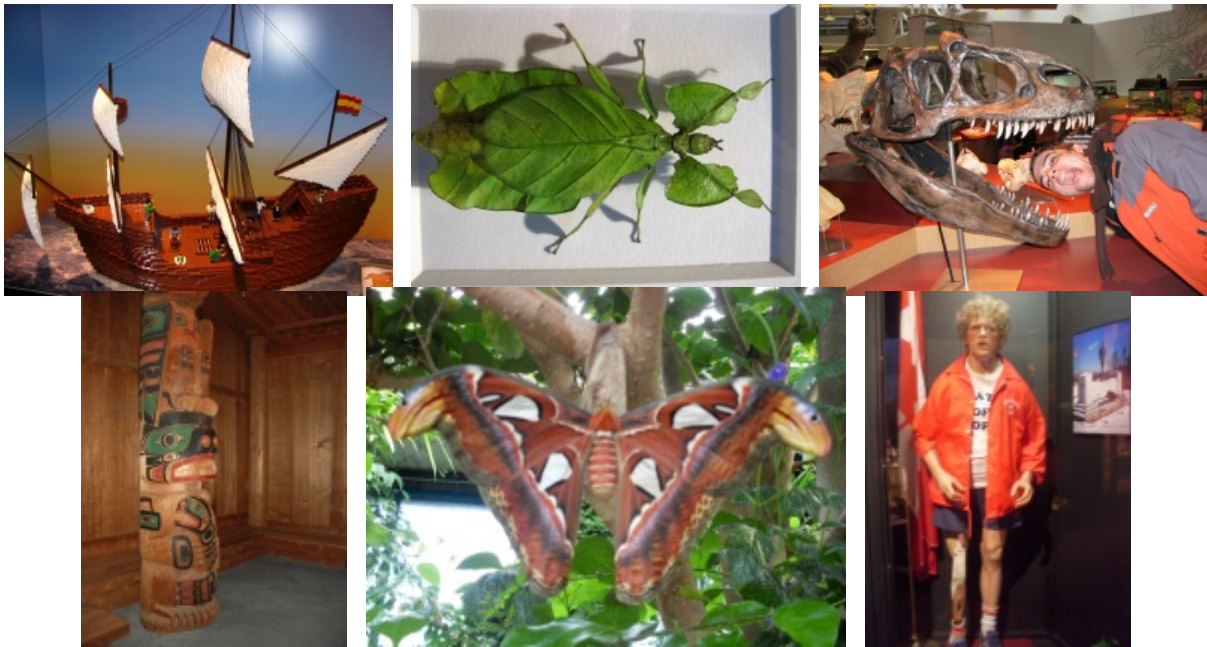


With our kung fu team, we went to a Laser Tag game. It was very cool in spite of I was around, or a little bit better than the average. But it hurt my engineer soul, when we got our personal results on paper, that how many times we have shot the others, and it didn't match perfectly with each other.

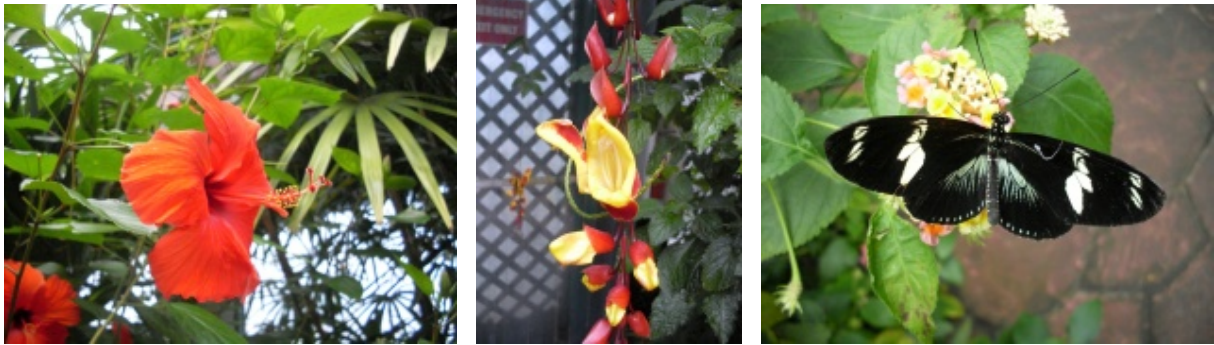
Sport possibilities are almost unlimited at SFU. We participated at the soccer league with Bao, Misi, Misi's roommate Ramsay, Bao's Australian roommates, and Alex behind me from the lab. We didn't get in the playoff, but we won some matches, and had a good time after all. I used to go swimming once a week, and went to the fitness center 1.5 times a week average. As we played soccer, there are various sports to choose from football to badminton. In the residence we could play pool and table soccer.

I visited the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden. It's a beautiful place with exotic plants, and the details of an ancient, faraway culture. Buildings, articles for personal use, paintings, and many more, everything from China and the way how they existed in their time. We tried the Science World, it's a little bit similar to the Csodák palotája (Palace of miracles) in Budapest, but I had a lot of new thing too, it was worth to go there.

In the last week, we went sight-seeing more. We visited Victoria for a week-end. At the beginning we weren't sure,

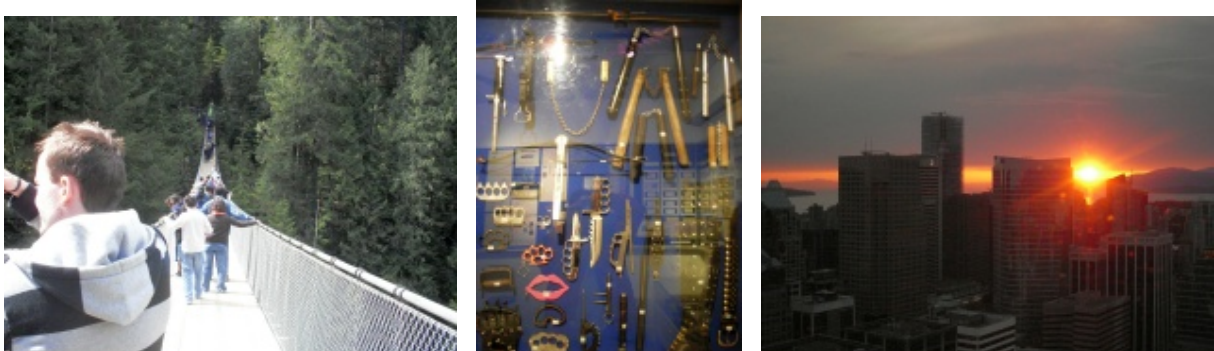


that we would find enough things to see, but on the ferry we found so many brochures, that it was hard to choose which to see first, or at all. We went to the beach, saw acrobatics and music performances on the street, a left-wing demonstration in front of the Parliament, beautiful parks. We had diner in a Thai restaurant. We visited the BC Museum, and the Wax



Museum. On the way back home, we saw the Butterfly Gardens in Saanich. It's wonderful. Tropical plants, many butterflies flying around, and some birds. One of them with personal disorders (pecking people's ankle) :).

We came back to Vancouver for the last week, had our last exam from Social background of Canada, finished projects, and continued sight-seeing with the Capilano Suspension Bridge, and the Police Museum. We tried the Seabus to North Vancouver, and looked around from the Harbour Center Vancouver Lookout.



On my last day in Vancouver, we went to the Stanley Park, to the beach.

At the same time, I had some time to my project as well, worked on the professional parts as a meaning of my staying. 4 months is a long time, the challenge is to map the time out.

I had a very good time here, and I hope that I will come back again to this amazing place!

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