

Vancouver Writers Fest Sneak Preview Reading List 2016
October 18-23, 2016

André Alexis (CA), *The Hidden Keys*

(Fiction, Coach House Books, September 2016)

Tancred Palmieri, a thief with elegant and erudite tastes, meets Willow Azarian, an aging heroin addict. She reveals to Tancred that her very wealthy father has recently passed away, leaving each of his five children a mysterious object that provides one clue to the whereabouts of a large inheritance. Willow enlists Tancred to steal these objects from her siblings and help her solve the puzzle.

Gail Anderson-Dargatz (CA), *The Spawning Ground*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2015)

An intimate family saga, Native and white cultures are bridged in a story about Hannah and Brandon Robertson, raised by their grandfather as part of the Shuswap community. Hannah carries salmon past the choke point to the spawning grounds while her childhood best friend, Alex, leads a Native protest against the development further threatening the river. When drowning nearly claims the lives of both Hannah's grandfather and her little brother, their world is thrown into chaos.

Peter Behrens (CA), *Carry Me*

(Fiction, House of Anansi, February 2016)

Billy Lange, born in 1909 on the Isle of Wight, England is entranced by a German-Jewish baron's daughter, the elusive and willful Karin von Weinbrenner. Billy and Karin's childhood friendship deepens and transforms into a complex love affair with extraordinarily high stakes. As society loses its moral bearings and Germany marches toward the Second World War, they also share a dream of escape — from Germany, from history — to El Llano Estacado.

David Bergen (CA), *Stranger*

(Fiction, HarperCollins Canada, September 2016)

Íso, a young Guatemalan woman, gets pregnant from an affair with an American doctor. After the birth of her daughter, the baby is taken from her. Determined to reclaim her stolen daughter, Íso makes her way north through Mexico, eventually crossing illegally into the United States. A stirring tale that lays bare the bonds of motherhood, *Stranger* reveals just how far a mother will go to reclaim her stolen child.

Rowan Hisayo Buchanan (US), *Harmless Like You*

(Fiction, Hachette Book Group, August 2016)

Written in startlingly beautiful prose, *Harmless Like You* is set across New York, Berlin and Connecticut, following the stories of Yuki Oyama, a Japanese girl fighting to make it as an artist, and Yuki's son Jay who, as an adult in the present day, is forced to confront his mother who abandoned him when he was only two years old.

Robert Olen Butler (US), *Perfume River*

(Fiction, PGC Books, September 2016)

Perfume River examines family ties and the legacy of the Vietnam War through the portrait of a single North Florida family.

Robert Quinlan's marriage, forged in the fervor of anti-Vietnam-war protests, now bears the fractures of time. Robert's father, a veteran of WWII, is dying and Robert's brother remains estranged. An unstable homeless man whom Robert at first takes to be a fellow Vietnam veteran grows to have a deep impact on the Quinlan family.

Deborah Campbell (CA), *A Disappearance in Damascus*

(Non-fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

The true story of the relationship between two women: reporter, Deborah Campbell and Ahlam, leader of a rag-tag group of war survivors. The Syrian Secret Police are watching. The morning they seize Ahlam, Campbell is forced to watch, unable to stop them. Fearing that her work with Ahlam has led to her friend's kidnapping, Campbell spends the months that follow desperately trying to find Ahlam—all the while fearing she could be next.

Alexander Chee (US), *The Queen of the Night*

(Fiction, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, February 2016)

Lilliet Berne is a sensation of the Paris Opera, a legendary soprano with every accolade except an original role, every singer's chance at immortality. When one is finally offered to her, she realizes with alarm that the libretto is based on a hidden piece of her past. Only four could have betrayed her: one is dead, one loves her, one wants to own her and one, she hopes, never thinks of her at all.

Anna Y.K. Choi (CA), *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*

(Fiction, Simon & Schuster, May 2016)

Family secrets, a lost sister, forbidden loves, domestic assaults—for Mary, a young Korean-Canadian girl growing up in 1980s Toronto, life is much more complicated than she ever imagined. Her secret passion for her English teacher is filled with problems and with the arrival of a promising Korean suitor, events escalate in ways that she could never have imagined, catching the entire family in a web of deceit and violence.

Eileen Cook (CA), *With Malice*

(Fiction, Raincoast Books, June 2016)

Eighteen-year-old Jill Charron's senior trip to Italy was supposed to be the adventure of a lifetime. And then the accident happened. Waking up in a hospital room with no memory of the past six weeks, Jill tries to piece together the story behind this fatal accident. However, she soon begins to realize that maybe the accident wasn't an accident after all and that her once-perfect life is about to be shattered.

Ivan Coyote (CA), *Tomboy Survival Guide*

(Non-Fiction, Arsenal Pulp, October 2016)

Ivan writes movingly about many firsts—the first time they were mistaken for a boy; the first time they purposely discarded their bikini top so they could join the boys at the local swimming pool, and the first time they were chastised for using the women's washroom. Ivan also explores their years as a young butch and life as a gender-box-defying adult, in which they offer advice to young people while seeking guidance from others.

Joan Crate (CA), *Black Apple*

(Fiction, Simon and Shuster Canada, March 2016)

Torn from her home and delivered to St. Mark's Residential School for Girls, Rose Marie finds herself in a world where nothing of her previous life is tolerated, not even her Blackfoot name. Set during the Second World War and the 1950s, *Black Apple* is about two different women whose worlds collide: an irrepressible young Blackfoot girl whose spirit cannot be destroyed, and an aging yet powerful nun who increasingly doubts the value of her life.

Craig Davidson (CA), *Precious Cargo*

(Non-Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

A flyer that read "Bus Drivers Wanted" was the first step towards an unlikely career for Davidson: driving a school bus full of special-needs kids for a year. Armed only with a sense of humour, creative approaches to driving a large, awkward vehicle and unexpected reserves of empathy, Davidson takes us along for the ride through a moving story about how we see and treat people with special needs in our society.

Wade Davis (CA), *Wade Davis: Photographs, Cowboys of the Americas*

(Non-Fiction, Douglas & McIntyre and Greystone Books; October 2016, September 2016)

In *Wade Davis: Photographs*, Davis selects 150 of his favourite photographs from the thousands he has taken in the course of his forty-year career. The intimate portraits of family and community life are universal in feel, although they represent an enormous diversity of geographical locations and cultural backgrounds. Each one captures a rich story about the human condition and invites the viewer to experience scenes of family, magic, love and tradition.

Cowboys of the Americas: For more than a decade, photographer Luis Fabini immersed himself in cowboy culture as he traveled through North and South America. An eloquent text by anthropologist and author Wade Davis reflects on the long relationship between horses and humans, describes the significance of Fabini's work, and illuminates the enduring spirit of cowboy culture.

David Denby (US), *Lit Up*

(Non-Fiction, Raincoast Books, February 2016)

Can teenagers be turned on to serious reading? What kind of teachers can do it, and what books? To find out, Denby sat in on a tenth-grade English class in a demanding New York public school for an entire academic year, and made frequent visits to a troubled inner-city public school in New Haven and a respected public school in Westchester county.

Emma Donoghue (CA), *The Wonder*

(Fiction, HarperCollins Canada, September 2016)

A small village in 1850s rural Ireland is baffled by Anna O'Donnell's fast where she subsists only on what she calls "manna from heaven". Enter Lib, an English nurse who is hired to determine whether or not Anna is a fraud. As Anna deteriorates, Lib finds herself responsible not only for the care of a child, but for getting to the root of why the child may be the victim of murder in slow motion.

Anne Fleming (CA), *poemw*

(Poetry, Pedlar Press, April 2016)

In *poemw*, the third finger of the left hand hits 'w' instead of 's' and makes up a new kind of poem, the sort-of poem, the approxi-lyric, the poem that doesn't want to claim "poemness". *Poemw* are about daily things—graffitti, hair, sea gulls, second-hand clothes—and rarer things—dead crows, baked mice, ski accidents, Judith Butler. They're jokes-and-not-jokes, cheeky, goofy, tender.

John Freeman (US), *Freeman's: Family*

(Anthology, PGC Books, August 2015)

With outstanding work from literary heavyweights and up-and-coming writers alike, *Freeman's: Family* collects the most amusing, heartbreaking and probing stories about family life today.

Anne & Nicholas Giardini (CA), *Startle and Illuminate*

(Non-Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

In the course of her extraordinary career, which included the novels *The Stone Diaries*, *Larry's Party*, *The Republic of Love* and *Unless*, Carol Shields was unfailingly encouraging of other writers. This essential work, drawn by her daughter and grandson from her

voluminous correspondence helps answer some of the most fundamental questions about writing. It answers why we write, whether writing can be taught and how a writer knows when a work is done.

Yaa Gyasi (US), *Homegoing*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, June 2016)

Two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, are born into different villages in eighteenth-century Ghana. Effia is married off to an Englishman and lives in comfort in the palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle. Unbeknownst to Effia, her sister, Esi, is imprisoned beneath her in the castle's dungeons, sold with thousands of others into the Gold Coast's booming slave trade and shipped off to America, where her children and grandchildren will be raised in slavery.

Adam Haslett (US), *Imagine Me Gone*

(Fiction, Hachette Book Group, May 2016)

When Margaret's fiancé, John, is hospitalized for depression in 1960s London, she faces a choice: carry on with their plans despite what she now knows of his condition, or back away from the suffering it may bring her. She decides to marry him. Over the span of decades, their younger children – the savvy and responsible Celia and the ambitious and tightly controlled Alec – struggle along with their mother to care for Michael's increasingly troubled and precarious existence.

Michael Helm (CA), *After James*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

A neuroscientist retreats to a secluded cabin intending to expose a pharmaceutical company. A poet is hired to decode the work of a mysterious online poet who writes about murders with knowledge of private details. A virologist discovers her identity has been stolen by a conceptual artist in whose work someone always goes missing. *After James* is a masterful novel, told in three connected parts.

Liz Howard (CA), *Infinite Citizen of the Shaking Tent*

(Poetry, Penguin Random House, April 2015)

In Liz Howard's wild, scintillating debut, the mechanisms we use to make sense of our worlds – even our direct intimate experiences of it – come under constant scrutiny and a pressure that feels like love. What Howard can accomplish with language strikes us as electric, a kind of alchemy of perception and catastrophe, fidelity and apocalypse. The waters of Northern Ontario shield country are the toxic origin and an image of potential.

Anosh Irani (CA), *The Parcel*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

Madhu identifies herself as a "hijra" – a person belonging to the third sex, neither man nor woman. Madhu has spent most of her life in a close-knit clan of transgender sex workers in the red-light district of Bombay. One day Madhu receives a call from Padma Madam, the most feared brothel owner in the district: a "parcel" has arrived – a young girl from the provinces, betrayed and trafficked by her aunt.

Marni Jackson (CA), *Don't I Know You?*

(Fiction, Raincoast Books, September 2016)

Rose McEwan has lived her life out of the spotlight. Even so, fame has come to her. After college, she finds herself camping near Joni Mitchell. While she is waitressing, Bill Murray and Dan Ackroyd whisk her away for synchronized swimming. Showing how the famous serve us in ways we don't recognize, *Don't I Know You?* puts an unremarkable woman center stage, and shows how an ordinary life might be the most extraordinary one.

Amy Jones (CA), *We're All in this Together*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, June 2016)

When a video of Kate Parker plummeting over a waterfall goes viral, Kate's family tumbles into chaos under the spotlight. Her 16-year-old granddaughter gets caught up in an online relationship. Her husband searches for what sent his wife over the falls. Kate fears her advancing dementia will rob her memory. Set over the course of four calamitous days, Amy Jones' first novel follows the Parkers' misadventures as catastrophe forces them to act like a family.

Guy Gavriel Kay (CA), *Children of Earth and Sky*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, May 2016)

From the small coastal town of Senjan, notorious for its pirates, a young woman sets out to find vengeance for her lost family. That same spring, from the wealthy city-state of Seressa come two very different people: a young artist travelling to the dangerous east to paint the grand khalif at his request—and possibly more—and a fiercely intelligent, angry woman, posing as a doctor's wife, but sent by Seressa as a spy.

Joy Kogawa (CA), *Gently to Nagasaki*

(Memoir, Caitlin Press, September 2016)

Set in Vancouver and Toronto, the streets of Nagasaki and the high mountains of Shikoku, Japan, *Gently to Nagasaki* is an account of a remarkable life. As a child during WWII, Joy Kogawa was interned with her family and thousands of other Japanese Canadians by the Canadian government. Kogawa knows what it means to be classified as the enemy, and she seeks urgently to get beyond false and dangerous distinctions of “us” and “them.”

Affinity Konar (US), *Mischling*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

It's 1944 when sisters Pearl and Stasha Zagorski arrive at Auschwitz. As part of the experimental population of twins known as Mengele's Zoo, the girls experience horrors unknown to others. That winter, Pearl disappears. Stasha grieves for her twin, but clings to the possibility that Pearl remains alive. When the camp is liberated by the Red Army, she and her companion Feliks—seeking vengeance for his own lost twin—travel through Poland's devastation.

Michael Koryta (US), *Rise the Dark*

(Crime, Hachette Book Group, August 2016)

Rise the dark. These were the last words written in Lauren Novak's notebook before she was murdered in a strange Florida village. They've never meant anything to the police or to her husband, investigator Markus Novak. Now the man he believes killed her is out of prison and draws Markus to the place he's avoided for so long: the lonely road where his wife was shot to death beneath the cypress trees and Spanish moss in a town called Cassadaga.

Lynne Kutsukake (CA), *The Translation of Love*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

After years spent in a Canadian internment camp, thirteen-year-old Aya Shimamura and her father are deported to war-devastated Tokyo. Aya's bully, Fumi Tanaka's older sister mysteriously disappears. Aya is enlisted to compose a letter to General MacArthur, asking him to find Fumi's beloved sister. The letter is translated by Corporal Matt Matsumoto, whose is powerless. The girls decide to take matters into their own hands, venturing into the dark and dangerous underside of Tokyo's Ginza district.

Owen Laukkanen (CA), *The Watcher in the Wall, The Fixes*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, HarperCollins Canada; March 2016, August 2016)

The Watcher in the Wall: Kirk Stevens and Carla Windermere of the joint BCA-FBI violent crime task force have handled shocking cases before, but this one is different. Stevens's daughter, Andrea, is distraught over a classmate's suicide. What the two

investigators find is more disturbing—an online suicide club of teenagers, presided over by an anonymous presence who only spurs them on. Andrea’s classmate wasn’t the first victim—and won’t be the last, either, unless they can hunt down this psychopath once and for all.

The Fixes: Eric Connelly is crumbling under the weight of his dad’s expectations. He can’t seem to live up to the “Connelly Man” standards—but when he meets the mysterious, free-spirited Jordan Grant, his dad’s rules seem so much less important than they used to.

Catherine Leroux (CA), *The Party Wall*

(Fiction, Biblioasis, May 2016)

A woman learns that she may not be the biological mother of her own son despite having given birth to him; a brother and sister unite, as their mother dies, to search for their long-lost father; two young sisters take a detour home, unaware of the tragedy that awaits; and a political couple—when the husband accedes to power in a post-apocalyptic future state—is shaken by the revelation of their own shared, if equally unknown, history.

Ashley Little (CA), *Niagara Motel*

(Fiction, Arsenal Pulp, October 2016)

Tucker Malone—the only child of a narcoleptic touring stripper— believes his father is Sam Malone, the Boston barkeep who regularly appears on Tucker’s TV screen. He and his mother move from motel to motel until one night in Niagara Falls, his mother is hit by a car after falling asleep in the street. Tucker meets Meredith – sixteen and pregnant, and together they take a road trip to find Tucker’s father, encountering some of the most notorious criminals of the 1990s.

Jim Lynch (US), *Before the Wind*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

Joshua Johannssen has spent his whole life among sailboats. As a child, Ruby Johannssen confounded the local and nationwide sailing community by throwing a race that would’ve delivered her to the Olympic Games. Both she and her oldest brother fled over a decade ago to the ends of the earth— Ruby, to Africa to do good works on land and Bernard, to sea as a law-defying fugitive and pirate. An important race forces the Johannssens to reunite, all of them on a historic vessel that will carry each to a destiny both individual and collective.

Alain Mabanckou (CD), *The Lights of Pointe-Noire*

(Non-Fiction, Cudasat Canada, May 2015)

Alain Mabanckou left Congo in 1989, not to return until a quarter of a century later. When he comes home to Pointe-Noire, some things remain unchanged, not least the swirling mythology of Congolese culture which still informs everyday life. Mabanckou, now an esteemed professor at UCLA, finds he can only look on as an outsider at the place where he grew up. Mabanckou slowly builds a stirring exploration of the way home never leaves us, however long ago we left.

Jennifer Manuel (CA), *The Heaviness of Things that Float*

(Fiction, Douglas & McIntyre, April 2016)

Only weeks from retirement, Bernadette finds herself unsettled, with no immediate family of her own. Her fears are complicated by the role she has played within her community: a keeper of secrets in a place “too small for secrets.” And then a shocking announcement crackles over the VHF radio of the remote medical outpost: Chase Charlie, the young man that Bernadette loves like a son, is missing.

Yann Martel (ES), *The High Mountains of Portugal*
(Fiction, Penguin Random House, February 2016)

In Lisbon in 1904, a young man named Tomás discovers an old journal. It hints at the existence of an extraordinary artifact that—if he can find it—would redefine history. Thirty-five years later, a Portuguese pathologist finds himself drawn into the consequences of Tomás' quest. Fifty years on, a Canadian senator takes refuge in northern Portugal, grieving the loss of his beloved wife. And there the century-old quest will come to an unexpected conclusion.

Eimear McBride (IE), *The Lesser Bohemians*
(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

Upon arrival in London, an eighteen-year-old Irish girl begins anew as a drama student, with all the hopes of any young actress searching for the fame she's always dreamed of. She struggles to fit in but soon forges friendships and finds a place for herself in the big city. Then she meets an attractive older man - an established actor twenty years her senior. The inevitable, clamorous relationship that ensues is one that will change her forever.

Francesca Melandri (IT), *Eva Sleeps*
(Fiction, Istituto Italiano di Cultura, July 2016)

Eva, a forty-year-old public relations professional living in Northern Italy, receives an unexpected message. Vito, a man she briefly knew is very ill and would like to see her one last time. He is a retired police officer who was stationed in the north during the late-sixties, a period rife with tension, protest, and violence. These troubles, however, did not stop a young hapless policeman from falling in love with the "wrong" woman, a girl named Gerda.

Christopher Merrill (US), *Boat*
(Poetry, Tupelo Press, November 2013)

Boat records a series of passages over a decade, employing varied formal strategies: meditations and fantasias, prose poems and versets, lyric sequences and narratives, translations and ghazals. Composed in war zones and embassies, refugee camps and monasteries, *Boat* is a logbook tracking questions of memory, the body and body politic, faith, mortality and the ways of knowledge moves through generations.

John Metcalf (CA), *The Museum at the End of the World*
(Fiction, Biblioasis, November 2016)

Set in Nashville, Memphis, New Orleans, and Ottawa, the stories in this collection span the life of writer Robert Ford and his wife Sheila. Playing with various forms of comedy throughout, Metcalf paints a portrait of twentieth-century literary life with levity, satire, and surprising moments of emotional depth.

Riel Nason (CA), *All the Things We Leave Behind*
(Fiction, Goose Lane Editions, September 2016)

Seventeen-year-old Violet is left behind by her parents to manage their busy roadside antique stand for the summer. Her restless older brother, Bliss, has disappeared, leaving home without warning, and her parents are off searching for clues. Violet is haunted by her brother's absence. Between visiting a local hermit, who makes twig furniture for the shop, Violet acts out with her summer boyfriend, Dean, and wonders about the mysterious boneyard.

Sharon Olds (US), *Odes*
(Poetry, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

Olds treats us to an intimate self-examination that, like all her work, is universal and by turns searing and charming in its honesty. From the early bodily joys and sorrows of her girlhood to the recent deaths of those dearest to her — the "Sheffield Mountain Ode"

for Galway Kinnell is one of the most stunning pieces here — Olds shapes her world in language that is startlingly fresh, profound in its conclusions and life-giving for the reader.

Kevin Patterson (CA), *News from the Red Desert*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, August 2016)

Deirdre O'Malley, an American journalist was covering municipal politics when the airplanes went into the towers. Now a war correspondent, she has come to love the soldiers she covers. Embedded with Canadian infantry, she can't ignore the situation on the ground. Fueling the tension is a melancholy American supply sergeant who accidentally releases a trove of war porn online that sparks a furious hunt for the person who leaked it.

Soraya Peerbaye (CA), *Tell: Poems for a Girlhood*

(Poetry, Pedlar Press, October 2015)

A collection of poems partially based on the Reena Virk murder case. Virk was an Asian adolescent whose drowned body was found in the Gorge Waterway in a Victoria, BC suburb, in 1997. Some of the poems use found material from court transcripts. The murder made international headlines due to the viciousness employed by Virk's assailants: seven girls and one boy between the ages of 13 and 16, five of whom were white.

Susan Perly (CA), *Death Valley*

(Fiction, Wolsak and Wynn, May 2016)

Legendary war photographer Vivienne Pink has five days to photograph servicemen about to deploy for active combat. Racing to meet her deadline she heads to Las Vegas where she'll capture images of men who may die the next day — and where she'll confront an abuser from her past to force a reckoning. Accompanied by her husband, a celebrated novelist, and her best friend, a former CIA spook, Vivienne heads out into the Nevada desert in search of adrenaline, vengeance and the perfect shot.

Steven Price (CA), *By Gaslight*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

London, 1885. A severed head is dredged from the Thames; ten miles away, a woman's body is discovered on Edgeware Road. The famed American detective William Pinkerton is summoned by Scotland Yard to investigate. Edward Shade is an industrialist without a past, a fabled con, a thief of other men's futures. The obsessive hunt for him that begins in the last days of the Civil War becomes Pinkerton's inheritance.

Billy Ramsell (IE), *The Architect's Dream of Winter*

(Poetry, Dedalus Press, November 2013)

A world of machines, machine management and communication is at the heart of Cork-born poet Billy Ramsell's second collection of poems. From credit card point-of-sale devices to personal music players, from mobile phones to cardiac supports, the world is seen as enabled, criss-crossed and perhaps even bound by digital signals that between them comprise a new life force on the planet, and one we have scarcely begun to comprehend.

Iain Reid (CA), *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*

(Thriller, Simon & Schuster, June 2016)

In this smart, suspenseful and intense literary thriller, debut novelist Iain Reid explores the depths of the human psyche, questioning consciousness, free will, fear and the limitations of solitude. Reminiscent of Michel Faber's cult classic *Under the Skin* and Lionel Shriver's *We Need to Talk about Kevin*, *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* is an edgy, haunting debut. Tense, gripping and atmospheric, this novel pulls you in from the very first page and never lets you go.

Noah Richler (CA), *The Candidate: Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail*
(Non-Fiction, Penguin Random House, October 2016)

During the 2015 federal election, approximately 1200 political campaigns were held across Canada. One of those campaigns belonged to author, journalist and political neophyte Noah Richler. In *The Candidate*, Richler recounts his time on the trail in sizzling detail and hilarious frankness, from door knocking in Little Jamaica to being internet-shamed by experienced opponents. *The Candidate* lays bare what goes on behind the slogans, canvassing and talking points, told from the perspective of a political outsider.

Peter Robinson (UK), *When the Music's Over*
(Crime, Penguin Random House, August 2016)

Two women; two crimes. The first is a poet claiming she was assaulted decades earlier by a man now regarded as one of the country's national treasures. The second is a girl found on a remote roadside, her body broken, her life snuffed out. For Alan Banks, newly promoted to Detective Superintendent, the first case rips a tunnel into long-ago days of innocence and discovery, of music and light. And in the victim, he sees an opportunity for magic recaptured—if he can bring her assailant to justice.

Maria Semple (US), *Today Will be Different*
(Fiction, Hachette Book Group, October 2016)

Eleanor knows she's a mess. But today, she will tackle the little things. But before she can put her modest plan into action—life happens. Today, it turns out, is the day Timby has decided to fake sick to weasel his way into his mother's company. It's also the day Joe has chosen to tell his office—but not Eleanor—that he's on vacation. Just when it seems like things can't go more awry, an encounter with a former colleague produces a graphic memoir whose dramatic tale threatens to reveal a buried family secret.

Anna Smaill (NZ), *The Chimes*
(Fiction, Quercus, May 2016)

A young orphan named Simon arrives in London with nothing but the vague sense of a half-forgotten promise. What he finds is a new family—a gang of scavengers that patrols the underbelly of the city looking for valuable metal to sell. Drawn in by an enigmatic and charismatic leader, a blind young man named Lucien with a gift for song, Simon forgets entirely what originally brought him to the place he has now made his home.

Cordelia Strube (CA), *On the Shores of Darkness, There is Light*
(Fiction, ECW, April 2016)

Harriet is 11 going on 30. Her mixed-media art is a source of wonder to her younger brother, Irwin, but an unmitigated horror to the panoply of insufficiently grown-up grown-ups who surround her. She plans to run away to Algonquin Park, hole up in a cabin like Tom Thomson and paint trees; and so, to fund her escape, she runs errands for the seniors who inhabit the Shangrila, the decrepit apartment building that houses her fractured family.

Amy Stuart (CA), *Still Mine*
(Thriller, Simon & Schuster Canada, March 2016)

Clare is on the run. From her past, from her husband, and from her own secrets. When she turns up alone in the remote mining town of Blackmore asking about Shayna Fowles, the local girl who disappeared, everyone wants to know who Clare really is and what she's hiding. As it turns out, she's hiding a lot, including what ties her to Shayna in the first place. But everyone in this place is hiding something.

Madeleine Thien (CA), *Do Not Say We Have Nothing*
(Fiction, Penguin Random House, May 2016)

Madeleine Thien's new novel is breathtaking in scope and ambition even as it is hauntingly intimate. With the ease and skill of a master storyteller, Thien takes us inside an extended family in China, showing us the lives of two successive generations—those who

lived through Mao's Cultural Revolution in the mid-twentieth century and the children of the survivors, who became the students protesting in Tiananmen Square in 1989, in one of the most important political moments of the past century.

M.G. Vassanji (CA), *Nostalgia*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

In the indeterminate future in an unnamed western city, physical impediments to immortality have been overcome. As society approaches the prospect of eternal life, a new problem must be confronted: with the threat of the brain's storage capacity being overwhelmed, people want to move forward into the future free from redundant, unwanted and interfering memories. Rejuvenated bodies require rejuvenated identities—all traces of a person's past are erased and new, complete fictions are implanted in their stead.

Katherena Vermette (CA), *The Break*

(Fiction, House of Anansi, September 2016)

When Stella, a young Métis mother, looks out her window one evening and spots someone in trouble on the Break — a barren field on an isolated strip of land outside her house — she calls the police to alert them to a possible crime. In a series of shifting narratives, people who are connected, both directly and indirectly, with the victim tell their personal stories leading up to that fateful night.

Genevieve Von Petzinger (CA), *The First Signs*

(Non-Fiction, Simon & Schuster, May 2016)

Join renowned archaeologist Genevieve von Petzinger on an Indiana Jones-worthy adventure from the open-air rock art sites of northern Portugal to the dark depths of a remote cave in Spain. Von Petzinger is obsessed with abstract geometric images, the terse symbols that appear more often than any other kinds of figures—signs that have never really been studied or explained until now.

Eleanor Wachtel (CA), *The Best of Writers & Company*

(Non-Fiction, Biblioasis, May 2016)

Eleanor Wachtel is one of the English-speaking world's most respected and sought-after interviewers. This book, celebrating her show's 25 year anniversary, presents many of her best conversations from the show with authors including Jonathan Franzen, Alice Munro, Hilary Mantel, J.M. Coetzee, Zadie Smith, W.G. Sebald, Toni Morrison, Seamus Heaney and nearly a dozen others who share their views on process, the writing life and the hazards of literary fame.

Fred Wah (CA), *Scree*

(Poetry, Talonbooks, June 2015)

Fred Wah's career has spanned six decades and a range of formal styles and preoccupations. *Scree* collects Wah's concrete and sound poetry of the 1960s, his landscape-centric work of the 1970s and his ethnicity-oriented poems of the 1980s. Fred was a founding member of the avant-garde TISH group, which helped turn Canadian poetry, in the West in particular, to a focus on language. He has said that his "writing has been sustained, primarily, by two interests: racial hybridity and the local."

Andrew Westoll (CA), *The Jungle South of the Mountain*

(Fiction, HarperCollins Canada, August 2016)

In an unnamed country on the northern coast of South America, a scientist named Stanley is deeply embedded in the life of the rainforest. He's been studying a troop of capuchin monkeys for eight years—seven since his wife, Maria, left him and their mentor, Professor Collimore, mysteriously disappeared. His research is violently threatened when one of his beloved monkeys goes missing and then another. Something is killing them, one by one.

Colson Whitehead (US), *The Underground Railroad*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, September 2016)

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and escape. Matters do not go as planned—Cora kills a young white boy who tries to capture her. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted.

Zoe Whittall (CA), *The Best Kind of People*

(Fiction, House of Anansi, August 2016)

To the shock of his family and community, George Woodbury, an affable teacher and beloved husband and father, is arrested for sexual assault at a prestigious prep school in Connecticut. While he awaits his trial in jail, his family is left to pick up the pieces. Unfolding over a one-year period, the novel focuses on the Woodbury family as they struggle to support George while privately grappling with the possibility of his guilt.

Sam Wiebe (CA), *Invisible Dead*

(Crime, Penguin Random House, June 2016)

Dave Wakeland isn't the usual PI. A 29-year-old ex-cop, he makes a habit of bad ideas. Chelsea Loam falls squarely into that category. Chelsea disappeared eleven years ago, leaving a trail leading towards career criminals and powerful men. Taking her case quickly starts to look like a good way to get killed. Whatever ghosts drive Wakeland, they drive him inexorably, addictively toward danger and the allure of an unsolvable mystery.

Peter Wohlleben (DE), *The Hidden Life of Trees*

(Non-Fiction, Greystone Books, September 2016)

Peter Wohlleben draws on groundbreaking scientific discoveries to describe how trees are like human families; tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, support them as they grow, share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling and even warn each other of impending dangers. With their newfound understanding of the delightfully complex life of trees, readers will never be able to look at a walk in the woods the same way again.

Richard B. Wright (CA), *Nightfall*

(Fiction, Simon & Schuster Canada, May 2016)

James Hillyer's life is barely existent after the death of his beloved daughter. On a whim, he tries to locate the woman he fell in love with so many years ago on a summer trip to Quebec. But Odette's present existence seems to be haunted by ghosts from her own past, in particular, the tough ex-con Raoul, with his long-standing grievances and the beginnings of dementia.

Xue Yiwei (CN/CA), *Shenzheners*

(Fiction, Linda Leith Publishing, September 2016)

The first book in English by acclaimed Chinese-Canadian writer Xue Yiwei, *Shenzheners* is inspired by the young city of Shenzhen, a market town north of Hong Kong that became a Special Economic Zone in 1980 as an experiment in introducing capitalism to Communist China. A city in which everyone is a newcomer, Shenzhen has grown astronomically to become a major metropolitan centre.

Alissa York (CA), *The Naturalist*

(Fiction, Penguin Random House, April 2016)

1867, Philadelphia. Amateur naturalist Walter Ash is on the brink of setting off to travel up his beloved Amazon when fate intervenes, obliging his only son to take his place. More at ease among his books than in the field, Paul Ash takes a reluctant leave of absence from Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology to accompany his grieving stepmother and her young companion to the fabled River Sea. Paul holds no memory of the place, though he was born there.

Clea Young (CA), *Teardown*

(Fiction, Freehand Books, October 2016)

The stories in this arresting debut collection are populated with people you know and people you've been. They're arguing about lamps in IKEA, drinking gin and tonics on a dock in summer, unemployed and without prospects. But under Young's astute gaze they are anything but ordinary. With sharp, invigorated prose she guides us through shoals and rapids alike, along the way paying homage to our missteps, our foibles, and ultimately to the complicated hearts that comprise a life.