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## **Vancouver Writers Fest Celebrates Record-Breaking Year And Announces Personnel Change**

**Vancouver, BC** – The Vancouver Writers Fest concluded its 29<sup>th</sup> Festival on Sunday, October 23 after more than 17,000 people attended 90+ events on Granville Island. With record-breaking attendance, the electric lineup of author conversations, readings and panels cemented the Vancouver Writers Fest as one of the most revered literary festivals in the world. Book sales reached more than \$100,000: a 15 percent increase from last year.

Highlights of the Festival included the opening event, *Between The Pages*: an evening with all Scotiabank Giller Prize finalists such as Vancouver’s own Madeleine Thien. A conversation between two of the biggest names in contemporary literature, Colson Whitehead and Yaa Gyasi, offered a remarkable perspective on history, slavery and the future of race relations in America. Ivan Coyote’s *Tomboy Survival Guide* performances captivated each sold-out house. Continuing the musical tradition, Irish poet Billy Ramsell was one of the six authors to read with a musical accompaniment during Festival favourite, *The Literary Cabaret* with Sal Ferreras and band.

More than 100 school groups participated in the 40 events curated to introduce young readers to the ideas of some of the most celebrated children’s authors in Canada, including Alice Kuipers, Lisa Moore and Roy Henry Vickers. Another dozen schools in the Lower Mainland whose classes include vulnerable children received visits from authors.

2017 will be the last year that Hal Wake, Artistic Director of the Vancouver Writers Fest, will be in the role.

“I’m extremely proud of the festival that we, as a team, have built. I’m especially grateful to the loyal, enthusiastic and engaged audiences that turn out every year and impress authors from all over the world with their thoughtful questions and passion for books and ideas. You can be sure that we will be working hard to make next year’s festival a very special one,” said Hal Wake.

“I’ve had a good run and 2017, our 30th anniversary, seems like a good time to move on and try some other things.”

Further information about the recruitment of a new Artistic Director – the Festival’s third in as many decades – will be announced in the coming weeks.

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### **Upcoming Special Events**

Carrying on from the successful festival, the Vancouver Writers Fest has a number of exciting special events to keep readers coming back for more including Ami McKay on

November 9, Mohamed Fahmy on November 21, Elvis Costello on November 23 and Robbie Robertson on December 6.

Further information about all special events, and tickets, are available at [writersfest.bc.ca](http://writersfest.bc.ca).

**About The Vancouver Writers Fest**

The Vancouver Writers Fest is one of North America's premier producers of literary events. The Society presents an annual six-day Festival in late October, the Incite reading series in the spring and a host of other literary and fundraising events throughout the year.

Vancouver Writers Fest activities attract 22,000+ readers of all ages annually. For further information visit [writersfest.bc.ca](http://writersfest.bc.ca).

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