# Vancouver Writers Fest 2023 Program Guide: Simple Text – Events With Descriptions

This document contains information about events at the 2023 Vancouver Writers Fest with full event descriptions.

Visit our website to learn more:

[Ticket information](https://writersfest.bc.ca/box-office)

[Accessibility at the Festival](https://writersfest.bc.ca/accessibility)

[Venue Maps](https://writersfest.bc.ca/venue-maps)

[Information for Teachers](https://writersfest.bc.ca/info-for-teachers)

01. Between The Pages: An Evening with the Scotiabank Giller Prize Finalists

Monday, October 16 7:30pm at Playhouse Theatre ($30)

ASL Interpretation Provided

Without fail, the winner of the annual Scotiabank Giller Prize becomes a household name in Canada. Those shortlisted also step into the proverbial CanLit Hall of Fame, their titles splashed across best-of lists for good reason. No wonder the Giller shortlist has become a staple of many bibliophiles’ reading lists. We’re delighted to celebrate these visionary authors to kick off the Festival with the cross-Canada Between the Pages tour. Find out who’ll be on stage when the shortlist is announced on October 11th! Check our website for the full lineup of authors. Moderated by Leslie Hurtig. Presented in partnership with the Scotiabank Giller Prize.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/01>

02. Cherie Dimaline in Conversation

Tuesday, October 17 10:15am at Granville Island Stage ($10)

Youth

Few authors have captivated Canadian youths’ imaginations like Cherie Dimaline, whose book *The Marrow Thieves* won multiple awards and was named a Book of the Year across North America. The sequel, *Hunting by Stars*, likewise received tremendous acclaim. Here is an author who explores some of the most pressing issues of our time—colonialism, identity, ecological protection—through captivating and deeply original stories. In this YA event, Cherie will dig into her writing process, her passion for storytelling, and what inspired her latest works: Funeral Songs for Dying Girls, about a teen who befriends a ghost, and Into the Bright Open, a new take on The Secret Garden. A must see. Grades 8–12. Moderated by Margaret Gallagher.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/02>

03. A Morning with Jon Klassen

Tuesday, October 17 10:15am at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

Who can resist hearing from the charming, multi-award-winning author and artist, Jon Klassen? In this event for little ones, the ubiquitous storyteller will delve into his new book The Skull, a funny, spooky tale of Otilla, a little girl who finds herself lost in a dark forest only to find shelter in a big abandoned house. It turns out there’s a skull living there who’s afraid of something. Can Otilla save herself and this strange companion? With Klassen’s unique style and engaging presentations, this is a fun morning for kids right before Halloween. Grades 1–3.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/03>

04. Masterclass: The Best Way to Get Your Way

Tuesday, October 17 10:15am at The NEST ($10)

Youth

Here’s a skill that’s important at any age: how to talk to people who share different opinions than yours. Arguably, it’s a skill we need *more* of in a time of social media-fuelled division and polarization. Tanya Lloyd Kyi, a beloved guest of the Festival and author of more than 25 books for kids, reveals tips for debating in respectful—and effective—ways. *The Best Way to Get Your Way* can help kids master exactly how it’s done and shows, through multiple scenarios, how making a smart and logical argument is the way to convince others! Relevant and engaging, Tanya’s work will support young folks looking to be heard—the right way. *Grades 4–7*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/04>

05. Finding Your Way

Tuesday, October 17 10:15am at Revue Stage ($10)

Youth

When life takes a tricky turn, sometimes it’s difficult to know which path to forge. Three authors share their stories of challenge and resilience in this moderated conversation. Debut author and award-winning filmmaker Alan Barillaro delivers a stirring story about a young girl who learns that growing up means taking responsibility in *Where the Water Takes Us*. Author Michelle Kadarusman has lived and travelled around the world, and uses *We the Sea Turtles* to shed light on how people ground themselves when they’ve been uprooted. A.T. Woodley transports readers to another world in *The Boy Who Woke the Sun*; a world of Elliot’s dreams, in which the 11-year-old needs to discover his true path. *Grades 4–7. Moderated by Shannon Ozirny.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/05>

06. Word! (1)

Tuesday, October 17 1:00pm at Granville Island Stage ($10)

Youth

Our Spoken Word event series, curated and hosted by award-winning poet and spoken word artist Jillian Christmas, is a varied, powerful highlight of our youth programming every year. This Word! features three exceptional performers, sharing poems about love, art, justice, and more. D Fretter has been described as “…like a hip-hop Andrea Gibson” or “a philosophical Shel Silverstein.” fanny kearse fuses her experience as a social worker and her lived experiences as a marginalized human to express activism through poetry and storytelling. Em Nimetz is known for their vulnerability and authenticity, and magnetic presence, in their performances as an actor and a poet. *Grades 8–12. Hosted by Jillian Christmas*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/06>

07. Picture Book Storytime

Tuesday, October 17 1:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

What a combination! Two of the best-loved illustrator-authors of children’s literature share their new work with students. Jon Klassen is revered for his entirely original illustrations which accompany whimsical tales. Ben Clanton’s *Narwhal* series made us fall in love with the majestic and underrated creature. Both authors have new books perfect for the Halloween season. Join presentations on *The Skull* and *A Super Scary Narwhalloween* in an event as cozy as it is spooky! *Grades 1–3*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/07>

08. Masterclass: Maybe a Whale

Tuesday, October 17 1:00pm at The NEST ($10)

Youth

In this masterclass for little ones, author and illustrator come together to describe how a story becomes a book. *Maybe a Whale*, written by Kirsten Pendreigh and illustrated by Crystal Smith, tells a moving story of learning to grieve someone you love—and how being in nature can help you connect with each other, and yourself. Students will feel immersed in storytime as Kirsten and Crystal’s book comes alive on stage. But how does a book like this come to be? Which comes first, the writing or the drawings? And how does Crystal know exactly what parts of the story to draw? The author/illustrator duo will reveal the secrets behind making a children’s book, and share more about this touching story, too. *Grades 1–3*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/08>

09. Spooky Stories

Tuesday, October 17 1:00pm at Revue Stage ($10)

Youth

Prepare to feel goosebumps with these tales of hauntings and mysteries from two bestselling writers. Joel A. Sutherland’s *Haunted Canada* series is a cult classic and a highlight of book fairs across the country. In the twelfth edition, more chilling than ever, Joel shares stories of black cat visits, mischievous spirits, and unusual sobs in strange places. Meanwhile, the kid detectives in Natasha Deen’s *Spooky Sleuths* series are asking themselves: is it science, or is it ghostly? In each tale, Deen spins a story based on Guyanese folklore. Tickle kids’ imaginations with these pre-Halloween series. *Grades 4–7. Moderated by Shannon Ozirny.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/09>

10. Ian Ferguson & Will Ferguson in Conversation

Tuesday, October 17 6:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

These brothers have a fraternal flair for the written word. With four Leacock Medals for Humour and multiple other awards including a Giller Prize and the CBA Libris Award for Non-Fiction, the duo have teamed up once again, after their hugely bestselling *How to Be a Canadian*, to deliver a gripping thriller: *I Only Read Murder*. For fans of Richard Osman, Alexander McCall Smith, or *Schitt’s Creek*, the tale follows a once-beloved television sleuth who finds herself far from Hollywood, only to witness a murder during a small-town theatre production. She’s convinced it’s up to her to solve the case. Delve into a delightful evening about this rollicking yarn, the process of writing with family, and what makes a plot a page-turner. *Moderated by Alison Broddle.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/10>

11. The Storm Inside Us

Tuesday, October 17 6:00pm at The NEST ($25)

If literature explores the deepest parts of our lives and is a place to underscore often-hidden topics in our culture, surely mental health is one of the most important contemporary issues for us to grapple with in this form. Alicia Elliott *(And Then She Fell)* and Carrie Mac *(Last Winter)* will speak to the process of writing about mental health, mental illness, and its relationship to family and community. How can one write about mental illness while protecting one’s own health? How does literature help us discuss taboo subjects hidden just below the surface? And why did these authors choose to delve into such important but challenging areas of life? Two writers on every ‘Must Read’ list in the country will answer. *Moderated by Carleigh Baker.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/11>

12. Marvelous Meta-Fiction

Tuesday, October 17 6:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Books within books, protagonists who are also their authors, plot twists about the narrator: some of the most celebrated writers in history—from Pynchon to Atwood to Jemisin—have used deeply creative ways to change the boundaries between reader. Three authors with anticipated new books in this style explore the joys of such playfulness and the literary challenges of subverting common styles. Kevin Chong’s *The Double Life of Benson Yu* follows a graphic novelist who loses control of his own narrative. *Hollow Bamboo* follows two William Pings in Newfoundland—the lost millennial and the grandfather he knows nothing about. Sam Shelstad’s *The Cobra and the Key* is a hilarious creative writing guide… with a twist. Clever, invigorating, and not to be missed. *Moderated by Eddy Boudel Tan.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/12>

13. The Alma Lee Opening Night Event: Page-Turning Thrills

Tuesday, October 17 7:30pm at Granville Island Stage ($25)

Looking for books to keep you up at night when you decide to read “just one more chapter”? We have the event for you. Three of the world’s most celebrated thriller writers join us on stage to talk about craft, mystery, crime, and plots that get your pulse racing. Louise Candlish’s *The Only Suspect* is a new work about obsession and deadly secrets. Shari Lapena has been called “a master of manipulation” by USA Today, and her latest thrilling domestic suspense novel, *Everyone Here is Lying*, proves it. Irish writer Liz Nugent, an international bestseller, joins us to talk about her wickedly dark and sharply observed novel, *Strange Sally Diamond*, about a woman confronting her unknown past. Your TBR pile just got bigger—but don’t worry, you’ll read these quickly. *Moderated by André Picard.*

*Presented thanks to the support of Simon & Schuster.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/13>

14. Roaming

Tuesday, October 17 8:30pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Jillian and Mariko Tamaki, the critically acclaimed and Caldecott Medal-winning graphic novelists, are turning their hand to a new story with *Roaming*, which Gabby Rivera explained, “made me wanna be 17 all over again.” This literary, elegantly illustrated work from Drawn & Quarterly shares the consequences of a trip with three friends to New York, including an unexpected fling that blossoms between casual acquaintances and throws a long-term friendship off-balance. For graphic novel fans, or readers who are just exploring the genre after falling in love with *Ducks*, this promises to be a future classic. The authors will discuss why they’re now making a foray into adult fiction, the growth of graphic novels… and why they chose the Big Apple for such a rich, layered work. *Moderated by Sarah Leavitt.*

*Presented in partnership with SFU’s Master of Publishing Program.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/14>

15. Patrick deWitt in Conversation

Tuesday, October 17 8:30pm at The NEST ($25)

Patrick deWitt is the perfect poster child for aspiring writers. Since dropping out of high school to focus on becoming a writer, he’s won the Governor General’s Literary Award, the Atwood Gibson Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize, and been a finalist for the Booker and Giller Prizes. His last novel, French Exit, is now being made into a motion picture with Michelle Pfeiffer. Moreover, his novels—of endlessly creative and varying styles and topics—are events when they publish. He joins us to discuss his latest and no less brilliant work, *The Librarianist*, celebrating the extraordinary in the so-called ordinary life; his lifelong love of the written word; and his surprising, brave, and exceptional career to date. *Moderated by Bill Richardson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/15>

16. Inheriting Truth

Tuesday, October 17 8:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

ASL Interpretation Provided, Guest Curator Event

These books consciously deal with the weight of inheritance, whether it’s inheriting story, self-mythology, or trauma. How do we make sense of what’s been passed down to us? Three lauded novelists discuss just this with our Guest Curator Elamin Abdelmahmoud. Janika Oza’s instant national bestseller, *A History of Burning*, follows three sisters across generations as they experience the reverberations of their family’s past. katherena vermette’s *The Circle*, a sequel to *The Break*, shares the far-reaching consequences of a missing woman in a small community. And Ada Zhang’s exceptional debut, *The Sorrows of Others*, probes intergenerational ties that bind. Each shows why the webs and depths of inheritance are as powerful as they are often invisible.

*Presented in partnership with UBC Library.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/16>

17. Word! (2)

Wednesday, October 18 10:15am at Granville Island Stage ($10)

Youth

Our Spoken Word event series, curated and hosted by award-winning poet and spoken word artist Jillian Christmas, is a varied, powerful highlight of our youth programming every year. This Word! features three exceptional performers, sharing poems about love, art, justice, and more. D Fretter has been described as “…like a hip-hop Andrea Gibson” or “a philosophical Shel Silverstein.” fanny kearse fuses her experience as a social worker and her lived experiences as a marginalized human to express activism through poetry and storytelling. Em Nimetz is known for their vulnerability, authenticity, and magnetic presence in their performances as an actor and a poet. *Grades 8–12. Hosted by Jillian Christmas.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/17>

18. Shadows, Wrath, and Haunting Writing

Wednesday, October 18 10:15am at Performance Works ($10)

Youth

Students will be on the edge of their seats hearing from writers who have produced two of the creepiest YA books of the season! Award-winning Aden Polydoros’ *Wrath Becomes Her* is *Frankenstein* meets *Inglourious Basterds*. This is a powerful Jewish historical horror novel about a golem—a creature brought to life with ancient magic—made in the image of a murdered daughter with a mission to avenge her death. Bestselling author Joel A. Sutherland’s *House of Ash and Bone* is spine-tinglingly macabre; described as *The Haunted* meets *House of Salt and Sorrows*. Award-winner Naben Ruthnum takes his first suspenseful foray into YA with small-town mysteries in *The Grimmer. Grades 8–12. Moderated by Rob J. Wiersema.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/18>

19. Storytime

Wednesday, October 18 10:15am at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

Three authors who have captivated people of all ages with their art and storytelling will offer a truly mesmerizing morning for little ones. Andrea Fritz is a Coast Salish artist and storyteller who tells the tale of a salmon and a sea otter who learn it’s okay to say “I don’t know” and ask for help in *Otter Doesn’t Know*. Canada Reads finalist Catherine Hernandez reveals how we can show love to difficult feelings we have in *Where Do Your Feelings Live?* And two-time Scotiabank Giller Prize-winner Esi Edugyan debuts her first picture book with *Garden of Lost Socks:* a whimsical story about friendship, curiosity, and the magic of a vibrant community. *Grades 1–3.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/19>

20. Masterclass with Tui T. Sutherland

Wednesday, October 18 10:15am at The NEST ($10)

Youth

What an opportunity! #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Tui T. Sutherland will take students through her creative process in this masterclass. The Wings of Fire series author has dazzled with her epic dragon fantasies. She’ll share more about how she comes up with ideas, the writing and editing process, and what her journey has been throughout the series. Students will leave with practical tips and a lot of inspiration to embark on their own projects. *Grades 4–7.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/20>

21. Rise Up!

Wednesday, October 18 1:00pm at Granville Island Stage ($10)

Youth

Andrea Warner’s *Rise Up* and *Sing* is an inspiring introduction to activism and social justice for young teens, showing the important role music plays in changing the world. Featuring musicians such as Beyoncé, Billie Eilish, Lizzo, Lady Gaga, Lil Nas X, and iconic artists from past generations, Andrea’s book shows how music contributed to the fight for social justice—and continues to do so. She’s joined by musicians Missy D, Kimmortal, and Chris Reed/Continental Breakfast, each of whom will perform and speak to how they use music in their own activism. The book even includes a playlist with recommended songs about areas of activism. This is an event, and book, that is as uplifting as it is rocking. *Grades 8–12.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/21>

22. Burt the Beetle with Ashley Spires

Wednesday, October 18 1:00pm at Performance Works ($10)

Youth

One of the staples of our children’s programming here at the Festival, Ashley Spires continues to delight classes, teachers, and families with her prolific and delightful books. In *Burt the Beetle Lives Here*, our favourite bug learns about the different places insects call home. He’s looking for a place to rest himself, but what does he need? A hive, a tunnel, a place in the trees? Fact and fiction wrapped in hilarity will keep kids laughing while learning about insects. *Grades 1–3*.

*Presented in collaboration with the Vancouver International Children’s Festival.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/22>

23. The Strength of Owls, Turtles… and Kids

Wednesday, October 18 1:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

Each of these books showcases the hidden strengths in nature—and in us. Kids will be amazed by the abilities of owls and turtles, and inspired by Firefox, who’s surrounded by animals on her own adventures. Arnolda Dufour Bowes’ *Maggie Lou, Firefox* shows how hard work and perseverance can bring valuable new skills, without losing one iota of irrepressible spirit. Nicola Jones’ *Saving the Spotted Owl* is a fascinating nonfiction deep dive into an owl chick’s rescue. Michelle Kadarusman, meanwhile, shows us the majesty of ancient creatures through eight evocative stories told in *We the Sea Turtles*. Come be inspired by the wonder around us and within us. *Grades 4–7. Moderated by France Perras.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/23>

24. Masterclass with Sarah Suk

Wednesday, October 18 1:00pm at The NEST ($10)

Youth

Vancouver-based author Sarah Suk is known for her gripping, atmospheric YA novels. Her latest work, *The Space between Here & Now*, follows a teen with a mysterious condition that transports her to the past when she smells certain scents linked to specific memories. It’s an aching, powerful exploration of memory, grief, and the painful silences we must overcome to discover our truest selves. Sarah will share her writing insights with students in this informative, engaging masterclass. How can fictional stories divulge important information about our real lives? How do authors come up with multiple book ideas? Can editing ever be fun? Sarah answers all. *Grades 8–12*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/24>

25. Bestselling Teen Fiction for a Reason

Wednesday, October 18 1:00pm at Revue Stage ($10)

Youth

Cherie Dimaline and Jen Ferguson are two of the biggest names in YA—and no wonder. Cherie’s debut *The Marrow Thieves* captured imaginations across the continent for its bold dystopian vision and has become a modern classic. Jen’s debut won a Governor General’s Literary Award and has made her a favourite of teachers, librarians, and readers ever since. Both write about Indigenous teens and the struggles they face, whether in this world or others. They’ll each speak about their writing journey to date, their passion for YA literature, and how their mesmerizing ideas take shape. This is a chance for students to discover more about admired authors, and hear about their brand new books: *Funeral Songs for Dying Girls* and *Into the* *Bright Open* by Cherie Dimaline, and *Those Pink Mountain Nights* by Jen Ferguson. *Grades 8–12. Moderated by Molly Cross-Blanchard.*

*Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival and the Canada Council for the Arts to celebrate the finalists and winners of the Governor General’s Literary Awards.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/25>

26. The Strength of Storytelling

Wednesday, October 18 6:00pm at Performance Works ($25)

*And Then She Fell* “is the fulfillment of the promise of Alicia Elliott’s storytelling prowess” according to Cherie Dimaline. *A Grandmother Begins the Story*, by Michelle Porter, is “charged with huge blasts of imaginative force,” and Erica T. Wurth calls katherena vermette’s *The Circle* “a polyphonic masterpiece.” What a gift to be joined by three of the most lauded and creative Indigenous writers in conversation. They speak to the process of writing their poignant, nuanced, exceptionally moving stories; the strength of Indigenous women at the heart of their latest works; and the nuance of beauty and heartbreak interwoven in stories and life. *Moderated by Michelle Cyca.*

*Presented in partnership with Penguin Random House and Talking Stick Festival.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/26>

27. Night Class - A Workshop with UBC School of Creative Writing

Wednesday, October 18 6:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Now a staple of the Festival, this interactive, unpredictable workshop offers writing tips, tricks, and cues from five members of UBC School of Creative Writing’s illustrious department. Participants will learn key writing skills in five minutes or less through nimble, electrifying craft, and rapid-fire creativity. Try out concepts and ask questions of these creative writing teachers and authors. Full of invigorating thought exercises, Night Class explores a wide array of styles and genres, from poetry and song to comics and speculative fiction. This workshop is suitable for new and established authors. Check our website for further info, including instructor bios. *Hosted by Sarah Leavitt.*

*Presented in collaboration with UBC School of Creative Writing.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/27>

28. On Being Human (or not): Exceptional Short Stories

Wednesday, October 18 6:00pm at The NEST ($25)

Good short stories can share expansive truths with the smallest details. Each of these authors offer mesmerizing insights into what it means to be human in their collections. Corinna Chong’s *The Whole Animal* is perfect for fans of Souvankham Thammavongsa or Lynn Coady; an original debut that grapples with self-discovery, and explores the bodies of humans and animals. Christine Estima’s *The Syrian Ladies Benevolent Society* explores indelible linked stories centred around Azurée, a young Arab woman living in the echoes of her ancestors’ voices across the globe. Ada Zhang’s *The Sorrows of Others* explores the experience of being outsiders—as immigrants, as revolutionaries—through families in China and America after the Cultural Revolution. These are ideas, themes, and identities worth exploring through the intricate craft of the short story. *Moderated by Anna Ling Kaye.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/28>

29. The Company We Keep

Wednesday, October 18 6:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

They say that a friend is someone who knows you and loves you anyway. And, certainly, good company can transform our lives and our outlooks. Three thought-provoking authors speak to the beauty of unusual company and surprising friendships, as shared in their latest works. Bob Comet tries to ward off loneliness by volunteering in a community centre full of strange individuals in Patrick DeWitt’s *The Librarianist*. Catherine Hernandez’s *The Story of Us* shares the unlikely companionship of a Filipino immigrant caregiver and her patient with Alzheimer’s. Sean Michaels’ *Do You Remember Being Born?* also includes a friendship with an age difference, this time between a 75-year-old New Yorker and an AI poetry bot. It’s the perfect evening for catching up with a friend. *Moderated by Robert J. Wiersema.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/29>

30. She’s A Scream

Wednesday, October 18 8:30pm at Performance Works ($25)

There are plenty of things for women to be terrified about—from reproductive rights erasure to violence in rising temperatures, to wrinkles, friendship betrayals, and even things that go bump in the night. These three hugely popular writers have a knack for uncovering the uncanny, and finding thrilling points of tension in both the mundane and bizarre. They share their penchant for this—and what makes for a gripping read—in a discussion likely to be warm, funny, and ever so clever. Join the exceptional Ashley Audrain *(The Whispers)*, Mona Awad *(Rouge)* and Silvia Moreno-Garcia *(Silver Nitrate)* for an unforgettable discussion. *Moderated by Jael Richardson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/30>

31. Blackness as a Portal, Blackness as the Frame

Wednesday, October 18 8:30pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

ASL Interpretation Provided, Guest Curator Event

Each of these writers analyze their relationship to Blackness from different vantage points and from different ends. In what promises to be a fascinating, powerful discussion, they will share why they write about Black experience, whether through memoir, historical analysis, or cultural criticism, and their relationship to Blackness. The panel includes three of the most exciting literary minds today, brought together by our Guest Curator, Elamin Abdelmahmoud. Aisha Harris *(Wannabe)* is “one of our smartest, most entertaining modern cultural critics” *(ELLE)*. Suzette Mayr won the Giller Prize and many others for her astonishingly creative, enveloping *The Sleeping Car Porter*. And Christina Sharpe *(Ordinary Notes)* is regularly hailed as inventive, dazzling, and intellectually expansive in her work. *Moderated by Jasmine Sealy.*

*Presented in partnership with Hogan's Alley Society.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/31>

32. Anne Berest in Conversation with Marsha Lederman

Wednesday, October 18 8:30pm at The NEST ($25)

It’s no exaggeration to say that Anne Berest’s *The Postcard* is one of the biggest literary sensations in Europe this century. Winner of multiple prestigious awards, and called “profound,” “brilliant,” and “stunning,” it is a remarkably moving and stylish work of fiction… based on a true story. An anonymous postcard is delivered to the Berest family home, bearing names of her maternal great-grandparents and their children, all killed at Auschwitz. Anne of the novel is moved to discover who sent it and why. What follows is a story of adventure across countries, a family saga and, ultimately, a reminder of how stories can shatter certainties. One of Europe’s most celebrated authors will speak with Marsha Lederman about family history and secrets in the face of abject destruction.
*Moderated by Marsha Lederman.*

*Presented in partnership with the Consulate General of France in Vancouver and Alliance Française Vancouver.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/32>

33. Season of the Witch

Wednesday, October 18 8:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Guest Curator Event

Witches aren’t just for Halloween. In spite of centuries of persecution, Hollywood stereotypes, and cultural misunderstandings, witchcraft is seeing a renaissance, and more and more women are exploring the power and feminism steeped in this practice. Our authors will talk with Guest Curator and Moderator Elamin Abdelmahmoud about why the concept of the witch is such a fertile playground for writing. Zalika Reid-Benta’s *River Mumma* explores Jamaican folklore and the vital connection to ancestral ties. Cherie Dimaline’s *VenCo* is a deliciously imaginative, deeply feminist novel of contemporary witches on the rise, while Anna Maxymiw’s *Minique* looks to the witches in history, in a fierce, outsider narrative about the so-called “witch in the woods” in 17th century Montreal. This is all about big witch energy—and subverting stereotypes, from fear to empowerment.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/33>

34. Good Reads for YA

Thursday, October 19 10:15am at Performance Works ($10)

Youth

Our Good Reads events feature books of the season that can’t be put down. Each of these new YA titles offers captivating stories that share important topics with youth. In her remarkable second novel, *Those Pink Mountain Nights*, Jen Ferguson writes about the hurt of a life stuck in past tense, the hum of connections that cannot be severed, and one week in a small town that changes everything. Clara Kumagai’s *Catfish Rolling* is perfect for fans of Studio Ghibli films, about a girl coming to terms with grief, adolescence, and new romances. Amanda West Lewis’ *Focus*. *Click*. *Wind*. follows a brave student photojournalist campaigning against the United States’ involvement in the Vietnam War. *Grades 8–12. Moderated by Susin Nielsen.*

*Presented in partnership with The Vancouver International Summer School in Children’s Literature at UBC.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/34>

35. Adventures in the Pacific Northwest

Thursday, October 19 10:15am at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

The Sueño Bay Adventures graphic novel series, by Nancy & Mike Deas, teaches kids about environmentalism, friendship, and home, and regularly receives starred reviews. No wonder it’s a go-to staple for teachers and librarians alike. In this fourth book, friends Kay, Ollie, Jenna, and Sleeves try to help a lost moon creature at the lighthouse of *Candle Point*. Nancy and Mike will take students on a magical romp through colourful landscapes and flora, sharing what makes a brilliant adventure and what we can learn from the characters in their series who, book after book, dare to explore strange, fascinating places. G*rades 2–4.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/35>

36. Masterclass with Elamin Abdelmahmoud

Thursday, October 19 10:15am at The NEST ($10)

Youth

Writer, cultural commentator, and podcast host Elamin Abdelmahmoud is this year’s Guest Curator at the Festival—but his accolades go far beyond that. Students may know his writing from BuzzFeed and Popchat, and he hosts his own radio program on CBC. He’s also the bestselling author of *Son of Elsewhere: A Memoir in Pieces*. Let us tell you, Elamin knows how to engage a crowd, and how to tell a story! He’ll share some of his tips and tricks on storytelling and presenting in this masterclass, perfect for budding producers, writers, and media makers, or anyone who wants to feel confident in their own skin amidst a crowd. *Grades 8–12.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/36>

37. Good Reads for Middle Grade

Thursday, October 19 10:15am at Revue Stage ($10)

Youth

Maggie Lou’s grandpa doesn’t call her Firefox for nothing. She’s always finding ways to make life more interesting—even if this means getting into big trouble. Arnolda Dufour Bowes’ *Maggie Lou*, *Firefox* is a heroine for today, showing kids how you can work hard and gain new skills without losing one iota of your spirit. Meanwhile, charismatic 13-year-old Augustus Constantine has ADHD, meaning his mind, and his mouth, operate at a different speed than the rest of society. Richard Scrimger explores the teen’s daily reality in *At the Speed of Gus*. Wanda Taylor’s true to life story, *The Grover School Pledge*, opens up about the pains and triumphs of growing up. These books will underscore how our differences are nothing to be ashamed of, imparting a strength that comes from just being you. *Grades 4–7. Moderated by France Perras.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/37>

38. Using Pop Culture

Thursday, October 19 1:00pm at Performance Works ($10)

Youth, Guest Curator Event

Looking to pop culture to create meaning in our own lives is an important part of every adolescent journey—and beyond. Two engaging, insightful authors touch on elements of pop culture that are not only relevant but fun to talk about. In *Superfan*, Jen Sookfong Lee explores family, identity, belonging, and grief through her love of pop culture, and probes the ways in which pop culture can fail to reflect one’s identity and even lead to a sense of invisibility. Aisha Harris’s *Wannabe* reads like hanging out with your smart, hilarious, pop culture-obsessed friend. She turns her razor-sharp wit to her nineties childhood to analyze what shapes us—and what *we* can shape. They’ll be in conversation with writer, broadcaster and Festival Guest Curator Elamin Abdelmahmoud. *Grades 8–12.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/38>

39. Wings of Fire: Tui T. Sutherland in Conversation

Thursday, October 19 1:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($10)

Youth

Tui T. Sutherland is a favourite—of booksellers, librarians, and young readers. Her Wings of Fire series is a #1 *New York Times* bestseller topping the lists for 122 weeks in total; she has sold 14 million copies of her books; and her work has been translated into 10 languages and counting. Tui will reveal her inspiration behind this epic fantasy series and what her success has felt like as she creates such imaginative, bold worlds. *Grades 4–7. Moderated by Shannon Ozirny.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/39>

40. Masterclass with Ben Clanton

Thursday, October 19 1:00pm at The NEST ($10)

Youth

How do you draw a narwhal, that strange unicorn of the sea? For that matter, how do you begin to draw any animal? Ben Clanton, *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator of the hilarious and charming Narwhal series, has delighted children and adults with his imaginative adventures under the sea. In this masterclass for youngsters, he’ll show budding artists how he begins his drawings, and how those drawings can tell emotive stories. Participants may even get some spooky tips in time for Halloween with *A Super Scary Narwhalloween*. *Grades 2–4.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/40>

41. Fantastical Fantasy

Thursday, October 19 1:00pm at Revue Stage ($10)

Youth

Step into worlds never before fathomed with three YA fantasy writers who use magic realism and new realms to reveal valuable insights about navigating teenage years—and society—with strength and fairness. Jes Battis is a queer autistic writer, teacher, and professor who reimagines Arthurian legends in the upbeat queer fantasy, *The Winter Knight*. Clara Kumagai is an award-winning author from Canada, Japan, and Ireland and joins us with her debut magical realism novel *Catfish Rolling*. Sarah Suk is a celebrated YA novelist whose latest, *The Space between Here & Now*, follows a youth with a mysterious condition that transports her to the past when she encounters scents linked to specific memories. Students will rethink the bounds of possibility.
*Grades 8–12. Moderated by Holman Wang.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/41>

42. It Stops Here: Rueben George in Conversation

Thursday, October 19 6:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Here is a memoir and a call to action. Rueben George of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation shares the story of the spiritual, cultural, and political resurgence of a nation taking action to reclaim their lands, waters, law, and food systems in the face of colonization in his memoir, *It Stops Here*. Recounting the intergenerational struggle of the Tsleil-Waututh to overcome the harms of colonization, it also underscores the powerful stance they have taken against the expansion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline. Ultimately, this is a call for policymakers to prioritize sacred territory over oil profits. Join us for this important conversation and a reminder of the importance of allyship in the face of megaproject destruction. *Moderated by Michelle Cyca.*

*Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/42>

43. Mona Awad in Conversation

Thursday, October 19 6:00pm at The NEST ($25)

In the few short years since Mona Awad published her debut novel, *Bunny,* the author has received cult-like status for her playful, darkly funny, and original stories that explore modern life for women… with a twist. She returns to the Festival after multiple sold-out events to discuss her body of work, and her latest novel, *Rouge*: a horror-tinted, gothic fairy tale about a lonely dress shop clerk whose mother’s unexpected death sends her down a treacherous path in pursuit of youth and beauty. *Snow White* meets *Eyes Wide Shut* in this surreal descent into the dark side of beauty, envy, grief, and the complicated love between mothers and daughters. Don’t miss what’s sure to be a fun, clever evening of conversation with one of our favourite page-turning writers. *Moderated by Liza Christiansen.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/43>

44. Rewriting History

Thursday, October 19 6:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

If we could rewrite history, what injustices would we right? We may not have time machines (yet) but writing about history at least offers the chance to recast historical figures in a more complex light. These three authors do just this with their captivating works that offer a new perspective on the past. Jes Battis reimagines Arthurian legends in *The Winter Knight*: an upbeat queer urban fantasy with a mystery at its heart, in which the Knights of the Round Table collaborate in Vancouver. Carmen Boullosa’s *The Book of Eve* tells the story of the most famous woman in history from her perspective. And, Beatriz Hausner also offers feminist insight in *She Who Lies Above*, on the life of Hypatia of Alexandria, the fourth-century Byzantine mathematician and thinker. Philosopher George Santayana said that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. What future is possible when we reimagine it, too? *Moderated by Rhea Tregebov.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/44>

45. Celeste Ng in Conversation

Thursday, October 19 7:30pm at Granville Island Stage ($25)

ASL Interpretation Provided

Where does one start when listing the accolades and praise for Celeste Ng’s deeply felt, intelligent body of work? *Little Fires Everywhere* sold millions of copies worldwide and was adapted to a highly acclaimed series on Hulu. Of her latest, *Our Missing Hearts*, Stephen King shared that “it’s impossible not to be moved,” while *TIME, NPR, People, The Globe and Mail*, and more, listed it as a book of the year. This inspiring book about the bond between a mother and son, and her unbreakable love, was one of the biggest books of 2022. With the paperback releasing this fall, this lauded author—whose work has been published in more than 30 languages—will speak to her work to date… and what comes next. *Moderated by Jael Richardson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/45>

46. Smells Like… 90s Lyrics Night

Thursday, October 19 8:00pm at Performance Works ($25)

Lyrics night is back! We Truly Madly Deeply loved the 90s when many of us were Livin’ La Vida Loca. You Oughta Know that in this Bittersweet Symphony of fun, celebrated authors read their favourite lyrics from the era like they’re still in Vogue. If you Believe that Nothing Compares 2 a silly night of MmmBop and Da Funk, then Come As You Are, Under the Bridge to Performance Works, for this Juicy night. You’ll be Tearin’ Up Our Hearts if you don’t visit us Where It’s At. Say You’ll Be There? Then say you’ll join us for our 90s Dance Party, immediately following this event (see Event #49)! Check our website for a complete list of participating authors. *Hosted by Elamin Abdelmahmoud.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/46>

47. Cli-Fi: Fiction for our Times

Thursday, October 19 8:30pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

The climate crisis is here, and as we grapple with what this means (and what to do about it), some writers offer warnings of what comes next in their fiction. This is Cli-Fi and it’s here to stay. Christine Lai’s *Landscapes* recalls the works of Rachel Cusk and Kazuo Ishiguro through a tale of art and survival in a world after ecological collapse. Andrew F. Sullivan’s *The Marigold* has been called “a gripping tour-de-force torn from tomorrow’s headlines” and looks at a near-future Toronto buffeted by unfettered development. Catherine Leroux imagines an alternate history, resulting in a world where children rule over their own kingdom in the trees, set in a strange, polluted, yet magical version of *Detroit in The Future. Moderated by Claudia Casper.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/47>

48. The Best of History

Thursday, October 19 8:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

(**Please note: There is no ASL Interpretation for this event**. We apologize for any confusion caused by the ASL designation in our printed Program Guide.)

The past is always fertile ground for rich stories, expansive epics, and high-stakes drama, but the very best writers of historical fiction also remind us of the shared humanity of people across the centuries. Turn the pages of any of these writers’ works and we begin to comprehend how we may have been when living in a different place, a different era. In short, historical fiction not only expands our shelves, it expands our empathy. Four of the most celebrated writers of this genre—all of them bestsellers and award-winners—speak to just this within their latest works. Join Emma Donoghue *(Learned By Heart)*, Paul Harding *(This Other Eden)*, Janika Oza *(A History of Burning)*, and Kai Thomas *(In the Upper Country)* for this illustrious evening. *Moderated by Aislinn Hunter.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/48>

49. 90s Dance Party

Thursday, October 19 9:30pm at Performance Works ($10)

Whether you’re reminiscing over nights on the dance floor when slip dresses and Doc Martens were in style, or simply want to move to the beat after sitting immersed in the rest of our events, our 90s Dance Party is sure to bring a smile to your face. Come lipsync to The Backstreet Boys, air guitar to Bon Jovi, relive your clubbing days with Underworld, or simply dance along to your favourite songs of an era. *Featuring DJ Ice B on the turntables.*

*Discounted for those attending 90s Lyrics Night.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/49>

50. On the Edge

Friday, October 20 10:00am at Performance Works ($25)

Guest Curator Event

Our modern state is a precarious one and these three writers offer very different approaches to exploring and analyzing our age of decline through memoir, cultural commentary, and a novel. *Toronto Star* Books Editor Deborah Dundas *(On Class)*, Trillium Book Award Finalist Emma Healey *(Best Young Woman Job Book)*, and celebrated novelist Andrew F. Sullivan *(The Marigold)* speak with Guest Curator Elamin Abdelmahmoud about how we can grapple with the cascading system failures of environmental decline, ongoing and rising class inequality, and the gig economy. Far from depressing, each of these books—and this conversation—underscores the power of art for finding solutions. Or at least finding good company and good ideas amidst the chaos.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/50>

51. Memoirs of Belonging

Friday, October 20 10:00am at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

These three authors have led remarkable lives, and their memoirs are enveloping tapestries of storytelling about family and belonging. Bestselling author and PEN/Faulkner Finalist Fae Myenne Ng *(Orphan Bachelors)*, award-winning Canadian author Charlotte Gill *(Almost Brown)*, and national bestseller Helen Knott *(Becoming a Matriarch)*, each speak to ties across generations, the complexity of identity in the face of historic ills and colonialism, as well as the process of piecing these often-intangible frameworks of our lives on paper. *Moderated by Anna Ling Kaye.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/51>

52. Debut Fiction

Friday, October 20 10:00am at Revue Stage ($25)

Each year, this event showcases authors you may not have heard of but whose debut fiction is buzzworthy—and likely appears on some of the biggest prize lists in the country. That is to say: you heard them here first, folks! William Ping draws on elements of magical realism, autofiction, and satire in his moving, inventive *Hollow Bamboo*. Métis academic and storyteller Michelle Porter has published nonfiction, but *A Grandmother Begins The Story* is her first novel and a national bestseller. And, Chelsea Wakelyn’s *What Remains of Elsie Jane* is a heartbreaking and darkly funny portrait of a woman unravelling in the wake of tragedy. Discover these remarkable voices. *Moderated by Tara McGuire.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/52>

53. Book Banning in a Precarious Age

Friday, October 20 1:00pm at Performance Works ($25)

ASL Interpretation Provided

Book banning is on the rise. In the United States, 2,532 books were banned in 2021/22, the majority of which explore LGBTQ2S+ issues or have a protagonist who is a person of colour. Books that weren’t political are suddenly cast as such. Librarians and teachers face losing their careers for sharing stories about a fair, more diverse world. What’s to be done about this expanding crisis of censorship? Could the same thing happen in Canada… or is it already? Marsha Lederman speaks with Jen Ferguson *(Those Pink Mountain Nights)*, Casey Plett *(A Safe Girl to Love),* and Aden Polydoros *(Wrath Becomes Her)*; three writers whose works remind us that human rights should be non-negotiable, in literature and beyond. *Moderated by Marsha Lederman.*

*Presented thanks to the generous support of the Al Roadburg Foundation.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/53>

54. Blending Genres

Friday, October 20 1:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Each of these authors combine the unexpected—either writing in many genres across works, or blending multiple genres in one book. The result, in every case, is a work as fascinating for its form as for its story. We delve into these kaleidoscopic offerings before a ceremony for the VMI Betsy Warland Between Genres Award. Helen Cova *(Autosarcophagy - To Eat Oneself)* blends personal history and present-day experiences into a seamless yet complex fabric of short story narrative. Jason Guriel’s *The Full-Moon Whaling Chronicles* is a mashup of dystopian fiction, poetry, cyberpunk... and more. Daniel Innes and Christina Wong use illustration and fiction in Denison Avenue, a work about gentrification, aging, and grief. Celebrate craft with these talents. *Hosted by Elee Kraljii Gardiner.*

*Presented in partnership with SFU Creative Writing.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/54>

55. AI, Quantum Physics and Simplifying the Unknown: In Conversation with Jérémie Harris

Friday, October 20 1:00pm at The NEST ($25)

Whether you think it’s a risk to humanity, a technological breakthrough for healthcare and beyond, or a confusing jumble of jargon, one thing’s for sure: Artificial Intelligence is here to stay. Physicist, AI risk expert, and international AI security consultant Jérémie Harris joins us to discuss the phenomenon and his new book, *Quantum Physics Made Me Do It: A Simple Guide to the Fundamental Nature of Everything*. He’ll speak to the magnificent world of quantum physics and all the things it enables us to do—even when we don’t quite understand it—and what we need to know about how computers are evolving. Accessible, engaging, and ever so relevant, this will be expansive… just like our universe. *Moderated by André Picard.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/55>

56. Carving Space

Friday, October 20 1:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Indigenous Voices Awards, Carving Space shares works of its finalists over the past five years, edited by Jordan Abel, Carleigh Baker, and Madeleine Reddon. We welcome Carleigh Baker and three contributors to the anthology, and former finalists of the Awards: Nathan Adler, Troy Sebastian, and jaye simpson. They’ll share readings from their works and discuss the emerging luminaries they admire, what it’s felt like to have their own writing careers burgeon, and the exceptional breadth and depth in modern Indigenous writing. *Moderated by Carleigh Baker.*

*Presented in partnership with SFU Library.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/56>

57. Women Talking

Friday, October 20 6:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

These literary works may delve into very different circumstances, but at the heart of each are women protagonists navigating complexity to build their own futures in bold and sweeping narratives. Claudia Dey’s hypnotic tour de force, *Daughter*, follows a woman caught in her charismatic, womanizing father’s web, starving to make a life—and art—of her own. Emma Hooper asks questions of human nature, connection, and hope in *We Should Not Be Afraid of the Sky*, following five girls—who call themselves sisters—abducted by Roman soldiers. Zalika Reid-Benta probes the vital importance of ancestral ties in her exhilarating magical realist novel about a millennial Black woman embarking on a quest through Toronto in *River Mumma*. *Moderated by Jasmine Sealy.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/57>

58. Suzette Mayr in Conversation

Friday, October 20 6:00pm at The NEST ($25)

An Oprah pick, a Giller Prize-winner, and on just about every eligible prize shortlist or Best of the Year list, Suzette Mayr’s *The Sleeping Car Porter* was one of the biggest literary sensations of recent years. It brings to life an important part of Black history in North America, from the perspective of a queer man living in a culture that renders him invisible in two ways. Affecting, imaginative, and visceral enough that we feel the rocking of the train, we are drawn into Baxter’s life in which he must navigate the perils of white passengers, ghosts, and his secret love affair. The novelist shares with us the journey of writing her sixth novel, why her fiction is so richly imaginative and diverse in theme and focus, and why she thinks so many, across the continent, fell in love with Baxter the porter. *Moderated by Jael Richardson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/58>

59. Latin Expressions in Three Conversations

Friday, October 20 6:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Celebrating international authors and discovering writers from different cultures is one of the many highlights of the Festival, and this year we delve into works from Latin American writers. Each offers fascinating, heady insight into the lives of women. Carmen Boullosa is one of Mexico’s leading novelists, poets, and playwrights. *The Book of Eve* tells the story of the original woman—and the fall of man—from her perspective. Helen Cova was born and raised in Venezuela and now resides in Iceland. *Autosarcophagy - To Eat Oneself* fearlessly delves into subjects such as child mistreatment, motherhood, and anxiety in precise short stories. Beatriz Hausner, who, as a teenager, moved to Canada from Chile, reawakens the legacy of a fourth-century Byzantine mathematician and philosopher who, against convention, is also a woman in *She Who Lies Above. Moderated by Carmen Rodríguez.*

*Presented in partnership with the Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre Society.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/59>

60. The Poetry Bash

Friday, October 20 8:00pm at Performance Works ($25)

Entrancing, surprising, and memorable: The Poetry Bash is a gateway to discovering new-to-you poets or hearing your favourites. This year’s poets include: Victoria Adukwei Bulley, a British poet exploring the importance of *Quiet* in producing forms of community, resistance, and love; Lorna Crozier, who shares the grief from the passing of her partner of 40 years, Patrick Lane, in *After That*; Patrick Friesen, whose *Reckoning* is a master poet taking stock in later years; Susan Musgrave, whose heartrending *Exculpatory Lilies* explores marriage, family, and addiction; Michael V. Smith celebrating growing up queer and working class in *Queers Like Me*; and Matthew James Weigel, who explores connection to land and the ongoing effects of colonialism in the genre-bending and stunning *Whitemud Walking. Hosted by Jen Currin.*

*Presented in partnership with KPU Creative Writing.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/60>

61. Lauren Groff in Conversation

Friday, October 20 8:30pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Speaking about her multi-award winning novel, *Matrix*, Lauren Groff’s visit to the 2021 Festival was electric, humorous, and insightful. All the more reason to be excited by this intimate event with the three-time National Book Award finalist and *New York Times* bestseller discussing her latest book, *The Vaster Wilds*. Here is a work of raw and prophetic power. A servant girl escapes from a colonial settlement in the wilderness with nothing but a few possessions and her faith. Her story is both a thrilling adventure and a question of how to find a new way of living within the churn of colonialism. It asks, ultimately, how—and if—we can adapt quickly enough to save ourselves. Lauren Groff is one of the greatest American writers working today. Join us for this exclusive conversation.
*Moderated by Alix Ohlin.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/61>

62. Freeman’s Conclusions

Friday, October 20 8:30pm at The NEST ($25)

Sometimes desperately sought, sometimes heartbreakingly found, always inevitable, conclusions in our lives are as varied as they are omnipresent. From the end of life or relationships, to finding answers about why we’re on this planet, John Freeman’s latest anthology explores *Conclusions* in all their forms. This year, the tables turn and the editor will be interviewed about this latest release in the series, by issue contributor, friend, and award-winning author and journalist Omar El Akkad *(American War, What Strange Paradise)*. They’ll be joined by lauded novelist and *Conclusions* contributor Tania James *(Loot)*, to delve into world endings in life and literature. *Freeman’s* is a highlight on the Writers Fest calendar for our regulars; always thought-provoking, exquisitely literary, and deeply human.
*Hosted by Omar El Akkad*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/62>

63. Landbridge

Friday, October 20 8:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Author and English Professor Y-Dang Troeung and her family were among the last of the 60,000 refugees from Cambodia that then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau pledged to relocate to Canada. Forty years later, in her brilliant book *Landbridge*, Y-Dang returns to this moment, and to many others before and after, to explore the tension between that public narrative of happy “arrival,” and the multiple, often hidden truths of what happened to the people in her family. Y-Dang passed away in 2022 after completing this exceptional work. Four revered writers, friends, and colleagues of the author and academic celebrate her work and share more about her life. Join Dionne Brand, David Chariandy, Madeleine Thien, and Christopher B. Patterson for an immersive tribute to this writer and an introduction to a new classic that demands to be read. *Moderated by Doretta Lau.*

*Presented thanks to the support of Penguin Random House.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/63>

64. Rebecca Solnit in Conversation

Saturday, October 21 10:30am at Granville Island Stage ($25)

“The voice of the resistance” is just another accolade that public intellectual, feminist, multi-award winning writer, environmentalist, and human rights activist Rebecca Solnit can add to her global recognition. The author of such works as *Men Explain Things to Me, Orwell’s Roses*, and *Wanderlust* joins us with her latest book, the anthology *Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility*. In this intimate interview, she speaks to her lifelong work as an activist and feminist, and the barriers we face to progress—and how there’s still so much room, and need, for hope. This is an opportunity to hear from one of the greatest thinkers of our generation. *Moderated by Kathryn Gretsinger.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/64>

65. Chinatown: Past and Future

Saturday, October 21 10:30am at Performance Works ($25)

ASL Interpretation Provided

In this important, prescient event, writers, and artists explore what it means to be Chinese in North America. They explore threats to Chinese North American heritage, community, and wellbeing including spreading gentrification across Vancouver, Toronto, and San Francisco, home to the largest Chinese diasporic populations in the West. They also offer a vividly accessible way to celebrate the sustained vibrance of these communities. Don’t miss this conversation with Daniel Innes and Christina Wong *(Denison Avenue),* Fae Myenne Ng *(Orphan Bachelors)*, and Henry Tsang *(White Riot)*. *Moderated by Kevin Chong.*

*Presented in partnership with Chinatown Storytelling Centre.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/65>

66. Fest Talks on Field Notes

Saturday, October 21 10:30am at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Field Notes from Biblioasis are slim, pocket-sized books with insightful forays into topics of importance. They’re as brilliant as they are concise. Four authors of recent *Field Notes* will each speak to the subject of their book and passion. We hear from Toronto Star Books Editor Deborah Dundas *(On Class)* on why we don’t about talk about poverty or class—and what will happen when we do; Jason Guriel *(On Browsing)*, in defence of the dying art of losing an afternoon—and gaining new appreciation—amidst shelves of bricks-and-mortar shops; Stephen Marche on the topic close to our hearts, *On Writing and Failure*; and Casey Plett *(On Community)*—what it looks like, and why it sometimes feels like it’s slipping away. *Hosted by Bill Richardson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/66>

67. Good Reads

Saturday, October 21 10:30am at Revue Stage ($25)

The premise of our Good Reads event each year is simple: hear from three authors of must-read, unputdownable books. Claudia Dey uses penetrating insight and devilish humour in *Daughter*: a blazing examination of the forces that drive us to become… and to break free. From breaking free to *Breaking and Entering*, Don Gillmor’s utterly compelling novel pokes at upper-middle class intelligentsia via the dissatisfied protagonist who gets an unexpected itch for crime. Emi Sasagawa’s celebrated debut, *Atomweight*, speaks to competing cultures, traditions, and values in a bold and gripping tale. Make space in your evening and your bookshelf for these buzzworthy books. *Moderated by Caroline Adderson.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/67>

68. Novel Ideas: Conversations with Michael Crummey, Emma Donoghue, and Elizabeth Hay

Saturday, October 21 1:30pm at Granville Island Stage ($25)

Three of the best loved names in CanLit sit down with longtime friend of the Festival, Marsha Lederman, to discuss their latest works. Michael Crummey, the multi-award winning, bestselling author, joins us with *The Adversary*: a dark, enthralling novel about the corruption of power and the power of corruption. Emma Donoghue captivates readers with every book. Her gorgeous novel, *Learned by Heart*, is based on the true story of two girls who fall secretly in love at boarding school in nineteenth-century York. Giller Prize-winner Elizabeth Hay’s new *Snow Road Station* is a poignant exploration of thwarted ambition, unrealized dreams, and love’s capacity to surprise us at any age. *Moderated by Marsha Lederman.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/68>

69. Short Stories Continued

Saturday, October 21 1:30pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

That tiny detail which holds insight into the most expansive of experiences; the crisp focus of an event that unfurls across time: despite their spare canvases, short stories are often profound. This is certainly the case for these three, deeply creative collections. Jamaluddin Aram’s *Nothing Good Happens in Wazirabad on Wednesday* shares the colourful lives of people in a small town in 1990s Afghanistan through a novel constructed with interwoven short stories. Two-time Lambda Literary Award winner Casey Plett returns with a new edition of her acclaimed debut story collection, *A Safe Girl to Love*. Canada Reads-shortlisted Lindsay Wong returns to our stages with a darkly hilarious, and poignant collection of immigrant horror stories, *Tell Me Pleasant Things about Immortality. Moderated by Shirarose Wilensky.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/69>

70. Poets in Conversation

Saturday, October 21 1:30pm at The NEST ($25)

Intellectual, versatile, and brilliant: these three writers’ works are perfect examples of how poetry can expand our consciousness. Victoria Adukwei Bulley makes her thrilling debut in North America. Bernadine Evaristo praised *Quiet* as “perfectly embody[ing] the political through the personal.” Patrick Friesen has published more than a dozen books of poetry. *Reckoning* is one long poem in search of itself. Poet and professor Joanne Leow’s debut, *seas move away*, seeks answers to the question of what is lost in intensive urban development and the journey across continents. And Matthew James Weigel’s debut *Whitemud Walking* has won multiple awards for its original, transcendent Indigenous resistance historiography through poetry. *Moderated by Molly Cross-Blanchard.*

*Presented in collaboration with Poetry in Voice.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/70>

71. Crime Time

Saturday, October 21 1:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Why are we so drawn to stories of crime? What makes us tune into such a vast array of true-crime shows, or pick up a book that begins with murder? And is it harmless entertainment, or something more sinister? Three authors of crime novels or works about the impact of crime explore why we love the dastardly: Michael Melgaard’s *Not That Kind of Place* is a literary anti-mystery and a compelling exploration of our obsession with true-crime stories. Liz Nugent is an international crime writing sensation, whose *Strange Sally Diamond* moves into the thriller genre. And Sam Wiebe’s *Sunset and Jericho* novel, the fourth in The Wakeland Novels series, reveals the underbelly of Vancouver too-often ignored. Don’t miss this invigorating conversation. *Moderated by André Picard.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/71>

72. Michelle Good in Conversation

Saturday, October 21 5:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Michelle Good has moved and inspired millions of people with *Five Little Indians*, which chronicles the desperate quest of a group of residential school survivors to come to terms with their past and find a way forward. The novel won Canada Reads, a Governor General’s Literary Award, an Amazon First Novel Award, a Kobo Emerging Author Prize, and was a Giller finalist (and the list continues). She joins us to speak about her new non-fiction work, *Truth Telling*, continuing her essential messages through essays exploring the historical and contemporary Indigenous experience in Canada. She speaks to ways we can acknowledge the past and understand the way forward; a national conversation we must continue—and loudly—in months and years to come. *Moderated by Carleigh Baker.*

*Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/72>

73. Silvia Moreno-Garcia in Conversation

Saturday, October 21 5:00pm at The NEST ($25)

Silvia Moreno-Garcia is prolific. The award-winning, *New York Times* bestselling author produces highly-original works across genres and worlds. Her latest, *Silver Nitrate*, is a fabulous meld of Mexican horror movies and Nazi occultism: a dark thriller about the curse that haunts a legendary lost film—and awakens one woman’s hidden powers. Perfect for fans of the big screen, horror or the combination of the two, the book suggests that sorcerers and magic may not only be the stuff of movies. We’re thrilled to welcome this singular author to talk about her body of work and most recent foray into the world of motion pictures. *Moderated by Rob J. Wiersema.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/73>

74. Poets on Family and Time

Saturday, October 21 5:00pm at Revue Stage ($25)

Lorna Crozier *(After That)* and Susan Musgrave *(Exculpatory Lilies)* are two of the most celebrated poets in Canada. More than this, there is a warmth to anyone sharing their name or talking about their work; a recognition of the impact of both writers in the literary world and poetry community for more than four decades. In conversation with former Artistic Director of the Festival, Hal Wake, they speak to their latest collections—both deeply moving and bravely revealing explorations of love, deep connections to family, and the process of grieving when they are lost. This promises to be a conversation as gentle as it is intellectually rigorous with people who truly understand how poetry can help to move us through the hardest periods of life. *Moderated by Hal Wake.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/74>

75. Doppelganger: Naomi Klein

Saturday, October 21 7:30pm at The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts ($35)

Naomi Klein’s new book, *Doppelganger: A Trip into the Mirror World*, takes a more personal turn, braiding elements of tragi-comic memoir, chilling political reportage, and cobweb-clearing cultural analysis. She delves into what she calls the Mirror World—our destabilized present rife with doubles and confusion, where far-right movements playact solidarity with the working class, AI-generated content blurs the line between genuine and spurious, and so many of us project our own carefully curated digital doubles into the social media sphere. We all feel the need to chart a path beyond confusion and despair. Klein delivers a revelatory treatment of the way many of us now think and feel, and shares it with us in *Doppelganger*. *Moderated by Jarrett Martineau.*

*Presented in partnership with UBC Centre for Climate Justice and the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/75>

76. The Literary Cabaret

Saturday, October 21 8:00pm at Performance Works ($50)

It’s a formula that never fails: combine six acclaimed and award-winning authors with one band and a table of friends for a night of exceptional art and delight. At the helm of our flagship event is new Musical Director, Benjamin Millman: a pianist, producer and multi-instrumentalist hailing from Vancouver, whose mission is to pay homage to the great legacy of the Black American and African Diasporic Music he loves. He’ll direct *Benjamin Millman and the Oxymorons* as they interpret readings from authors including Patrick deWitt *(The Librarianist),* Jenny Erpenbeck *(Kairos)*, Elaine Feeney *(How to Build a Boat)*, Paul Harding *(This Other Eden)*, Kai Thomas *(In the Upper Country)*, and Tania James *(Loot)*.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/76>

77. Gripping Domestic Thrillers

Saturday, October 21 8:00pm at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

These two authors have sold hundreds of thousands of copies in more than 40 countries. Clearly, their subject matter resonates with readers across the globe: that of the psychological terrors found in the most mundane parts of our lives; family dynamics transformed into gripping thrillers. Who knew the faultlines in marriages or communities could be so compelling? These celebrated authors at the top of their genre talk about the mysteries of motherhood and why family dynamics make such good fodder for pulse-racing plots. They’ll also share a little about their latest works: Ashley Audrain’s *The Whispers* and Ayelet Gundar-Goshen’s *The Wolf Hunt.*

*Presented thanks to the generous support of Sam Znaimer in memory of Nancy Richler.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/77>

78. Christina Sharpe in Conversation

Saturday, October 21 8:00pm at The NEST ($25)

Christina Sharpe’s latest work, *Ordinary Notes*, is a dazzlingly inventive, intellectually bracing exploration of pain and beauty, private memory and public monument, art and complexity in contemporary Black life. It follows a body of work from the writer, Professor, and Canada Research Chair in Black Studies in the Humanities which is groundbreaking and esteemed. Of this recent collection she writes, “I wanted to write about silences and terror and acts that hover over generations, over centuries. I began by writing about my mother and grandmother.” She speaks about such silence, the ways to overcome it, and more, with David Chariandy in a bold, rigorous, and deeply important discussion.

*Presented in partnership with Hogan’s Alley Society.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/78>

79. Food for Thought

Sunday, October 22 11:00am at Performance Works ($45)

ASL Interpretation Provided

A revitalized take on our Sunday Brunch, Food for Thought presents six authors exploring topics at the forefront of our minds. Charlotte Gill *(Almost Brown)* fearlessly examines the complexities of life within a multicultural household. Jérémie Harris simplifies AI and the universe, in *Quantum Physics* *Made Me Do It*. Holly Hogan is a wildlife biologist who brings a warning of the devastating effect we’re having on the ocean in *Message in a Bottle*. In Races, Valerie Jerome sets the record straight on her heroic family’s history and the racism they fought along the way. Helen Knott gets straight to the heart of what matriarchy truly means in *Becoming a Matriarch*. And Stephen Marche offers pithy, witty guidance on the craft we love in *On Writing and Failure*. Guests will also enjoy a continental breakfast of croissant, fruit and yogurt, tea and coffee, and our signature mimosas. *Moderated by Kathryn Gretsinger.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/79>

80. The Conversations: Jenny Erpenbeck, Ayelet Gundar-Goshen, Elaine Feeney

Sunday, October 22 11:00am at Waterfront Theatre ($25)

Marsha Lederman will separately interview three of the most talked-about international writers on our roster. Jenny Erpenbeck is a powerful voice in contemporary German literature. Her latest work, *Kairos*, tells of a star-crossed love affair in 1980s East Berlin. Irish author Elaine Feeney joins us to discuss her latest work, *How to Build a Boat*, heralded as “one of those rare books that leaves you feeling less lonely.” Ayelet Gundar-Goshen is a clinical psychologist, civil rights activist, and award-winning author based in Israel. Her latest work, *The Wolf Hunt*, is a mesmerizing Jewish thriller about safety and identity. This is an opportunity to be immersed in conversation with women of world repute. *Moderated by Marsha Lederman.*

*Participation of Ayelet Gundar-Goshen made possible thanks to the generous support of Sam Znaimer in memory of Nancy Richler.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/80>

81. Pulse-Racing Thrillers

Sunday, October 22 11:00am at Revue Stage ($25)

When he’s not practicing emergency medicine, Dr. Daniel Kalla writes thrillers that take place in the world of pills and prescriptions. *Fit to Die* is no different: a riveting tale about body shaming, toxic diet pills, and a rapidly rising body count. Robyn Harding is a Festival audience favourite, and *The Drowning Woman* is just as dark and propulsive as her other works, following a homeless woman fleeing the past. Meanwhile, #1 bestselling author Amy Stuart returns with a thrilling tale of suspense and secrets when *A Death at the Party* dredges up the past for its protagonists. Each of these writers uses the everyday to cast tales of mystery and intrigue, showing that all is not what it seems in our complex world. *Moderated by Rob J. Wiersema.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/81>

82. Emerge

Sunday, October 22 1:30pm at The NEST ($0)

Join us at this free event to celebrate the latest work from The Writer’s Studio at Simon Fraser University: *emerge 23:* *The Writer’s Studio Anthology*. Hear a taste of work from those who have participated in the illustrious studio this year, and insights from the writers who mentored them along the way. Find out more about the practices that fuel creative work, and see the results of those practices in the form of new work from exciting emerging voices. It’s an immersive celebration of new talent and established community.

*Presented in partnership with SFU Creative Writing.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/82>

83. Pictures on the Wall: The Power of Art

Sunday, October 22 1:30pm at Revue Stage ($25)

A generous and dedicated patron of the arts, Michael Audain is also one of Canada’s most notable collectors. At this Vancouver launch of his memoir, *Pictures on the Wall: Building a Canadian Art Collection*, he tells the story of his inspiration and his assemblage. He then joins Jeannie Marshall *(All Things Move)*, lauded for depicting “personal experience in the face of great art and especially the right to have [such] personal experience,” and Max Wyman *(The Compassionate Imagination)*, one of Canada’s foremost cultural commentators, who asks us to use creative imagination in our response to great social challenges. Together, they discuss the role art can play in our personal and public lives, and the joys of paying a little more attention to the beauty surrounding us. *Moderated by Sirish Rao.*

*Presented in partnership with the Vancouver Art Gallery.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/83>

84. The Afternoon Tea

Sunday, October 22 4:00pm at Performance Works ($55)

The Afternoon Tea is always special: a chance to immerse in readings from a lineup of bestselling, award-winning and celebrated authors while savouring a high tea selection of treats with friends. This year, we present Jamaluddin Aram *(Nothing Good Happens in Wazirabad on Wednesday)*, Carmen Boullosa *(The Book of Eve)*, Michael Crummey *(The Adversary)*, Elizabeth Hay *(Snow Road Station)*, Emma Hooper *(We Should Not Be Afraid of the Sky)*, Darrel J. McLeod *(A Season in Chezgh’un). Hosted by Bill Richardson.*

*Generously sponsored by the Faris Family in memory of Yulanda Faris.*

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/84>

85. Not Too Late: The Climate Conversation

Sunday, October 22 7:30pm at Granville Island Stage ($25)

It’s at the forefront of our minds and an issue that effects us all. What can we do to truly engage with this pivotal moment for humankind and our planet? Three of the most revered contemporary non-fiction writers speak about the climate crisis… and what comes next. Acclaimed public intellectual Rebecca Solnit most recently co-edited *Not Too Late: Changing the Climate Story from Despair to Possibility*. Chris Turner’s *How to Be a Climate Optimist* won the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing and offers a “blueprint for a better world.” Meanwhile, John Vaillant’s *Fire Weather* is a must-read of 2023 and beyond, unflinching in its exploration of our rapidly changing relationship with fire. Whether you feel stuck in a cycle of despair and helplessness, or are actively fighting against the crisis and need a recharge of hope, this is an essential conversation for all. *Moderated by Matt Galloway, host of CBC’s* The Current.

Link: <https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-event-2023/85>