

## Vancouver Writers Fest 2022 Board of Directors Slate

### Allison Felker

Allison has been involved in the non-profit sector for over twenty years and is passionate about the role the sector can play in building engagement, equity, and community well-being. She has worked in the areas of leadership development, fund development and board governance through roles at the JIBC's Centre for Leadership, Vancouver Foundation, and Vantage Point. Most recently, she was interim Executive Director at Vancity Community Foundation, where she led the team of twenty-five to establish the 312 Main Centre for Social and Economic Innovation and to renew the Foundation's strategic direction. Her board experience includes Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House, WISH Drop-in Society, and the Association of Fundraising Professionals Vancouver Chapter. Allison holds a Master of Education and a Bachelor of Social Work. When she's not reading some of the amazing authors featured at the Vancouver Writer's Festival, you can find her on her bike, in a garden, on a trail, or playing her ukulele with her partner, family and friends.



### Julia Iannacone

Julie has spent most of her career at Vancouver Public Library and believes in the role of public libraries as champions for equity, intellectual freedom, and access, and that opportunities to connect people with books, ideas, and dialogue are a critical part of the social infrastructure of a vibrant, democratic society. In her role as Director of Neighbourhood & Youth Services at VPL, she leads a team of staff who provide resources and services at the Library's 20 neighbourhood branches, city-wide services for children, teens and families, and Accessible Services. She also leads community engagement initiatives and partnerships, and strategic planning and development for new and renewed library facilities.

Julie holds a Master of Library Science from the University of British Columbia and is a recent graduate of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council's Public Library Leaders Program, University of Toronto. She is committed to lifelong learning and to reducing barriers to meet the needs of equity deserving or under-represented groups. She is excited about opportunities to promote diverse voices including those of x̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and Urban Indigenous Peoples.



## Karen Gilmore

Karen Gilmore (she/her) is a long-time attendee of the Festival and a firm believer in the transformative power of books and ideas. Karen brings substantial experience in corporate and social profit organizations at both management and Board levels. After four decades as a corporate lawyer, Karen is currently working with The Discovery Group, a boutique consulting firm dedicated to the social profit sector. Previously, Karen founded and led the Technology Law Group at the Vancouver office of a national law firm, before moving to an in-house legal and operational role at a Canadian book publishing company. She was then VP Legal at a private equity firm, where she also led the creation of a public foundation and was instrumental in the creation of a social enterprise business. Karen has volunteered extensively in the social profit sector, including serving as Board Member and Board Chair of each of YWCA Metro Vancouver and YWCA Canada. Karen has received many awards for her years of service in both the community and the legal profession, including the BC Community Achievement Award.



## Krystal Paraboo

Krystal Paraboo (*she/her*) is an award-winning independent Curator, Art Historian, Writer, and Community Builder. She is currently a Public Art Planner with the City of Vancouver. Krystal's work has spanned within both public and private art institutions over the years, and has recently shifted to research in the public art realm transforming spaces through placemaking, bridging art and activism. She specializes in: curatorial art projects, art education, research, fundraising, policy, events, communications, community building, art consulting, non-profit design and management, organizational development, and anti-racism training.



## Luan Li

Luan Li is a Chartered Professional Accountant who continues to maintain her love for reading and writing. As someone who has both benefited from and participated in community programs, she understands the crucial role that arts programming and events plays in order to help communities thrive. During her time articling at PricewaterhouseCoopers, she has performed various assurance services ranging from midsize private clients to large public companies, as well as NPOs, helping them navigate complex financial issues and preparing financial statements and reviews. At the same time, she completed the first draft of a novel in 2020 which was then shortlisted for the JCW Emerging Writer's Prize, given to an emerging writer of Asian-Canadian descent. She will be joining the Humber College for Writers in fall 2022 in order to further develop this draft and other writing projects.

She has participated as a Youth Mentor in the Richmond Youth Media Program and continues to be passionate about creating opportunities for community engagement and fostering connections where writers and readers alike can thrive. During her free time, she enjoys running, hiking, and spending long afternoons in a local bookstore.



## Michelle Blackwell

Michelle Blackwell is a marketing and communications leader with a passion for literature and the arts. As Director of Communications & Marketing at UBC Library, she is responsible for the overall strategic direction of communications and marketing for the University's library services, advising on issues, brand and reputation management. Michelle spent almost a decade working in the Canadian book publishing industry with Simon & Schuster Canada and has served on several not-for-profit boards, including the Giller Light Bash in Toronto and Ballet BC Up in Vancouver.

Living on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, she is committed to anti-racism, inclusive excellence and is excited about creating more opportunities for meaningful conversations through VWF.



## Tom Woods

Thomas S. Woods sat as a Provincial Court judge from 2007 to 2019. Before that, he practised for 20 years as a barrister at a Vancouver law firm. And before that, he worked for ten years in the child behaviour therapy field serving children with autism, first as a clinician/researcher and ultimately as a treatment program director. Throughout his careers, Tom contributed regularly to the academic literatures of his chosen professions. Since his retirement, he continues as editor-in-chief of the London-based *Commonwealth Judicial Journal*. Since the 1980s, Tom has written creatively under the pen name, P.W. Bridgman. He has thus far published two books of short fiction and two of poetry. He has given readings of his work in Greater Vancouver, Victoria, Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow and Melbourne.

Tom enthusiastically endorses the VIWF's expressed view that "the transformative power of books and ideas is the foundation of an empathetic, inspired and just society". He welcomes the opportunity to work with his fellow board members in furthering the VIWF's efforts to facilitate—for the benefit of writers and readers from all cultures and segments of society—the growth of the literary arts in Vancouver and across British Columbia.

