

Exceptional Books & Ideas in 85+ Events

October 20–26, 2025

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2025 FESTIVAL

#### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

(Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations.

# The Vancouver Writers Fest carries out its work on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwəta

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## Welcome to the 2025 Festival!



© Yasmeen Strang

Welcome to the 38th annual Vancouver Writers Fest! For one week, on Granville Island and beyond, we'll host over 130 authors from around the world, in 85+ immersive events that celebrate the written word and the power of community and storytelling.

I'm delighted that our 2025 Guest Curator is award-winning novelist and poet, **Canisia Lubrin**. She joins us in a monumental year that saw her win the 2025 Carol Shields Prize for Fiction (for her novel Code Noir) and release an incandescent new poetry collection, *The World After Rain*. Her writing, and the four events she's curated for you, invite readers to immerse themselves in the work of writers who dare to ask difficult questions, and who challenge their readers to consider the force of literature to repair and build connections of transformative power.

Together, we're excited to share this program of events that will entertain, enlighten, and invigorate our book-loving, knowledge-hungry attendees. When embarking on a new year of programming, we ask ourselves what issues and themes are dominating the cultural and political sphere that would benefit from deeper examination and understanding. Also, which new books are just cracking good reads?

The results of these questions lie in the pages of this guide. We have authors who have spun deeply entertaining page-turners alongside writers who have devoted their time and research to pressing global political, social, and cultural topics. We'll be examining what it means

to be Canadian in a time when our closest ally is turning toward authoritarianism, and we'll talk about Canadian nationalism in an era of Truth and Reconciliation. We'll hear from an Olympic gold medal-winning skip, and a Senior Fashion & Style Writer at Vogue, who hails from the Nipissing First Nation reserve. We'll examine issues of cyber security, anti-fascist resistance, and the history of military alliance between Canada and the US, alongside conversations on the rise of anti-Semitism and the ongoing genocide in Palestine.

We'll welcome an all-star list of Canadian favourites like Miriam Toews, David A. Robertson, Emma Donoghue, Mona Awad, and Guy Gavriel Kay, alongside international favourites like Kiran Desai, Susan Orlean, Walter Mosley, Chloe Dalton, Curtis Sittenfeld, and Danez Smith.

To top it all off, we'll feature four stellar Special Events surrounding the Festival, featuring global best-selling authors, **R.F. Kuang, Arundhati Roy, Chris Hadfield**, and **Margaret Atwood** with her long-awaited memoir, *Book of Lives*.

Through it all, we'll be thinking of the founding artistic director of this organization, Alma Lee. Above all else, she enjoyed a rollicking conversation, discovering new storytellers, and hosting literary greats in immersive events on Granville Island. Alma passed away in March, but her presence here will always be felt, and celebrated.

We hope you will join us to celebrate exceptional books, ideas, and dialogue. In a world that feels upside down, the Festival provides an antidote in the form of knowledge, community, and escapism. These forms of resistance, on the pages of books filled with joy, or in conversations on pressing issues, happen in small and big ways to create a more empathetic and just society.

Leslie Hurtig, Artistic Director



2025 FESTIVAL INTRODUCTIONS



© Kevin Clark

As we ready ourselves to receive all of you for another incredible week of captivating conversations, I have been reflecting on what an amazing community endeavour we are about to embark on.

From the resources we share with other festivals and cultural partners across Vancouver, the services and spaces provided to us by our title sponsor CMHC Granville Island, to the support of our government funders and representatives, Vancouver Writers Fest is upheld by these longstanding relationships, just as it is valued and championed by you, our patrons and donors.

Behind the scenes, our production and operations teams have been at work for months, bringing together some of the many professionals who light up the broader Vancouver arts and culture festival season with their expertise: our small team of eight expands to fifty by the end of October.

During Festival Week, you will be welcomed at all events by our incredible volunteers, a force more than 400 strong, who give of their time and energy year-round to help with everything from dropping off program guides like the one you are currently reading, to arranging tea cups and treats for our legendary Afternoon Tea.

So, as you pore over this guide, planning your best-ever festival itinerary, know that you are a welcome guest, and an essential part of this unique celebration of all things literary.

Looking forward to seeing you very soon,

Jennifer Milley, Managing Director

#### A Letter from Our Board of Directors

This year's Vancouver Writers Fest presents a can't-miss line-up of authors and events. Our mission is to connect people to exceptional books, ideas, and dialogue, igniting a passion for words and the world around us. As we look forward to our 40th anniversary, we mourn the passing of our founder, Alma Lee, whose vision, energy, and tireless support made the Festival what it is today.

Artistic Director Leslie Hurtig and Guest Curator Canisia Lubrin have assembled a program to stimulate the imagination and spark dialogue. The Festival connects us in ideas and discussion, and strengthens our community.

The Board of Directors expresses its appreciation to the staff for creating such a welcoming space for participants. The flagship week-long Festival is just one element of the Vancouver Writers Fest, which offers year-round programming with something for every reader, from politics to poetry.

This would not be possible without the support of our generous donors. We thank our public and private sponsors, and all those whose contributions

are key to the success of the Festival. If you are not already a donor, please consider making a small contribution to help ensure the VWF can continue to deliver amazing programming.

Also, a big shout-out to our members and audiences who bring the Festival to life. We look forward to joining you as we connect with writers and readers at our events this fall.



Welcoming Our Guest Curator, Canisia Lubrin



It is enriching, humbling, and wholly inspiring to be your Guest Curator for the 2025 Vancouver Writers Fest. My approach is based on the idea(I) of literature's unique ability to broaden the scope of dialogue between people, and that this, in turn, can fortify the work of cultures, institutions, and literature itself.

What I'm calling **Cycling and Renewal for the Earth** is a willingness to risk the book, the gesture, and the voice as important tools for transformational thinking about the world. Such co-visioning engages writers, thinkers, students, and artists—collaborators who come to the page from their different vantage points and ultimately reveal little

understood things about the same world, from the personal to the social to the political and the ecologic. In that way our particularly unstable present world—with all that moves us to awe and that infuriates—is given refreshing perspective. Here we gain chances to more clearly see forward. Naturally, through the power of transformational literature and the writers who dare to take up courageous questions, I hope Festival guests will leave these events with a renewed sense of the vast range and possibility of our-very-selves. Might you laugh? Might you cry? Might you holler and slow a horse with your bare hands?

It will be a fortune to welcome you to these events, and perhaps, to watch you leave transformed. I hope to see many of you there.

With All Care, Canisia Lubrin

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## QUEST CURATOR Look for this icon on Canisia's curated events.



#### Co-Founder and Lifetime Member

Alma Lee

#### **Board of Directors**

**Treasurer** Benita Loughlin Co-Chairs Daniel Getz Jillian Stirk

Secretary Pat Cumming

Sanika Bhurke Avalon Bourne Julie Iannacone

Anna Panzo Steve Tornes Sonia Wong

#### Our Team

Leslie Hurtig, Artistic Director

Jennifer Milley, Managing Director

Celeste Cadieux-Rey, Senior Operations Coordinator

Chelsee Damen.

Senior Operations Manager

Leena Desai, Senior Education & Development Coordinator

Jovce Wan. Marketing & Digital Production Manager

Sarah Wang, Programming Coordinator

Ashleigh Withall, Development Manager

#### Seasonal Staff

Benjamin Anton, **Box Office Coordinator** 

Kas Bueno & River Kero, **Box Office Assistants** 

Mikaela Asfour & Deanna Overland, Co-Volunteer Managers

Winnie Chan, Sunday Food/Bev Coordinator

Melanie Clark, Festival Hospitality Manager

Elizabeth Glancy, Catering Manager Epiphany Cooper, Holly Lam, Larissa Lau, Kathryn Morrow, Alina Quarin, Cassie Unger. Venue Coordinators

Brynn Fortier, Concessions Manager

Ariel Hudnall, Festival Marketing Director

James Tyler Irvine, Festival Hospitality Ambassador

(Serif)

Kelly Leung, Festival Assistant

Erica Miller. Distribution & Transportation Coordinator

Ese Orioghwo,

Marketing & Development Assistant; Night Administrator

Eduardo Ottoni, Production Manager (EventLAB)

#### Collaborators

Mitchell Press. Program Guide Printing

Showpass. Festival Box Office

Gina Ortiz, 2024-25 Festival Artwork

**Murray Patterson** Marketing Group, Digital Advertising **Trevor Battye Advertising** Sales.

Program Guide Advertising

ZAK Design Studio. Festival and Program Guide Designs

Serif. Festival Marketing & Publicity

#### 2025 Festival Participants

Elamin Abdelmahmoud Caroline Adderson André Alexis Christian Allaire Katherine Ashenburg Mona Awad Linda Bailev Martha Bátiz Kate Beaton Vince Beiser Billy-Ray Belcourt Michael Bennett Otoniya J. Okot Bitek Tanya Boteju Eddy Boudel Tan Holly Brickley Claire Cameron Tim Cook Mike Curato

Chloe Dalton

Anne de Marcken Ronald J. Deibert Kiran Desai Junie Désil Marcello Di Cintio Cory Doctorow Emma Donoghue Antonio Michael Downing Kyle Edwards Christine Estima Terry Fallis Elaine Feeney Whitney Gardner Bill Gaston Don Gillmor Jill Yonit Goldberg Larry Grant Kathleen Gros Rachel Hartman

Claire Hatcher-Smith

Clara Kumagai Eve Lazarus Danielle Leavitt Marsha Lederman Amanda Leduc Dennis Lee Jen Sookfong Lee Carol Lee Jonathan Lethem Corey Liu Canisia Lubrin Yiming Ma Linden MacIntvre Roz MacLean Sarah Manguso Eimear McBride Fiona McFarlane Scott McIntyre Bruce McIvor Haley Mlotek Silvia Moreno-Garcia Walter Mosley Leila Mottley Cecily Nicholson Susin Nielsen Terry O'Reilly Kenneth Oppel Susan Orlean Kirsten Pendreigh Marc Perez Eliana Ramage Karolina Ramqvist Michael Redhill

**Bonny Reichert** 

Jon Hickey

Jay Ingram

Plum Johnson

Jennifer Jones

Guy Gavriel Kay

Bob Joseph

Tae Keller

elin kelsey

Wesley King

Emma Knight

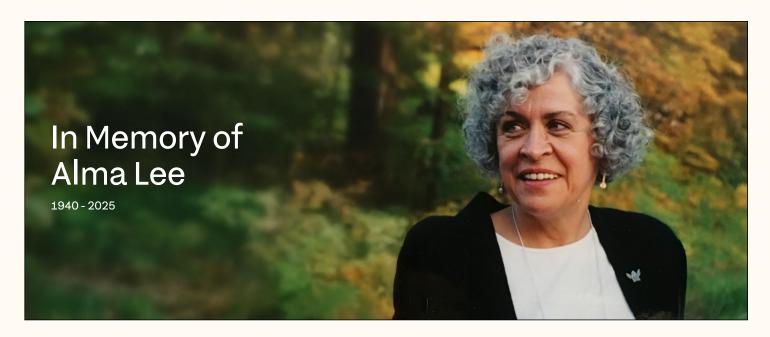
Gord Hill

Maria Reva David A. Robertson Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross Ziyad Saadi Thomas Schlesser Coltrane Seesequasis Donna Seto Sheung-King Merilyn Simonds Niigaan Sinclair Stephanie Sinclair **Curtis Sittenfeld** Danez Smith Michael V. Smith Timothy Snyder Karen Solie Kim Spencer Scott Steedman Sarah Suk Bindu Suresh Susan Swan Nilo Tabrizy Saeed Teebi Souvankham Thammavongsa Madeleine Thien Jeremy Tiang Georgia Toews Miriam Toews Irvn Tushabe Paul Vermeersch katherena vermette Rachel Wada Jess Walter Isabella Wang Jack Wang Melanie Watt Ira Wells Sam Wiebe Ian Williams Michelle Wong

Rebecca Wood Barrett

Clea Young

Liann Zhang



"A ship in my new book must be named for a beautiful, strong woman. It is a ship that crosses oceans and penetrates deep into the country of Canada. The name Alma Lee springs immediately to mind. Long may she sail!" —Jane Urquhart, author\*

As we prepare to celebrate the 38th annual Vancouver Writers Fest, we are deeply missing the wisdom, guidance, and inexhaustible wit of the organization's founding artistic director, Alma Lee. Alma passed away peacefully on March 28, 2025.

The inaugural Festival was held in 1988, after tireless lobbying and planning. Alma shepherded it for 17 years, bringing countless literary icons to Vancouver, while helping to launch the careers of many others. Her genuine warmth and interest in people—not to mention her legendary parties—drew writers, attendees, volunteers, and staff back to the Festival year after year.

A lifelong advocate for arts and culture who founded multiple other pillars of Canada's literary community, including the Writers' Union of Canada and the Writers' Trust of Canada, Alma's vision and dedication put Vancouver on the literary map. Today, the Vancouver Writers Fest is thriving thanks in great part to the framework she built, including beloved flagship events like the Afternoon Tea and the Literary Cabaret—which are still going strong after almost 40 years.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to Alma for her mentorship and support. She invited me to join her Festival Board of Directors 25 years ago and has offered me her own brand of strong, Scottish opinion ever since. I'm eternally grateful for what she taught me and the love she shared." —Leslie Hurtig, Artistic Director of the Vancouver Writers Fest

#### The Alma Lee Legacy Fund

Alma has touched the lives of tens of thousands of readers and writers, and her impact will continue to shape many future generations. In 2006, the Vancouver Writers Fest and several of our community supporters established a \$1 million dollar endowment fund to celebrate her accomplishments, and ensure that the Festival continues to thrive for years to come.

If you would like to support Alma's legacy by making a contribution to the Alma Lee Legacy Fund, please visit our website to learn more: writersfest.bc.ca/alma-lee-legacy.

2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL INFORMATION

#### **Festival Tickets** Accessibility & Equitability

#### Festival Tickets Info

Always check the website! Please remember to check our website, as the information below is abbreviated, and event details may change. writersfest.bc.ca/box-office

#### Ticket Sale Dates

Member Tickets: Tuesday, September 9 at 10am School Groups: Thursday, September 11 at 8am General Tickets: Tuesday, September 16 at 10am

#### How to Buy

Online: writersfest.bc.ca

Over the phone: Call Showpass at (844) 307-7469,

Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat-Sun 9am-6pm.

At the event: Visit the event venue starting 45 mins

prior to the performance.

#### 

Ticket prices are listed under each event. Prices include GST and service fees. Debit and Credit only.

Discounts for regular events are offered for members or seniors (10%), and youth under 25 (\$15 flat fee; some events excluded).

#### Youth Events



For full information about school group bookings, including subsidy information and free livestream options, please visit writersfest.bc.ca/info-for-teachers.



#### Accessibility at the Festival

We're committed to listening, learning, and doing the work to make the Festival a safer, low-barrier experience for you. Please reach out to boxoffice@writersfest.bc.ca or call (778) 658-0462. Our phone lines are staffed Mon-Thurs, 11am-3pm.

We offer a range of accessibility information and options, including but not limited to: venue access details, ASL at select events (and upon request), priority reserved seating, complimentary support person tickets, and reduced ticket prices for those impeded by cost. All our accessibility information can be found on our website: writersfest.bc.ca/accessibility.

#### Look for these icons:



ASL ASL-Interpreted Event EPI Epiphan Automated Captions

Scan QR code to visit our accessibility page directly.



We offer no exchanges or refunds except if an event is canceled. Check your order carefully before you click Pay.

#### Festival Pop-Up **Bookstore**





#### Festival Pop-Up Bookstore:

The Fishbowl (100-1398 Cartwright St.)

#### Bookstore Hours:

Tuesday-Sunday 10am-10pm



## Maps & Venue Information

We use several venues on Granville Island for our events, as well as some off-island locations within the city. Please input any of the addresses in the right column in your GPS of choice for guided directions, or use the QR code below to access our annotated and printable maps. Venue maps will be situated across Granville Island during Festival Week.

Scan QR code to access our annotated and printable maps.

#### **Parking Information**

Granville Island has a metered parking system.

Pay parking in effect 9am-10pm

Free parking 10pm-9am

Parking is extremely limited during retail hours, especially on the weekend. We highly encourage patrons to take public transportation, taxis, or use rideshares whenever possible.

#### **ON ISLAND VENUES**

RS

The Revue Stage, 1601 Johnston St.

2 GS

Granville Island Stage, 1585 Johnston St.

3 WT

Waterfront Theatre, 1412 Cartwright St.

N

The NEST, Third Floor, Festival House, 1398 Cartwright St.

Festival Pop-Up
Bookstore
(The Fishbowl)

PW

Performance Works, 1218 Cartwright St.

100 - 1398 Cartwright St.

7 0

Dockside Lounge, 1253 Johnston St.

#### **OFF ISLAND VENUES**

Vancouver Playhouse, 600 Hamilton St.



2025 FESTIVAL BECOME A MEMBER / DONOR 10

#### Support VWF Programming

#### Join Vancouver's Biggest Book Club — Become a VWF Member

VWF Members receive special access, perks, and exclusive content, including:

- Festival Program Guide mailed to you
- Member Preview event with a sneak peak of the Festival Reading List
- Early access to Festival tickets
- 10% discount on Festival tickets
- A vote at the VWF Annual General Meeting

Join our community today by becoming a member: writersfest.bc.ca/membership

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$45** 



#### Make a Charitable Donation

When you donate to the Vancouver Writers Fest, you're supporting the power of books and ideas. Your contribution helps our efforts to eliminate barriers of participation for others. Here are three ways to give:

#### Become A Page-Turner — Join Our Monthly Donor Club

Page-Turners help us ensure our story keeps going by making sustaining gifts that are crucial for maintaining our operational costs throughout the year. Become a Page-Turner by visiting **writersfest.bc.ca/donate** to make your monthly gift.

Monthly donations of \$38/month or more include a complimentary membership.

#### **Become a Strategic Benefactor**

Donate publicly-traded securities to VWF and benefit from significant tax savings. Receive a tax credit of the same value and become part of the heart of our literary community. Want to know more? Contact Ashleigh Withall at awithall@writersfest.bc.ca

#### Join the Post Script Society and Make Literature Your Legacy

If books have been a lifelong companion for you, consider supporting the Vancouver Writers Fest as part of your legacy giving. Legacy gifts are incredibly valuable investments in the Festival, ensuring future Vancouver readers will continue to engage with authors, and foster a love of books and reading as a lifelong pursuit. Please contact Ashleigh Withall at awithall@writersfest.bc.ca to discuss how to give a legacy gift.

# VWF Programming (Year-Round)

The Vancouver Writers Fest works year-round to connect readers to exceptional books and ideas. By leveraging the power of stories and storytelling, we seek to build empathy and connection, spark curiosity, and delight in the sheer joy of words. **Our programs include:** 

#### October Festival

The October Festival is our flagship event, inviting 130+ authors and world-class moderators to join us across 85+ events during the third week of October every year. During this week-long event, our home on Granville Island is illuminated by VWF signage, school visits, and sold-out events from the early morning well into the evening.

#### **Books & Ideas**

Established in 2025, Books & Ideas is a new event series hosted exclusively on Granville Island, home of the October Festival. With an intimate theatre venue and a pop-up bar for socializing, attendees are invited to connect more deeply with Vancouver's literary community—and meet the esteemed authors who grace the stage—in a modern space for exchanging ideas.

#### **Special Events**

Special Events feature some of the biggest internationally-renowned authors being published today, engaging in provocative, illuminating conversations. Some of this year's Special Events will include R. F. Kuang, Arundhati Roy, Chris Hadfield, and Margaret Atwood.

#### Incite

This free reading series, presented in partnership with the Vancouver Public Library, features insightful, moderated conversations with emerging and established writers on a multitude of themes. Each inperson event is also live-streamed.

#### **My Roots**

The My Roots Workshop encourages a small cohort of immigrants to develop and share their stories of place through a mix of writing exercises and writing craft lessons once a year.

#### **Youth Writing Contest**

Our annual writing contests are for high school and elementary school students, awarding a cash prize and public recognition for first and second place in each category.

# For Schools: Writers in the Classroom

Our popular Writers in the Classroom program returns for fall! Designed to connect children and youth to authors through live, interactive events, the fall season of Writers in the Classroom will include 13 author visits to schools across Metro Vancouver between October and December 2025.

During each Writers in the Classroom event, authors typically read from their work, discuss their writing process, and answer student questions. All author visits are in person and typically last 60–75 minutes.

Writers in the Classroom is offered FREE of cost to schools thanks to the support of the Government of British Columbia, Modo, and Bonnie Mah. Authors open to school visits in fall 2025 include **Rachel Hartman, Coltrane Seesequasis, Donna Seto**, and **Kim Spencer**, among many others.





For the full availability of authors and other details, please use the following QR code.









2025 FESTIVAL SPONSORS & DONORS 12

TITLE SPONSOR



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#### **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**



















ARTS COUNCIL NEW ZEALAND TOI AOTEAROA

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNER**























MEDIA PARTNERS























#### **FESTIVAL SUPPORTER**























2025 FESTIVAL SPECIAL EVENTS 13

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 | 7:30 PM | \$65 AND UP (BOOK INCLUDED)







# R. F. Kuang in Conversation with Michelle Cyca

Presented with the support of HarperCollins Canada.

Bestselling literary superstar **R. F. Kuang** joins us for one night only on the Vancouver stop of her *Katabasis* tour!

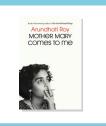
Hot off the trail of her 2023 novel, Yellowface—an instant New York Times bestseller which has now been optioned by Lionsgate TV—Katabasis is a dark academia fantasy in which two graduate students must put aside their rivalry and journey to Hell to save their professor's soul—perhaps at the cost of their own.

Get your signed copy of this coveted new release. The cost of the ticket and book bundle includes:

- One (1) pre-signed deluxe limited edition copy of Katabasis.
- A custom Canadian tour stamp (available at a table in the lobby; stamp your copy of Kαταbαsis or other R.F. Kuang books!)

R.F. KUANG is the award-winning, #1 New York Times and #1 Sunday Times bestselling author of the Poppy War trilogy, Babel: An Arcane History, Yellowface, and Katabasis. She has an MPhil in Chinese Studies from Cambridge and an MSc in Contemporary Chinese Studies from Oxford; she is now pursuing a PhD in East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale. (USA)

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 | 7:30 PM | \$40 AND UP









# Arundhati Roy in Conversation with Naomi Klein

Presented in partnership with UBC Centre for Climate Justice and Indian Summer Festival, and with the support of Simon & Schuster Canada.

Arundhati Roy's first novel, *The God of Small Things*, won the Booker Prize and made her an international household name. She has gone on to publish multiple acclaimed books, and to challenge injustices around the world as a prominent political and environmental activist. Her impact has been recognized with the PEN Pinter Prize and *Time*'s 100 most influential people distinction—as well as sedition charges and prosecution by the Indian government. Get up close and personal with the author's fascinating debut memoir.

Mother Mary Comes to Me is a soaring account of how Roy became the person and the writer she is, shaped by circumstance, but above all by her complex relationship to her extraordinary, singular mother. Roy speaks with awardwinning journalist, author and activist—as well as her longtime friend—Naomi Klein, about her latest book and her work to date, the intricacies of thorny love, and living on the frontlines of humanism.

ARUNDHATI ROY is the author of The God of Small Things, which won the Booker Prize in 1997, and The Ministry of Utmost Happiness. Roy has also published several works of nonfiction including The End of Imagination, The Doctor and the Saint, and My Seditious Heart. She lives in Delhi. (INDIA)

#### Upstart &Crow

# The not-for-profit literary studio & bookstore on Granville Island.

Stories are the fabric of all communities, everywhere.
They shape what we believe in, who we are, how we live.
We champion stories, and those who cherish them, through free workshops, writer residencies, community library donations, international partnerships and more.

And we sell very, very good books.

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- · Community Libraries
- · Climate Writing Initiatives
- · Our Writers' Accelerator



Stories Inside

@upstartandcrow upstartandcrow.com

1387 Railspur Alley Granville Island

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 20 | 7:30 PM | \$40 \$

#### Oh, Canada!: The Alma Lee Opening Night

event number

O1

VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE

No matter how you view this country of ours, the past year has brought new focus to what it means to be Canadian. Some boldly wave the flag, while others feel uneasy about showing affection for a place with so many unresolved issues, including a legacy of colonization that has too often been covered up. As complicated as our relationship to this place may be, we need to protect the best parts of it—especially those things that make us different from our neighbours to the south. As the Trump administration threatens our values, our livelihoods, and our sovereignty, it's more important than ever to consider what we have to lose. In sequential talks, notable Canadian authors will illuminate, through their eyes, who we are—and who we could be, if we commit to protecting this country and making it better. Featuring Bob Joseph, Kate Beaton, Linden MacIntyre, Emma Donoghue, Canisia Lubrin, David Moscrop, Brent Butt, and Jack Wang—see our website for the full speaker list! Hosted by Elamin Abdelmahmoud.

Presented in partnership with STIR Vancouver.

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 10:15 AM | \$12 \$

David A. Robertson on Living with 'Little Monsters' EVENT NUMBER

02

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE



From the outside, award-winning author **David A. Robertson** looks as if he has it all. But like a growing number of Canadians, he lives with "little monsters": chronic, debilitating health anxiety and panic attacks accompanied, at times, by depression. Generalized anxiety disorders are on the rise, particularly among young people aged 15–24. In this talk specially curated for teens, Robertson will share his journey with anxiety and the tools he uses to manage his mental health, as chronicled in his book, *All the Little Monsters: How I Learned to Live with Anxiety*. Moderated by **Jael Richardson**. *Grades 8–12*.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 10:15 AM | \$12 \$

**EVENT NUMBER** 

Sun, Trees & Seas

03

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE

YOUTH

Little ones will be enthralled by the wonder and beauty of nature with these richly illustrated picture books. Author Tae Keller and illustrator Rachel Wada will present and read from We Carry the Sun—not only an engaging history of humankind's relationship with solar power, but also a call for kids to imagine a brighter future. Kids will then dive beneath the waves with fascinating sea creatures in What Fish Are Saying by Kirsten Pendreigh. Roz MacLean's journey into the woods, Together, a Forest, reveals that everyone-including those of us with neurodivergence or differing abilities-belong to nature. This educational storytime will inspire awe and respect for the environment we live in. Grades 1-3.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 10:15 AM | \$12 \$

Masterclass with Wesley King

**EVENT NUMBER** 

04

N THE NEST

**YOUTH** 

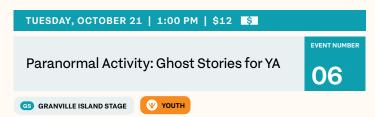
Wesley King knows how to tell stories that have you on the edge of your seat. His books have been published around the globe, and he's travelled with them, speaking to over 50,000 students worldwide. He even collaborated with the late NBA legend Kobe Bryant on the #1 New York Times bestselling Wizenard series. Most importantly, he knows it's hard to be a kid, especially when you don't fit in. His new book, Benny on the Case, follows a boy with Mosaic Down syndrome as he stands up to bullies while trying to solve a mystery. In this middle grade Masterclass, King will build up young writers' confidence while sharing some of the tips and tools that made him a bestselling author. Grades 4-7.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.



# TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 10:15 AM | \$12 S EVENT NUMBER Tanya Boteju: Allyship as Action O5

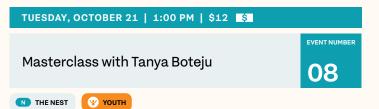
Being an ally is not just a status to claim—it's about lifelong learning and action. It's a constant, ongoing willingness to engage in the hard work of standing alongside those who don't have the same privileges. Author and teacher **Tanya Boteju** will teach middle grade students how to acknowledge their own privileges, and the difference between allyship and being performative. As a self-proclaimed imperfect ally herself, she'll show how to address mistakes when we make them, and share some activities and tools for becoming a better ally from her book, *Allyship as Action*, before offering a candid and compassionate Q+A session. Grades 4-7.



If ghosts are the memories that refuse to let us go, then some spectres deserve a second look. Ghosts haunt the pages of these engrossing YA novels, whether they appear as connections across time, or predatory demons. Inspired by Madama Butterfly, Clara Kumagai's Songs for Ghosts is an enticing blend of globe-trotting love drama, chilling ghost story, and Japanese history. Rachel Hartman follows up on her New York Times bestseller Seraphina with Among Ghosts, a ghost story with a found-family theme set in a vibrant fantasy world. Equal parts campy and terrifying, Corey Liu's He's So Possessed with Me is an LGBTQ+coming of age story featuring a demon that wants to steal a boy's heart—literally. Moderated by Hudson Lin. Grades 8–12.

#### 

These characters will show young readers how to believe in themselves—even if, and especially when, things get scary. Through engaging presentations and readings, kids will meet Lena the Chicken, Linda Bailey's lovable chicken with the ferocity of a dinosaur, who springs into action to protect her coop from a weasel; and Kate Beaton's Shark Girl, who takes revenge on a greedy fishing captain after getting caught in his net. In Little Shoes, David A. Robertson tells a touching story about an Indigenous boy who finds comfort through his family when he learns about the history of residential schools for the first time. With captivating illustrations from the books, this event will provide inspiration for overcoming one's fears. Grades 1–3.



Tanya Boteju is the acclaimed author of three YA novels, including Messy Perfect, her new book that follows a rule-following teen who starts a Gender and Sexuality Alliance at her Catholic high school. Her work explores queer identity, self-discovery, and self-acceptance. As an educator committed to anti-oppressive teaching and learning, she also knows how to hold the attention of a classroom. In this engaging Masterclass, Boteju will guide teens in a discussion, interactive writing activity, and Q+A period around themes of perfectionism and self-expression. Grades 8–12.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 1:00 PM | \$12 \$

Cracking the Case

**EVENT NUMBER** 

09

RS THE REVUE STAGE

YOUTH

Kids can do anything when they believe in themselves, especially when others believe in them, too. The two detectives in these middle grade titles have a few things in common: they both have Down syndrome, and a knack for solving mysteries. Featuring endearing twelve-yearold detective Mizzy, A Skeleton in the Closet is the first book in The Mizzy Mysteries from Claire Hatcher-Smith, a speech and language pathologist who has worked with children with Down syndrome for thirty-five years. In Wesley King's Benny on the Case, Benny is bullied for having Mosaic Down syndrome, but he won't let that stop him from catching a thief. The authors will share why they write for and about kids who are different in this fun and enlightening event. Moderated by Mark Kershaw. Grades 4-7.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 6:00 PM | \$27 \$

#### Pen and Ink: Illustrated Resistance

**EVENT NUMBER** 

10

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE

In the right hands, the power of pen and ink can draw attention to injustice, challenge power structures, and illustrate paths to a better future. These graphic novelists will discuss how and why they use the form to tell important stories about sociopolitical issues that have resonated with adult and teen readers from all walks of life. Kate Beaton's Canada Reads-winning Ducks is a memoir of her own experience working in the Alberta oil sands to pay her loans, and the devastating exploitation of humans and the environment she found in an industry rarely seen by outsiders. Gord Hill has met the moment with a revised and expanded version of The Antifa Comic Book, addressing the alarming rise of far-right aggression in various countries—as well as the mobilization against it. Moderated by Am Johal.



#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 6:00 PM | \$27 \$

Linden MacIntyre: An Accidental Villain

11

N THE NEST

Journalist, bestselling author, and Festival favourite **Linden MacIntyre**'s numerous awards include the Giller Prize, ten Gemini Awards, and an International Emmy. His latest enthralling work of nonfiction uncovers the little-known life of British Major-General Sir Hugh Tudor. Appointed by his old friend Winston Churchill to lead the police in Ireland against the IRA during the Irish War of Independence, Tudor's brutal methods included police death squads and commanding his men to open fire on Irish civilians in the Bloody Sunday massacre. *An Accidental Villain* is a shocking account of how a man reaches the point where he acts against his own training, principles, and inclination in the service of a cause. Hear a conversation and a fascinating piece of history that will echo loudly in our present moment. Moderated by **Marsha Lederman**.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 6:00 PM | \$27 \$

Debut to Bestseller

event number

RS THE REVUE STAGE

These ambitious, bestselling, acclaimed novels are all debuts, and they come from writers you need to keep on your radar. Emma Knight's instant bestseller *The Life Cycle of the Common Octopus* is a Read with Jenna Pick that has drawn comparisons to the likes of Sally Rooney and Dodie Smith. *There There* meets *The Night Watchman* in *Big Chief*, **Jon Hickey**'s monumental political novel that's been proclaimed an instant American classic. And Eliana Ramage's rave-reviewed *To the Moon and Back*, about one woman's extraordinary quest to become the first Cherokee astronaut, is as expansive as space itself. You'll be hearing these names again come awards season, so get to know their books now. Moderated by Margaret Gallagher.



2025/26 SEASON

# WORLD-CLASS SHOWS, EAST VAN VIRES.



thecultch.com

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

Blood in the Pen: Stories, Crises, Repair, and the Writer EVENT NUMBER

13



GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE



GUEST CURATOR

The writer is viewed as a kind of arbiter, making sense of things, the world, and the self-especially when the dominant characteristics of the times are confusion and despair. As it relates to personhood and stewardship, storytelling during high-crisis moments in the world is about looking long and close at the root fractures of the moment and how they compel human action in all its complicated realms. Guest Curator Canisia Lubrin is joined for a luminous conversation about the role of the writer in times of crisis by Otoniya J. Okot Bitek (We, The Kindling), Saeed Teebi (You Will Not Kill Our Imagination), and Madeleine Thien (The Book of Records).

Saeed Teebi's appearance presented thanks to the generous support of Catherine Ross and David Ewartand.

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### Gems of the Emerald Isle

EVENT NUMBER

14

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

The world is witnessing a new golden era of Irish literature, with contemporary authors from the Emerald Isle dominating international bestseller lists. Meet two of Ireland's most acclaimed novelists at this event, elevated by live music. **Emma Donoghue**'s Room sold more than two million copies and was a global phenomenon; she followed it up with The Wonder, The Pull of the Stars, and now The Paris Express, a brilliant historical thriller that captures the politics, fears, and chaos of fin-de-siècle French society. From Eimear McBride, named one of the ten best British and Irish novelists writing today and "the natural heir to Joyce and Beckett," The City Changes Its Face is the story of a passionate love affair, told with exquisite and fearless intimacy. Moderated by Robert J. Wiersema.

Eimear McBride's attendance made possible thanks to the generous support of Culture Ireland.



#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### It Runs in the Family: Georgia and Miriam Toews

15

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE

What's it like to be raised by a literary celebrity—to grow up in a household filled with books, and an internationally-acclaimed writing mentor at your dinner table? And on the flipside, when your child chooses the same profession, how can an author provide support and guidance while letting them walk their own path? **Miriam Toews** (A Truce That Is Not Peace) and **Georgia Toews** (Nobody Asked for This) are some of the few people who can tell us, and both are extremely successful authors in their own right. Interviewed by **David A. Robertson**, the mother-daughter duo will shed light on their literary family dynamic, their writing lives, and both of their radiant new books that explore grief, trauma, and the many kinds of love that bind us.

Presented in partnership with Penguin Random House Canada.

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### Seven Lives and One Year in Ukraine



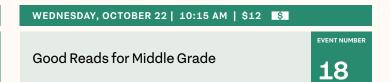
RS THE REVUE STAGE

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, onlookers across the world have identified with and rallied to the Ukrainian cause. Yet even as updates from the frontlines make front page news, and Volodymyr Zelensky has become one of the most respected politicians on the planet, the lives of ordinary Ukrainians remain mostly opaque. In *By the Second Spring*, historian **Danielle Leavitt** shares the experiences of a diverse group of Ukrainians as they react to being brutally overtaken by a more powerful neighbour. From a man whose dreams of opening a coffee shop are shattered, to a young female cadet, Leavitt—who grew up in Ukraine—bears witness to these lives with insight, compassion, and gripping storytelling, while never losing sight of the broader historical context. As the invasion continues in its fourth year, Leavitt shares this urgent new work in conversation with Ukrainian-Canadian author **Maria Reva**.



# WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 10:15 AM | \$12 EVENT NUMBER 17

Our Spoken Word event series, curated and hosted by award-winning poet and spoken word artist **Jillian Christmas**, is a highlight of our youth programming every year—and so popular that we offer two chances to hear it, both of which sell out long before Festival Week. This Word! features three exceptional performers: **Johnny MacRae**, who has performed everything from three-minute slam pieces to long-form theatrical performances across North America; **Emilee Nimetz**, who is known as both a poet and actor for their vulnerability, authenticity, and magnetic presence; and **Anjalica Solomon**, who blends their Desi roots and Pacific Northwest upbringing in art forms such as singing, songwriting, loop pending, poetry, and the spoken word. *Grades 8–12*.



YOUTH

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE

Our Good Reads events are just that: superb books that will entertain and amaze kids without fail. Whitney Gardner's Free Piano (Not Haunted) is a graphic novel with a passion for music at its core, and a pitch-perfect understanding of middle grade sensibilities. Kim Spencer explores identity, family, and Indigenous culture in I Won't Feel This Way Forever, the follow up to her award-winning Weird Rules to Follow. Carousel Summer is another engrossing graphic novel from Kathleen Gros, blending a queer coming-of-age story with broader social themes about tradition and transformation. Across three sequential presentations, these authors will share humour, personal stories, and insight into how kids can identify their values, true friends, and authentic selves. Moderated by Jael Richardson. Grades 4–7.



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 10:15 AM | \$12 \$

Masterclass with Rebecca Wood Barrett

EVENT NU

EVENT NUMBER

19

N THE NEST

Award-winning author **Rebecca Wood Barrett** has done all kinds of jobs, including submarine escape and rescue, torpedo recovery, filmmaking, video editing, heli-skiing, cat-skiing, and more—but having written her first book at the age of seven, she has always been a writer first. A passionate advocate for the literary arts who teaches both emerging and established authors, Rebecca brings her witty and supportive teaching style to this middle grade Masterclass. The author of *My Summer Camp Has Mega Sloths* will share how she crafts such exciting and unique stories, and how her wide-ranging career path has inspired her writing. *Grades 4–7*.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 10:15 AM | \$12 S

EVENT NUMBER

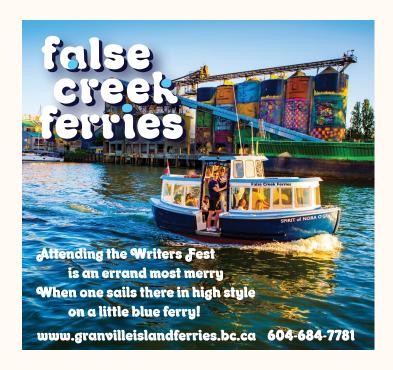
20

RS THE REVUE STAGE

YOUTH

First published in 2018, **Gord Hill's** *The Antifa Comic Book* is an essential graphic novel for any young citizen's shelf, acclaimed for its searing imagery documenting the history of fascism and anti-fascist movements. In the years since, this work has only grown in alarming relevance, as far-right movements gain traction around the world. Hill returns with a revised and expanded edition that draws attention to recent fascist activity, and the important work being done to combat it. He'll speak candidly with teens about the power of protest and what we can all do to resist fascism, as well as his writing and illustrating process. Moderated by **Christina Barber**. Grades 8-12.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.





### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 1:00 PM | \$12 \$

EVENT NUMBER

You Were Made For This World

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE



Every young person deserves the chance to feel like they belong, are recognized, and that they matter. Celebrated Indigenous voices from across Turtle Island speak directly to young people in this joyous and inspiring anthology of letters and art. Stephanie Sinclair, co-editor of You Were Made for This World, is joined on-stage by esteemed contributors David A. Robertson and katherena vermette. Together, they'll celebrate the potential of youth, share a sense of pride in tradition and personal teachings, and encourage young people to honour who they are and what they dream of. Grades 4-7.

Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.

Kenneth Oppel in Conversation

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 1:00 PM | \$12 \$

EVENT NUMBER

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS



Award-winning author Kenneth Oppel isn't afraid to try new things. He's written about a brave bat's epic journey in the internationally bestselling Silverwing series; horror stories such as Ghostlight and his latest, Best of All Worlds; high-flying adventures set on airships 20,000 feet above the ground; charming picture books for children; and much more. This bold experimentation has been rewarded with awards and accolades, and loyal fans who can't wait to see what he does next. In conversation, Oppel will share more about his new book and his work to date, and how his curiosity about the world drives him to create such compelling stories across multiple genres and topics. Moderated by Shannon Ozirny. Grades 8-12.

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 1:00 PM | \$12 \$

Masterclass with Canisia Lubrin and Jillian Christmas **EVENT NUMBER** 

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE





This Masterclass is an extraordinary double-bill, featuring two icons of contemporary Canadian poetry. Canisia Lubrin is the author of the multiaward-winning Code Noir and The World After Rain, a poetry collection epic in its vision and intimate in its exploration of grief and loss. Jillian Christmas is a spoken word poet, author of The Gospel of Breaking, and a passionate organizer and activist in our local arts community. Both authors are deeply knowledgeable about the wider literary scene, and their insight and curation has helped shape this year's Festival. This unmissable session will give students the chance to generate new poems together and alone, learn reading and recitation techniques, and listen to a short craft talk, followed by a Q+A. Grades 10-12.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.



His Last Bubblegum, 1968, Fred Herzog Archival pigment print, Courtesy of ©The Estate of Fred Herzog, 2025 and Equinox Gallery, Vancouver

#### ICONIC IMAGES

#### HIDDEN STORIES

Come experience the vitality of Chinatown through the lens of Fred Herzog. Discover the hidden stories and untold memories behind his iconic images.

On through Dec 31

168 E Pender St







#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 1:00 PM | \$12 \$

EVENT NUMBER

Masterclass with Kirsten Pendreigh

24





Our youngest readers and future writers will be inspired to play, create, and imagine in this interactive Masterclass with returning favourite children's author, **Kirsten Pendreigh**. Kids will dive into a fascinating underwater adventure as Kirsten introduces the wondrous creatures of the sea (and all their fascinating sounds!) in *What Fish Are Saying*, and get up close with the extraordinary ecosystem of a nurse log in *When a Tree Falls*. Primary students will have tons of fun, and leave with their minds brimming with stories. *Grades 1–3*.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 5:30 PM | \$27 \$

## Ronald Deibert on Cyber Espionage and the Fight for Democracy

25

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE

We are barraged daily by chilling stories revealing data leaks of our most personal information. Cyber security expert **Ronald Deibert** exposes a dark underworld of digital espionage and disinformation in this talk, and in his instant bestselling book: a shocking investigation of cyber espionage that reads like a real-life thriller. Following his team of digital sleuths at the Citizen Lab as they lift the lid on dozens of covert operations, from the streets of Guatemala City to the corridors of power in the White House,  $Chasing\ Shadows$  reveals with petrifying clarity the defects in our digital ecosystem. If you feel any concern over breaches of privacy across your digital devices, but are at a loss as to how you can fight back, this event is not to be missed. Moderated by **William Johnson**.

Presented in partnership with Simon & Schuster Canada.

### East India Carpets



JUTE RUG COLLECTION – A COLLABORATION WITH PROVIDE 1606 W 2nd Ave., Vancouver eastindiacarpets.com

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 5:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### Fiction Beyond Imagination

**EVENT NUMBER** 

26

N THE NEST

Voracious readers can sometimes feel like they've seen, or read, it all. But every once in a while, a book crosses our desk that is utterly incomparable to anything we've read before. Discover not one, not two, but three astonishingly original works of speculative fiction that will invigorate the imaginations of even the most ravenous readers. Amanda Leduc's mythical Wild Life follows two hyenas as they speak with humans over decades, producing a strange new religion. The heroine of It Lasts Forever and Then It's Over—Anne de Marcken's Ursula K. Le Guin Prize for Fiction-winning novel—is alive in the afterlife, and narrates her journey across time and space with dark humour and soul-stirring insight. From Yiming Ma comes These Memories Do Not Belong to Us, a mesmerizing sci-fi debut set in a near-future dystopia where citizens can transfer memories between minds. Moderated by Jael Richardson.

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 5:30 PM | \$27 \$

October 7th and Beyond: Marsha Lederman in Conversation with Elamin Abdelmahmoud

27

RS THE REVUE STAGE

As one of the leading Canadian voices on Jewish identity—and a believer in Palestinian rights, opponent of Netanyahu, and daughter of Holocaust survivors who is terrified by the rise in anti-Semitism—Marsha Lederman has been publicly grappling with the horrific pain and confusion that she and so many others have felt ever since the October 7th attacks on Israeli citizens, and the unceasing war that has killed over 57,000 Palestinians. October 7th: Searching for the Humanitarian Middle collects her columns for the Globe and Mail, which have been a real-time archive capturing a period of deep division and trauma. In conversation with CBC Commotion's Elamin Abdelmahmoud, who has also spoken with numerous Palestinian authors and artists about how the war has affected them, Lederman discusses how her feelings have shifted over time since October 7th, and brings to light anti-Semitism so prevalent that it is affecting even the way Al communicates.



#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 7:30 PM | \$27 \$

Miriam Toews in Conversation with Eleanor Wachtel

EVENT NUMBER

28



EPI EPIPHAN AUTOMATED CAPTIONS

Miriam Toews is a national treasure. Her nine published novels, including A Complicated Kindness and Women Talking, have immersed us in the lives of unforgettable characters, brought to life with her trademark wit and profound humanity. Now, the bestselling author tells her own story in a breathtaking memoir of stunning emotional force. Beginning with a deceptively simple question—"why do you write?"—A Truce That Is Not Peace weaves through Toews' grief over her sister's suicide and her attempts to fill the silence left behind, ultimately arriving at an answer not only as to why she writes, but why she lives. She's interviewed by another icon of Canadian letters: Eleanor Wachtel, the former host of CBC Radio's Writers & Company.

This event is organized in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts to celebrate the finalists and winners of the Governor General's Literary Awards.

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 7:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### Reconciliation and You

29

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

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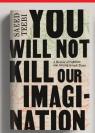
Ten years have passed since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its 94 Calls to Action outlining a path towards healing from the legacy of colonization in Canada. There is still a great distance to walk on the path of reconciliation—and every individual has a role to play in this work. David A. Robertson shares 52 Ways to Reconcile: one achievable and meaningful act of reconciliation every week, from hosting a movie night, to learning words in Indigenous languages, to being a mentor. Internationally-renowned as an expert in Aboriginal law, Bruce McIvor breaks down complex legal issues to offer straightforward answers to fundamental questions about Indigenous rights in Indigenous Rights in One Minute. This conversation is for everyone who wants to take up our collective responsibility to build a healthier, more equitable country. Moderated by Michelle Cyca.

Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.

## Simon & Schuster Canada presents



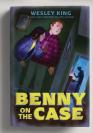
























#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### You Will Not Kill Our Imagination: Saeed Teebi in Conversation

EVENT NUMBER 30

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE

Palestinian-Canadian author Saeed Teebi was at work on his first novel when the attacks on Gaza began in late 2023. The violence and cruelty of these ongoing attacks, accompanied by the assent and silence of international governments, have stunned many across the globe into a new state of permanent horror. What does it mean to be of the Palestinian diaspora in such a moment? In this vital conversation centred around his memoir, You Will Not Kill Our Imagination, Teebi explores the effects of the genocide on the bodies, minds, and imaginations of Palestinians, and humanity as a whole. Omar El Akkad calls it "literature of the highest order... unwilling to flinch or submit to self-censorship." This courageous work of resistance is as urgent as it is timeless. Moderated by Adel Iskandar.

Saeed Teebi's appearance presented thanks to the generous support of Catherine Ross and David Ewartand.

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22 | 8:30 PM | \$27 \$

#### **UBC Night Class**

**Fantastic Worlds** 

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

Grades 8-12.

**EVENT NUMBER** 

**EVENT NUMBER** 

RS THE REVUE STAGE

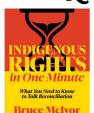
This returning event is a top pick for all writers aspiring, emerging, and established! Night Class is an interactive workshop offering writing tips and prompts across various genres, from instructors at UBC's renowned School of Creative Writing. Learn key writing skills in five minutes or less from Ray Clark, Anosh Irani, Tanya Lloyd Kyi, Alex Marzano-Lesnevich, and Bronwen Tate, as each instructor guides participants through a different concept and writing exercise. Night Class explores a wide array of styles and genres, from fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction to children's literature and interactive storytelling. This workshop is suitable for writers of every experience level. Hosted by Tariq Hussain.

Presented in collaboration with UBC School of Creative Writing. Presented in partnership with Peliplat.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 10:15 AM | \$12

YOUTH

## Read Nightwood



#### INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN ONE MINUTE

What You Need to Know to Talk Reconciliation

#### **BRUCE MCIVOR**

"Bruce McIvor's ability to make the information accessible to a broad, non-legal audience will help dispel myths, clarify misunderstandings, and give Canadians the tools they need to help advance reconciliation."

-Dr. Pamela Palmater, author of Warrior Life: Indigenous Resistance and Resurgence

## ISABELLA WANG

calm world presented in November, November, a catalogue of the cathedrals inside grief, a hymnal of memorials to tenderness and friendship, a manifesto of the resilience of body and mind against illness and loss."

#### removed from our own or fantastically unrecognizable—will immerse readers in fascinating relationships, thought-provoking themes, and page-turning storytelling. A memory-erasing clinic ruptures a childhood friendship in Sarah Suk's heart-wrenching Meet Me at Blue Hour. A teen who finds an old diary is haunted by the writer's ghost in Songs for Ghosts, Clara Kumagai's paranormal love story. Coltrane Seesequasis's The Threads of Time takes place in a world where humanity has lost its war against nature, and wolves fight for control of the Four Territories. Take a

Each of the worlds bursting out of these YA novels—whether only slightly

deep dive into these worlds of wonder with three conversations featuring these relatable young authors. Moderated by Christina Barber.

### **NOVEMBER, NOVEMBER**

"Attentiveness is our guide through the deceptively

-Tolu Oloruntoba, author of The Junta of Happenstance



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 10:15 AM | \$12

EVENT NUMBER

Flamer: A Morning with Mike Curato

33

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE



Books can comfort, shock, entertain, amuse, and delight—and some can save lives. Flamer is a life-saving book, and all of the above. Awardwinning author and artist **Mike Curato** draws on his own experiences as a targeted gay teen in this raw, compassionate graphic novel about a gay boy who finds self-discovery and acceptance after being bullied. Named one of the best books of the century by Kirkus, this book has the power to change how teens see themselves and others. In this essential event, Curato shares his journey to becoming an author/illustrator, and why and how he created Flamer, along with a discussion of censorship and a Q+A session. Grades 8–12.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 10:15 AM | \$12

Storytime with Nature (And Dinos!)

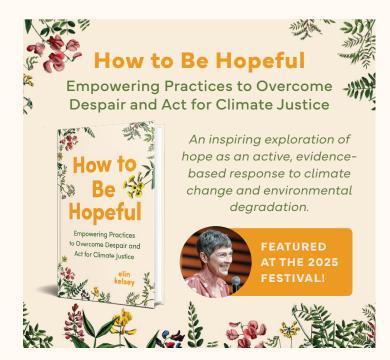
EVENT NUMBER

34

RS THE REVUE STAGE



Little ones will be endlessly delighted by this storytime featuring three presentations from beloved, award-winning picture book authors—and teachers will find recommended reads to add to their classroom shelves. Caroline Adderson playfully adapts one of the poet Bashō's most famous haikus for young readers in A Pond, a Poet, and Three Pests. In Linda Bailey's The Great Dinosaur Sleepover, Jake is disappointed when his friends come down with the flu and can't attend his dino-themed birthday party, until real dinosaurs show up to celebrate with him instead! Tae Keller and Rachel Wada share We Carry the Sun, a poetic account of humankind's relationship with the sun, filled with stunning illustrations. Grades 1–3.





THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 1:00 PM | \$12

EVENT NUMBER

Word! 2

35

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

Our Spoken Word event series, curated and hosted by award-winning poet and spoken word artist Jillian Christmas, is a highlight of our youth programming every year—and so popular that we offer two chances to hear it, both of which sell out long before Festival Week. This Word! features three exceptional performers: Johnny MacRae, who has performed everything from three-minute slam pieces to long-form theatrical performances across North America; Emilee Nimetz, who is known as both a poet and actor for their vulnerability, authenticity, and magnetic presence; and Anjalica Solomon, who blends their Desi roots and Pacific Northwest upbringing in art forms such as singing, songwriting, loop pending, poetry, and the spoken word. Grades 8-12.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 1:00 PM | \$12

The Misewa Series Finale:
David A. Robertson in Conversation

EVENT NUMBER

36

PERFORMANCE WORKS



Join us to celebrate the finale of The Misewa Saga, **David A. Robertson**'s adventurous, award-winning, middle grade fantasy series set in a world inspired by Narnia and Indigenous culture. The stakes are higher than ever in *The World's End*, as Eli must summon the power to protect Misewa against the dangers of colonization. Always a popular and engaging speaker, Robertson will talk about this latest and last book in the six-part series, share stories and inspiration from when he was a kid himself, and might even drop hints about the much anticipated screen adaptation of The Misewa Saga. Moderated by **Tanya Boteju.** Grades 4-7.







With the generous support of Hotfusion Communications Inc.

Binge-watching worthy of book lovers.

# Digital Festival

#### **COMING DECEMBER 2025!**

The popular Digital Festival returns this winter! Enjoy a curated selection of events from this year's October Festival, available to watch over the winter holidays and beyond.



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 1:00 PM | \$12 S

EVENT NUMBER

37

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE



Readers of all ages love **Melanie Watt**'s sweetly vulnerable Scaredy Squirrel, the titular star of a bestselling book series and animated TV show. The well-prepared worrywart is back in *Nuts About Scaredy Squirrel*, a collection of five hilarious stories that show young readers that just like Scaredy Squirrel, they too can take risks and do scary things. This storytime with the series' author and illustrator will be filled with laughter and gentle lessons on courage, adaptability, and perseverance. *Grades 1–3*.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 1:00 PM | \$12 S

Wasterclass with Kenneth Oppel

38

RS THE REVUE STAGE



Award-winning children's and YA author **Kenneth Oppel** wrote his first novel at age fourteen—a funny book about a boy addicted to video games, which was picked up by a literary agent and published before Oppel turned twenty. Since then, he has created dozens of beloved books, including the million-copy bestselling Silverwing trilogy, and his latest heart-stopping teen survival thriller, *Best of All Worlds*. Oppel will shed light on his career path, how he shifts between and plays with genres, and more, in this fascinating Masterclass that will appeal to both middle grade and high school students. *Grades 7–10*.

Presented thanks to the generous support of The Pitfield Family in memory of Ebie Pitfield.

Join Donna Seto,
Christine Estima,
katherena vermette,
Jack Wang, Clea Young,
Martha Bátiz, Iryn Tushabe
and Karen Solie at

Vancouver Writers Fest '25!

ANANSI PUBLISHES VERY GOOD BOOKS.



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Proud to be the award-winning literary marketing agency supporting the Vancouver Writers Fest

...and publishers, prizes, industry associations, bookstores and authors, in Canada and beyond.

serif.inc

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 5:30 PM | \$27

EVENT NUMBER

Cory Doctorow: Enshittification

39

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

EPI EPIPHAN AUTOMATED CAPTIONS

At last, a word has been coined that encapsulates our modern era, that eloquently sums up the pressing issues of our times: <code>Enshittification</code>. The term—which creator <code>Cory Doctorow</code> describes as a diagnosis about the state of exploitative online services, and the disheartening digital world as a whole—resonated so strongly that the American Dialect Society named it the 2023 Word of the Year, and it was cited as an inspiration for the 2025 season of <code>Black Mirror</code>. With incisive urgency as well as humour, <code>Doctorow will</code> speak with author and political commentator <code>David Moscrop</code> about how we reached this point, and what we can collectively do to move beyond hopelessness about our enshittified fate, and back toward the optimism promised by the earliest days of the internet.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 5:30 PM | \$27

Writing in Today's America

40

PERFORMANCE WORKS

The United States is a nation in worrisome decline. Escalating divisions drive intensifying violence, longstanding institutions are unraveling, and the fabric of democracy is being torn apart at the seams by tyranny—and, in the midst of it all, writers continue to write essential works of fiction, as they have done throughout every era of political chaos and upheaval. What does it mean to create art while grappling with the realities of socio-economic ruptures, horrific acts of authoritarianism, and climate catastrophe? American authors Jess Walter, Curtis Sittenfeld, Anne de Marcken, and Leila Mottley join us for a panel discussion moderated by longtime Festival friend and editor John Freeman, who has brought countless stories into the world through his long career as an editor and publisher.

Presented in partnership with Raincoast Books.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 5:30 PM | \$27

41

Jennifer Jones, Rock Star

WATERFRONT THEATRE

Every stone is swept home in this no-holds-barred memoir from **Jennifer Jones**, one of the greatest curlers in Canadian history. The Olympic gold medalist and six-time Canadian women's curling championship winner will surprise even her biggest fans with the stories revealed in *Rock Star: My Life On and Off the Ice*. In this candid interview, Jones will open up about the personal battles she endured during her career, the challenges of balancing world-class curling with motherhood, and her inspiring achievements in what was traditionally a male-dominated sport. A sought-after motivational speaker, her journey will inspire sports fans and a much wider audience. Moderated by **Karin Larsen**.

Presented in partnership with Vancouver and Marpole Curling Clubs.



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 7:30 PM | \$27

EVENT NUMBER

Sarah Manguso in Conversation

42





Sarah Manguso's work—in the genres of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry—has been recognized with an American Academy of Arts and Letters Literature Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Hodder Fellowship, and the Rome Prize. Her ten acclaimed books include her most recent novel Liars, a searing divorce drama that was named one of the best novels of the past 20 years (Los Angeles Times); The Two Kinds of Decay, a memoir of her experience with a chronic autoimmune disease; the collections Siste Viator and The Captain Lands in Paradise, poems from which have won a Pushcart Prize; and Questions Without Answers, a delightful work of philosophy written in collaboration with hundreds of children and illustrated by Liana Finck. The celebrated author joins us to discuss her multifarious body of work, and the topics that are driving her curiosity these days. In conversation with Aislinn Hunter.

Sarah Manguso's attendance made possible thanks to the generous support of an anonymous patron.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 8:00 PM | \$27

Queer Stories on the Map

43

RS THE REVUE STAGE

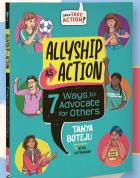
Acclaimed writers to watch from across North America—and various diaspora communities—share these tender and transformative stories about queer BIPOC characters discovering their place in a world that can be hostile to LGBTQ+ people. A Palestinian refugee plans to come out to his entire family at his birthday dinner party in *Three Parties*, **Ziyad Saadi**'s breathtaking reimagining of *Mrs. Dalloway*. **Iryn Tushabe** introduces us to an endearing young Ugandan heroine who must make difficult decisions between the religious and cultural mores of her country, and her beloved gay sister, in *Everything Is Fine Here*. *Gaysians*, the new graphic novel from **Mike Curato**, follows four gay Asians navigating love and building a chosen family in Seattle. In conversation, the authors will discuss writing queerness from outside white-centric perspectives, and how they balance depicting queer joy and pleasure with the realities of violence against LGBTQ+ people. Moderated by **Hudson Lin**.

Presented in partnership with Vancouver Queer Film Festival.









Be the best ally you can be!

Tanya Boteju: Allyship as Action October 21 at 10:15 a.m. Masterclass October 21 at 1:00 p.m.



The highly anticipated follow-up to the acclaimed Weird Rules to Follow.



Kim Spencer:
Good Reads for
Middle Grade
October 22 at 10:15 a.m.





Summer camp isn't quite what Henry expected.

Rebecca Wood Barrett: Masterclass October 22 at 10:15 a.m.



ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS • Reaching More Readers

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 8:30 PM | \$27

Literary Giants in Short Form

EVENT NUMBER

44

GS GRANVII I F ISI AND STAGE

Three luminaries of contemporary literature grace our stage with their new short story collections that brilliantly reflect the tensions and foibles of our modern lives. André Alexis playfully employs a multitude of literary genres to capture not only the worlds we live in, but the ones we imagine. With acerbic wit, Curtis Sittenfeld writes characters that feel like old friends in Show Don't Tell. And Jonathan Lethem's A Different Kind of Tension collects new work along with some of the greatest gems from across his 35-year career, moving effortlessly between realism and the surreal to offer up utterly unpredictable tales. This is sure to be a scintillating conversation among three acclaimed authors at the height of their powers. Moderated by Shaena Lambert.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 8:30 PM | \$27

The Poetry Bash

EVENT NUMBER

45

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

For poetry connoisseurs and newcomers to the genre alike, The Poetry Bash is a gateway to discovering new-to-you poets or hearing your favourites on-stage. This atmospheric evening of readings and conviviality will be hosted by interdisciplinary and spoken word artist, and Vancouver Poetry House Artistic Director, **Johnny Trinh**. Beguiling and unforgettable poems from **Canisia Lubrin** (*The World After Rain*), **Dennis Lee** (*Wrestling with Cadence*), **Marc Perez** (*Dayo*), **Karen Solie** (*Wellwater*), **Isabella Wang** (*November*, *November*), **katherena vermette** (*Procession*), and **Paul Vermeersch** (*NMLCT*) will surely take your breath away.

Presented in partnership with Vancouver Poetry House.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23 | 8:30 PM | \$27

A Doctor, A Lawyer, and A Journalist Walk Into a Literary Festival EVENT NUMBER

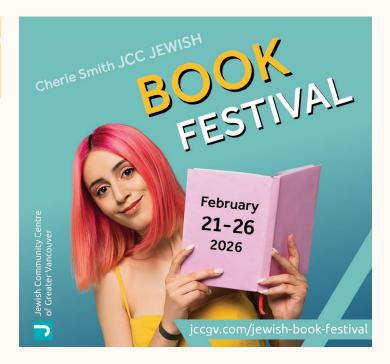
46

WATERFRONT THEATRE

A doctor, a lawyer, and a journalist walk into a literary festival. Elamin Abdelmahmoud asks, "So what brings you here?" The result is a fascinating conversation between three authors who live dual lives as professionals in other fields. Kyle Edwards has won two National Magazine Awards for his journalism, and joins the Festival with his debut novel, Small Ceremonies. Full-time pediatrician Bindu Suresh is also the author of the strikingly poetic The Road Between Us. A lawyer by day, Saeed Teebi shares You Will Not Kill Our Imagination, a vital memoir on being a member of the Palestinian diaspora. Together, they'll discuss how their professions inform and inspire their writing, and what compels them to do both.

Saeed Teebi's appearance presented thanks to the generous support of Catherine Ross and David Ewartand.

RESTAURANT





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# PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE CANADA WELCOMES OUR AUTHORS TO



### THE VANCOUVER WRITERS FEST





2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 38

### Teachers & Educators,

### PRO-D DAY FRIDAY, OCT 24

Take advantage of the Pro-D Day by joining us for daytime events on Friday, October 24 that have been curated with professional development in mind. Open to everyone, these events fit current curriculum needs, and will inspire further conversation. They are also suitable for mature high school students (*Grades 11–12 recommended*).

### **47. Indigenous Voices:**

### **A Steady Brightness of Being**

with Stephanie Sinclair, David A. Robertson, katherena vermette, and Kyle Edwards 10am at Granville Island Stage

### 48. The Costs of Exploitation and Sustainability

with Don Gillmor, Vince Beiser, and Marcello Di Cintio 10am at Performance Works

### 49. Visions of Chinatown

with Donna Seto and Carol Lee 10am at Waterfront Theatre

### 50. On Book Banning and Censorship

with Ira Wells, Mike Curato, and Jeremy Tiang 10am at Revue Stage

### 51. Elbows Up!

with Elamin Abdelmahmoud, Jen Sookfong Lee, David Moscrop, Niigαan Sinclair, and Leslie Hurtig 1pm at Granville Island Stage

### 52. The Conversations

with Elaine Feeney, Ian Williams, and Jack Wang 1pm at Performance Works

### **53. The Next Generation**

with Leila Mottley, Liann Zhang, and Michelle Wong 1pm at Waterfront Theatre

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 10:00 AM | \$27 \$

### Indigenous Voices: A Steady Brightness of Being

EVENT NUMBER

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE



This groundbreaking new anthology collects letters from Indigenous writers, activists, and thinkers, exploring the histories that have brought us to this moment, the challenges and crises faced by present-day communities, and the visions that will lead us to a new architecture for thinking about Indigeneity. **Stephanie Sinclair**, co-editor of *A Steady Brightness of Being*, joins us on-stage for an essential conversation with award-winning contributors from across Turtle Island: **David A. Robertson**, **katherena vermette**, and **Kyle Edwards**.

Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 10:00 AM | \$27

The Costs of Exploitation and Sustainability

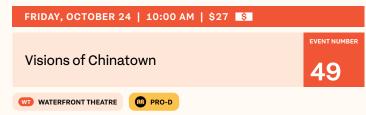
EVENT NUMBER

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS



The global economy is fueled by exploitative industries that drain their profits from the planet's most vulnerable people and places. Esteemed authors and journalists take the stage to analyze the heavy human and environmental costs of abusive resource extraction, and illuminate a better path forward. Former roughneck **Don Gillmor**'s On Oil maps out how the oil industry has infiltrated governments, started wars, and hushed up climate concerns. **Vince Beiser** casts his eye on the Achilles' heel of "green power" in *Power Metal*, an exploration of how the skyrocketing demand for minerals is driving environmental havoc and rising violence. And in *Precarious*, **Marcello Di Cintio** scrutinizes global systems of migrant labour—including Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker program, referred to in a UN report as "a breeding ground for contemporary forms of slavery." Moderated by **David Beers**.

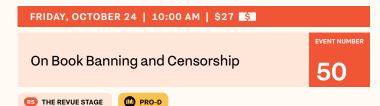
Presented in partnership with ShareWares.



Vancouver's Chinatown is a vibrant cultural hub, and these two locally published titles capture both its striking visual ambience, which draws countless photographers and visitors to its streets, and the rich and diverse histories contained within. **Donna Seto**'s gorgeous illustrations of the neighbourhood's historical buildings are collected in *Chinatown Vancouver*, alongside interviews with community members and information about these cultural sites. **Carol Lee**, founder of the Vancouver Chinatown Foundation, joins us with *Vitality*, pairing stunning photographs of Chinatown in the '50s, '60s, and '70s with interviews and historical insights gathered by the Chinatown Storytelling Centre. This event will be a feast for the eyes, while celebrating the resilience and contributions of Chinatown's communities. Moderated by **Anna Ling Kaye**.

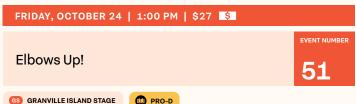
Presented in partnership with Chinatown Storytelling Centre.





The freedom to read is under attack. From the destruction of libraries in ancient Rome to today's state-sponsored efforts to suppress LGBTQ+ literature, book bans and censorship arise from the impulse toward social control. Ira Wells's On Book Banning is a nuanced historical study, a rallying cry, and a guide to resistance. He's joined on-stage by Mike Curato—whose graphic novel about queer identity and self-acceptance, Flamer, is "one of the most banned books in America" (NPR)—and author and translator Jeremy Tiang, who will discuss the coercive forms of censorship in his home country of Singapore, where some of the authors he translates are unable to have their books published. This will be a vital conversation about freedom of speech and the state of censorship today. Moderated by Marian Botsford Fraser.

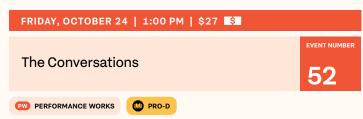
Presented thanks to the generous support of the Al Roadburg Foundation.



Donald Trump thinks that Canada is for sale. In this momentous anthology and event, some of our nation's leading cultural figures gather to respond: *This* is Canada; never the 51st state. Capturing the swell of pride and unity that is spreading across the country, along with the shock of facing down the threat of American imperialism, *Elbows Up! Canadian Voices of Resilience and Resistance* editor **Elamin Abdelmahmoud** will host a panel conversation on this pivotal moment in our country's history with some of the book's esteemed and influential contributors: **Jen Sookfong Lee, David Moscrop, Niigaan Sinclair,** and **Leslie Hurtig.** 

Presented in partnership with Penguin Random House Canada.

2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 40

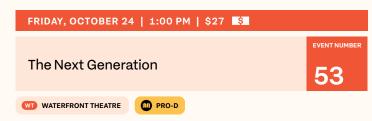


This event is like witnessing a live recording of your favourite literary podcast—no headphones required. Moderator **Tara McGuire** conducts back-to-back interviews with the authors of some of the most anticipated novels of the season. Let Me Go Mad in My Own Way is a multi-generational drama from Irish author **Elaine Feeney**, whose previous novel was longlisted for the Booker Prize and included in numerous 'best of the year' lists. Giller Prize-winner **Ian Williams** shares a daring and absurdly funny dissection of a crumbling marriage in You've Changed. **Jack Wang**'s *The Riveter* is an exhilarating cross-cultural love story set against the backdrop of the Allied invasion of Europe in WWII. Come for the dialogue, and you're sure to leave with all three of these must-read books in hand.

Elaine Feeney's attendance made possible thanks to the generous support of **Culture Ireland**.



We're delighted to once again host the Vancouver Book Award ceremony at the Festival. This year's program will include live readings from the shortlisted authors, a chance to hear from Vancouver Poet Laureate Elee Kraljii Gardiner, and a live reveal of the 2025 Book Award Winner. The annual City of Vancouver Book Award has been recognizing authors of excellence of any genre since 1989. The shortlisted and winning titles contribute to the appreciation and understanding of Vancouver's diversity, history, unique character, or the achievements of its residents. Come and celebrate this city's extraordinary talent.



These Gen Z and Millennial authors are topping bestseller charts, going viral on BookTok, being nominated for prestigious awards, and tackling the pressing issues of our times. Leila Mottley is the youngest author ever to have a book longlisted for the Booker Prize. Her new novel, The Girls Who Grew Big, is an electric portrait of teenage motherhood and girlhood. Liann Zhang casts a razor-sharp eye on influencer culture and the obsession with status in her debut thriller, Julie Chan Is Dead. House of the Beast is a dark fantasy from The Legend of Korra graphic novel illustrator Michelle Wong, laced with betrayal, vengeance, and cosmic horrors. The next generation of visionaries will discuss their buzzworthy books, and what it's like to be an up-and-coming writer in a world turning upside down. Moderated by Rachel Sargeant.



With her distinctive voice, astute observations, and ability to write characters so complex and real they seem like old friends, **Curtis**Sittenfeld peels back the layers of our lives—both in her bestselling novels, such as *Prep*, *Rodham*, and *Romantic Comedy*, as well as her dazzling latest short story collection: *Show Don't Tell*. In this warm and witty event, Sittenfeld sits down for a conversation about her work to date, the power of female friendship, and how she looks past assumptions to write such nuanced characters. Moderated by **Alix Ohlin**.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 5:00 PM | \$27 \$

Souvankham Thammavongsa in Conversation

EVENT NUMBER

56

### THE NEST

Souvankham Thammavongsa's debut collection, How to Pronounce Knife, exploded onto the literary scene—winning her the Giller Prize and Trillium Book Award, and bringing the multifaceted stories of Laotian refugees into the spotlight. Her much anticipated first novel unfolds over a single day in the life of a nail salon owner, painting a deeply intimate portrait of the immigrant experience, and offers a penetrating exploration of class, labour, and the inseparable alienation and violence that results. Thammavongsa speaks about Pick A Colour, and telling the nuanced stories of immigrants with solidarity and grace, with Doretta Lau.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 5:00 PM | \$27 \$

Walter Mosley in Conversation

EVENT NUMBER

RS) THE REVUE STAGE

The name Easy Rawlins stirs excitement in the hearts of readers and fear in the hearts of his foes. Multi-award-winning author **Walter Mosley**'s iconic detective has thrilled readers, while the series has continually delivered sharp social and racial commentary since 1990. In *Gray Dawn*, the series' latest gritty installment, Rawlins has settled into the happy rhythm of his life in Los Angeles when a dangerous woman from his past returns to disturb this newfound balance. Don't miss hearing from a pioneer of the crime-fiction genre. As an esteemed non-fiction author, Mosley will also discuss his essay in the new anthology *California Rewritten*, edited by **John Freeman**, who will interview him on-stage.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 7:00 PM | \$27 \$

The Feminine Grotesque

**EVENT NUMBER** 

58

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

These novels will creep under your skin with their horror-tinged tales of witchcraft and demons—and their unsettling reflections on race, class, privilege, womanhood, and intergenerational trauma will continue to haunt you long after. Returning Festival fan favourites Mona Awad (We Love You, Bunny), Jen Sookfong Lee (The Hunger We Pass Down), and Silvia Moreno-Garcia (The Bewitching) confront power imbalances, slip between genres, and deliver page-turning chills in their latest novels. They're joined by Mattea Roach, host of CBC's Bookends, for a smart and subversive conversation that will be recorded for the show.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 8:00 PM | \$27 \$

Ahead By A Century: Lyrics Night

EVENT NUMBER

59

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

You Oughta Know, there will be no Sweet Surrender to The Americans by us Wheat Kings and Snowbirds. That's why this year's lyrics night—a fan-favourite event featuring dramatic readings of song lyrics with some of your favourite authors—focuses on Rockin' in the Free World by Canadian artists. Everybody Knows that When We Stand Together, we're Taking Care of Business. So Don't Let It Bring You Down: join us and we'll Raise a Little Hell. As you hear a new take on your favourite Anthem, reinterpreted by literary icons, you'll be saying "It's All Coming Back To Me Now." Don't forget that the fun continues with a dance party afterwards (Event 62). Hosted by Elamin Abdelmahmoud with DJ Ice B on the turntables. See our website for the list of participants!

Receive a 50% discount to **62. Shake It Off: Dance Party** when you purchase the tickets at the same time!



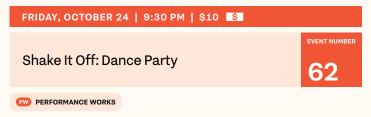
PT VAN	COUVE	R PLAYHOUSE DMC DJAVAD MOWAFAGHIAN CINEMA OT	ORPHEUM	<b>?</b> уоит	TH EVENT **	GUES	ST CURATOR EPI EPIPHAN AUTO-CAPTIONED ASL AS	SL PROVIDED	)
:30 PM	41	Jennifer Jones, Rock Star	WT		10:30 AM	66	Bitter and Sweet: Bonny Reichert and Karolina Ramgvist	N	
:30 PM	42	Sarah Manguso in Conversation	N	ASL	10:30 AM	67	Building Suspense	RS	
00 PM	43	Queer Stories on the Map	RS		1:30 PM	68	Terry O'Reilly: Against the Grain	WI	
30 PM	44	Literary Giants in Short Form	GS		1:30 PM	69	Dennis Lee: Wrestling with Cadence	N	
:30 PM	45	The Poetry Bash	PW		1:30 PM	70	Christian Allaire: From the Rez	RS	
:30 PM	46	A Doctor, A Lawyer, and A Journalist Walk Into a Literary Festival	WT		5:00 PM	71	Crosscurrents of History	GS	**
		walk into a Literary Festival			5:00 PM	72	Wisdom, Age & Beauty	WT	
FRIDA	Υ, Ο	CTOBER 24			5:00 PM	73	Short Stories from Here	RS	
IME	#	EVENT	VENUE		7:30 PM	74	The Lit Cab	PW	
0:00 AM	47	Indigenous Voices: A Steady Brightness of Being	GS	PRO-D	8:00 PM	75	On Tyranny: Timothy Snyder in Conversation	GS	ASL
0:00 AM	48	The Costs of Exploitation and Sustainability	PW	PRO-D	8:00 PM	76	Mona Awad in Conversation	WT	
0:00 AM	49	Visions of Chinatown	WT	PRO-D	8:00 PM	77	Soundtrack of Life	RS	
0:00 AM	50	On Book Banning and Censorship	RS	PRO-D	SUNDA	Υ, Ο	OCTOBER 26		
:00 PM	51	Elbows Up!	GS	PRO-D	TIME	#	EVENT	VENUE	
00 PM	52	The Conversations	PW	PRO-D	10:30 AM	78	Food for Thought	PW	
					10:30 AM	79	The Divorce Diaries	WT	
00 PM	53	The Next Generation	WT	PRO-D	10:30 AM	80	Reconciling	N	
00 PM	54	The City of Vancouver Book Award Ceremony	RS	ASL	10:30 AM	81	Global Political Narratives	RS	
00 PM	55	Curtis Sittenfeld in Conversation	WT	EPI	2:00 PM	82	Kiran Desai in Conversation	GS	EPI
:00 PM	56	Souvankham Thammavongsa in	N		2:00 PM	83	A Trio of Vast Ideas	WT	
:00 PM	96	Conversation			2:00 PM	84	Emerge	RS	
:00 PM	57	Walter Mosley in Conversation	RS		3:30 PM	85	The Afternoon Tea	PW	
:00 PM	58	The Feminine Grotesque	GS		7:00 PM	86	Closing Night Event: Susan Orlean with The Current's Matt Galloway	GS	
:00 PM	59	Ahead By A Century: Lyrics Night	PW				•		
:00 PM	60	The Art of Living	WT		7:00 PM	87	The Crime Scene	WT	ASL
:00 PM	61	Guy Gavriel Kay in Conversation	RS		SATUR	DAY	, NOVEMBER 15		
:30 PM	62	Shake It Off: Dance Party	PW		TIME	#	EVENT	VENUE	
SATUR	RDAY	, OCTOBER 25			7:30 PM	-	SPECIAL EVENT: Chris Hadfield	DMC	
IME	#	EVENT	VENUE		<b>T</b> 11.2.5	437	250514252		
0:30 AM	63	Verses of Transformation	GS	**	TUESD		DECEMBER 9		
0:30 AM	64	Tim Cook on The Good Allies: Canada and the US in Wartime	PW	EPI	TIME	#	SPECIAL EVENT: Margaret Atwood in	VENUE	
0:30 AM	65	Raising Hare	WT		7:30 PM	-	SPECIAL EVENT: Margaret Atwood in Conversation with Carol Off	ОТ	

2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 44

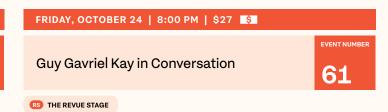
## The Art of Living WY WATERFRONT THEATRE

Art is inseparable from life in these luminous novels that explore the myriad ways art can shape and drive our fates. **Christine Estima**'s *Letters to Kafka* explores the torrid love affair between translator and resistance fighter Milena Jesenská and Franz Kafka, carried out in passionate letter correspondence. Following her mother's sudden death, Isabel must adapt to a new life in the home of her father—Miguel de Cervantes, the celebrated author of *Don Quixote*—in **Martha Bátiz**'s *A Daughter's Place*. And in *Mona*'s *Eyes* by **Thomas Schlesser**, Mona's grandfather introduces her (and readers) to fifty-two great works of art—one per week, before she loses her eyesight forever. These novels explore what it means to be human through acts of artistic expression, and this conversation will be no different. Moderated by **Paloma Pacheco**.

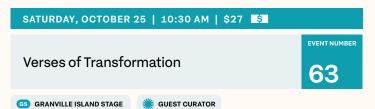
Presented in partnership with Vancouver Latin American Cultural Centre Society. Thomas Schlesser's appearance presented with the generous support of Consulate General of France in Vancouver.



Bring your Moves Like Jagger to this party that will have you Dance the Night Away. It might be your Party Rock Anthem that gets you to Shake It Off and Scream & Shout, but (We) Gotta Feeling this is one night of revelry you won't want to miss. After all, we're Crazy In Love with these beats. Come do a jig or Safety Dance in an event that has quickly become a fun Festival highlight. Featuring **DJ Ice B** on the turntables.



The internationally bestselling author of Tigana, All the Seas of the World, and A Brightness Long Ago, Guy Gavriel Kay is one of our most decorated fantasy writers—and a skilled worldbuilder who blends history and fantasy to bring entirely original narratives to life. Written on the Dark is another masterpiece, set in a magical version of medieval France, replete with ambitious royals, assassins, and invading armies. He'll speak to this latest novel, along with the rest of his extraordinary body of work, and how he researches and draws from the past to create worlds unlike anything we've seen before. Moderated by Robert J. Wiersema.

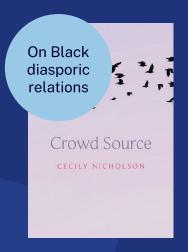


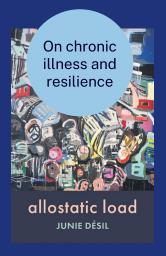
Poets are notoriously understood as bulwarks of counterculture. They exist against the grain, against the rising tide of autocratic ruin, against threats to liberatory values. We could go on; the list is long. Join an awe-inspiring lineup of poets—Guest Curator Canisia Lubrin, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Junie Désil, Cecily Nicholson, Danez Smith, Karen Solie, and Paul Vermeersch—as they read and reflect on a secret question drawn from a bag on-stage and posed, one poet to the next, in a carousel-style reading and fireside-style chat. Enjoy a drink from the bar and settle in for this incandescent conversation.

## BC books that redefine *BC stories*

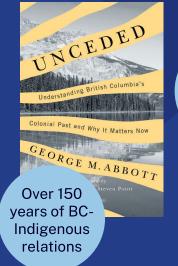
Discover #BCBooks at ReadLocalBC.ca

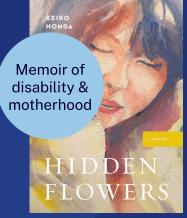
Discover indie books with empowered perspectives this fall

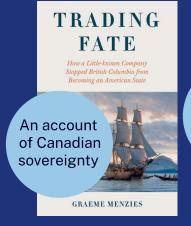


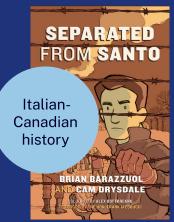






















2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 46

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 10:30 AM | \$27 \$

Tim Cook on The Good Allies: Canada and the US in Wartime EVENT NUMBER

64

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

**EPI** EPIPHAN AUTOMATED CAPTIONS

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, it set in motion a deadly struggle between the Axis powers and the Allies, but also fraught negotiations and shifting relationships between the Allies. To defend the coasts of North America, Canada and the US forged a new military alliance—one that would ultimately last long after the war ended. Bestselling author and Chief Historian at the Canadian War Museum Tim Cook joins us with *The Good Allies*: a masterful account of how the two nations made the transition from wary rivals to steadfast allies. This conversation will explore our intertwined history of bleeding together to save the world from the threat of fascism; it will also probe the realities of our relationship in the present moment, in light of all that we have done together and for each other. Moderated by **Stephen Quinn**.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 10:30 AM | \$27 | \$

### Raising Hare

event number
65

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE

Has a book ever been so profoundly special that you forget to release a bated breath? In February 2021, **Chloe Dalton** rescued a newborn hare that had been chased by a dog. Though she intended to care for it and return it to the wilderness, it continued to return to Dalton's house day after day, becoming her constant and unlikely companion throughout the pandemic lockdown. *Raising Hare* is a poignant account of their remarkable friendship, which is a portrait of all humankind's relationship with nature—and a testament to the transformative power of approaching the natural world with love. Dalton speaks about her *New York Times* bestselling debut, and about trust, freedom, and beauty, with **Aislinn Hunter** at this unmissable event.





### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 10:30 AM | \$27 \$

Bitter and Sweet: Bonny Reichert and Karolina Ramqvist EVENT NUMBER

66



Food is nourishment, love, a holder of memories; it can be fraught with fear and vulnerability, and—often overlooked by those living in comfort it is necessary for human survival. These two authors share profound journeys through the complex emotions and relationships attached to what we consume, and what consumes us. Chef and author Bonny Reichert grew up hearing stories about her father's near-starvation in Auschwitz-Birkenau. She follows the roots of her food obsession through lifetimes of both scarcity and plenty in How to Share an Egg. Renowned Swedish author Karolina Ramqvist explores the hunger for food and more in Bread and Milk, tracing the fraught relationships between the women in her family, and how their struggles with vulnerability replicate themselves in obsessive relationships with food. Moderated by Meeru Dhalwala.

Participation of Bonny Reichert made possible thanks to the generous support of Sam Znaimer in memory of Nancy Richler. This event is being implemented with the assistance of a grant from the Swedish Arts Council. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 10:30 AM | \$27 \$

**Building Suspense** 

EVENT NUMBER

RS THE REVUE STAGE

Fans of intricately twisting plots and high-stakes suspense will not want to miss this year's crime and thriller fiction event, featuring three page-turners from acclaimed authors. Terry Fallis's tenth novel, The Marionette, introduces readers to a new hero: a thriller writer whose life takes an unexpected turn into the perilous world of espionage with Canada's Security Intelligence Service. The Tiger and the Cosmonaut by Eddy Boudel Tan is equal parts nail-biting mystery, and tender portrait of immigrant family relationships. Jonathan Lethem traces more than fifty years of one neighborhood's community, crime, and gentrification in Brooklyn Crime Novel, named a best book of the year by multiple publications. The panelists will discuss the craft of suspense, and how they keep readers on the edge of their seats. Moderated by Robert J. Wiersema.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 1:30 PM | \$27 \$

Terry O'Reilly: Against the Grain

**EVENT NUMBER** 

68

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE

Meet and learn from people who ignored conventional wisdom, found or invented a better way, questioned the status quo at great sacrifice, and pushed for change against all odds. Author, host of CBC Radio's Under the Influence, and award-winning advertiser Terry O'Reilly profiles fascinating mavericks across various industries in Against the Grain: Defiant Giants Who Changed the World. Gain valuable insight from the experiences of visionaries such as COVID vaccine co-creator Dr. Katalin Karikó, screenwriter Norman Lear, NHL coach Roger Neilson, and O'Reilly himself as he recounts these stories and more in a captivating talk. Moderated by Kathryn Gretsinger.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 1:30 PM | \$27** \$

Dennis Lee: Wrestling with Cadence

**EVENT NUMBER** 

N THE NEST

Dennis Lee is not only one of Canada's most decorated poets, but one of the finest poets working in the English language. His expansive body of work is revered for the beauty, directness, and rhythm of his language—and for a mysterious force that Lee refers to as cadence: the intuitive perception of pre-verbal rhythms and energies. In a careerspanning new collection of critical and personal essays, Wrestling with Cadence, Lee reflects on how this germinating force has driven and defined his work. Cadence will permeate this thought-provoking conversation, as Lee rhythmically alternates between readings of his poems, and conversation with Vancouver Poet Laureate Elee Kraljii Gardiner about the force that structures them, and how he writes such unforgettable poetry.

Presented in partnership with BCIT School of Business and Media and Peliplat.

2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 48

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 1:30 PM | \$27 \$

Christian Allaire: From the Rez to the Runway 70

RS THE REVUE STAGE

Christian Allaire lives and works at the centre of the global fashion industry in New York City, where he covers celebrity style, red carpets, emerging designers and trends, and more as a senior fashion and style writer for Vogue—but he was once a young boy growing up on the Nipissing First Nation reserve in Ontario, harbouring a high fashion dream that seemed like a remote fantasy. From his first encounters with traditional Ojibwe powwow regalia, through grinding as an unpaid intern to build the career he has today, Allaire's memoir, From the Rez to the Runway, is a candid, inspiring account of how a boy from the rez broke into the exclusive world of fashion, carving out a space for himself and his community. Moderated by Michelle Cyca.

Presented in partnership with HarperCollins Canada Ltd and Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 5:00 PM | \$27

Crosscurrents of History

71

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

🌞 GUEST CURATOR

James Baldwin said, "If history were past, history wouldn't matter. History is present... You and I are history. We carry our history. We act our history." Writers are often thought of as existing between worlds. These three writers and their books cross the livewires of recent history with their books, attending to fractures of time, chance, and place—all streams that heighten our experiences of the present world. How do these impact the way we see ourselves, and by extension, how we make stories and lives despite these fractures? Kyle Edwards (Small Ceremonies), Maria Reva (Endling), and Jeremy Tiang (State of Emergency) discuss, in conversation with Guest Curator Canisia Lubrin.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 5:00 PM | \$27 \$

Wisdom, Age & Beauty

EVENT NUMBER

**72** 

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE

With age comes experience and wisdom that can sometimes be overlooked by society—particularly when the holder of such insight is a woman. Three authors boldly defy erasure with big, vivacious stories that celebrate resilience and beauty of all kinds, and challenge the notion that feminism, self-reinvention, or daring writing could be restricted by age. Margaret's New Look is a page-turning mystery from career chameleon Katherine Ashenburg, who published her first fiction book at the age of 72. Susan Swan shares a lifetime's worth of wisdom about carving her own path as a woman, mother, and artist in her memoir, Big Girls Don't Cry. And after turning 70, Merilyn Simonds began to take weekly walks with her centenarian friend; the result is Walking with Beth, a heartfelt meditation that delves into rarely seen corners of older women's lives, passions, and friendships. Moderated by Marian Botsford Fraser.

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 5:00 PM | \$27 \$

Short Stories from Here

73

REVUE STAGE

Within their brief pages, short stories have an immense power to transform perspectives, capture essential truths, and introduce us to unforgettable characters. Enjoy a thought-provoking conversation and readings from three local authors of outstanding new collections. Set on an island in BC's Salish Sea, Bill Gaston's Tunnel Island follows characters striving to overcome pasts that often include a catastrophic error. The stories in Welcome to the Neighbourhood by Clea Young explore the labyrinthine inner lives of women, with a distinct Pacific Northwest flair. Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross incorporates elements of fable, surrealism, satire, art, and cultural criticism to deliver a wonderfully strange exploration of the creative process in The Longest Way to Eat a Melon. Moderated by Holly Flauto.

**Peliplat** 

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Peliplat is an online hub for writers ready to be heard. Publish your stories and connect your voice to a global community of engaged readers.



Your Voice Belongs Here 2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 50

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 7:30 PM | \$55

EVENT NUMBER

The Lit Cab

74

PW PERFORMANCE WORKS

A perennial favourite that sells out every year, the Literary Cabaret is a guaranteed hit: combine six acclaimed and award-winning authors with one band and a table of friends for a night of art and delight! Pianist, producer, and multi-instrumentalist Benjamin Millman returns as our charismatic Musical Director, leading his band, The Oxymorons, in accompanying lyrical readings from literary greats: Michael Bennett (Carved in Blood), Antonio Michael Downing (Black Cherokee), Anne de Marcken (It Lasts Forever and Then It's Over), Fiona McFarlane (Highway Thirteen), Michael Redhill (The Trial of Katterfelto), and Danez Smith (Bluff).

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 8:00 PM | \$27 | \$

On Tyranny: Timothy Snyder in Conversation 75

GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

ASL ASL PROVIDED

Esteemed author and thinker **Timothy Snyder**'s conversation at our 2024 Festival was a resounding highlight, roaming through a wide array of sociopolitical topics with incisive eloquence. He returns to consider a book that has only grown in relevance in the years since it was published: the #1 New York Times bestselling guide for surviving and resisting America's turn towards authoritarianism, On Tyranny. An American historian who recently moved to Toronto, Snyder shares his deep knowledge and perspective of the evolving political landscape, and revisits his essential body of work, in conversation with **John Freeman**.

Michael Bennett's attendance generously supported by Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 8:00 PM | \$27 \$

Mona Awad in Conversation

EVENT NUMBER

76

WI WATERFRONT THEATRE

Mona Awad writes the gothic fairy tales of our fever dreams. Her dark and wickedly funny novels have been a fixture of bestseller and "Best Of" lists, and won her a devoted fanbase. She returns with the highly anticipated follow-up to Bunny, the sensational cult classic that's soon to become a feature film. We Love You, Bunny is simultaneously a prequel, a sequel, and a dazzlingly original stand-alone novel. Follow the Bunnies on a surreal journey into the heart of dark academia, as Awad spills secrets from one of the most talked-about releases of the season. Moderated by Robert J. Wiersema.

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from mentors in our part-time program.

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## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 | 8:00 PM | \$27 S EVENT NUMBER 77 THE REVUE STAGE

These books can't stay silent; their music-infused storylines will have you humming along to the rhythm. Three authors convene to share narratives, memories, characters, and themes that are inextricably shaped by the soundtrack of life. Set in 1984 to the music of Tina Turner, Madonna, and Stevie Nicks, *After We Drowned* by **Jill Yonit Goldberg** is a haunting coming-of-age story with a fierce feminist subplot. **Holly Brickley**'s instant bestseller, *Deep Cuts*, follows two lovers over a span of many years as they're alternately drawn together and wrenched apart by their shared love of music. **Michael V. Smith** has written a moving memoir and ode to music in *Soundtrack*, which replays his personal memories and significant moments in queer history to the songs of the era. Join us to laugh, cry, and maybe even sing. Moderated by **Margaret Gallagher**.

Presented in partnership with Langara College and Peliplat.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 10:30 AM | \$27 

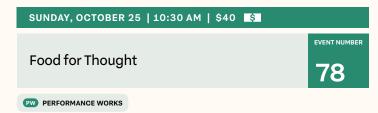
The Divorce Diaries 

79

Though divorce rates are at their lowest in decades, readers have never been more enamoured with the stories that come from humans parting ways. From fiction to memoir, women are exploring how ending a partnership can reclaim agency, challenge patriarchy—or even release unbridled and long-held rage. Haley Mlotek, as the daughter of a divorced marriage counselor, weaves the story of her separation with profound inquiries into family, friendship, and love in No Fault.

Sarah Manguso's Liars, an NPR Book of the Year, subverts the usual narratives as a dissatisfied wife proves marriage makes liars out of all.

Plum Johnson's memoir, The Trouble with Fairytales, examines how we so often fall for the notion of "happily ever after," and how it can take a lifetime to fulfill the most important relationship—the one with ourselves. Moderated by Cori Howard.



Seven authors of intriguing nonfiction titles explore topics at the forefront of our minds, in this popular returning event where TED Talk meets café social, with a morning snack. Scott McIntyre, co-founder of Douglas & McIntyre, shares his story of making a life in Canadian publishing in A Precarious Enterprise, while Vogue writer Christian Allaire's From the Rez to the Runway takes us behind the scenes of the fashion industry. Science writer Jay Ingram (The Science of Pets) and Women's Prize finalist Chloe Dalton (Raising Hare) both delve into the meaningful bonds between humans and animals. Eve Lazarus explores a forgotten tragedy in Beneath Dark Waters, an account of the 1914 sinking of the Empress of Ireland; Nilo Tabrizy spotlights Iran's recent women-led uprising in For the Sun After Long Nights. And Bread and Milk traces author Karolina Ramqvist's life and relationships through the lens of food. Come hungry for insight. Hosted by Kathryn Gretsinger.

This event is being implemented with the assistance of a grant from the Swedish Arts Council.



When Larry Grant talks about reconciliation, he uses the verb reconciling to signify an ongoing, unfinished process we're all going through. "To not belong was forced upon me by the colonial society that surrounded me," he says. "But reconciling with myself is part of all that." The son of a Musqueam cultural leader and an immigrant from China tells the story of his extraordinary life and heritage in Reconciling: A Lifelong Struggle to Belong. Unfolding through a series of conversations between himself and writer Scott Steedman, his memoir brings us from the Musqueam reserve to Chinatown, the site of the Mission Residential School to the University of British Columbia, where he is now the Elder-in-residence. Mirroring the book's format, Scott will interview Larry on-stage, in a wise conversation with much to teach us.

Presented in partnership with Talking Stick Festival.



Tell it on the page, stage, or screen
— with programs in Journalism,
Film Arts, English, and more.

Langara.

?ə λ xwməθkwəyəm | at Musqueam

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 10:30 AM | \$27 \$

Global Political Narratives

EVENT NUMBER

81

RS THE REVUE STAGE

Take an international journey with these razor-sharp novels that offer up stunning storylines, while shedding light on significant political conflicts and acts of resistance around the world. **Sheung-King**'s *Bαtshit Seven* follows a disaffected millennial living through the Hong Kong protests, in a darkly funny indictment of the cycles of imperialism. **Maria Reva** brings us to Ukraine in her raved-about debut novel, *Endling*, where a snail researcher and her sisters go on a search for their missing mother—and come face-to-face with the Russian invasion instead. **Jeremy Tiang** tells interlocking stories of leftist movements and political detentions in Singapore and Malaysia, uncovering decades of the region's history in *Stαte of Emergency*. Moderated by **Renée Sarojini Saklikar**.

Presented in partnership with SFU's Department of World Languages and Literatures and Peliplat.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 2:00 PM | \$27 \$

Kiran Desai in Conversation

82

**GS** GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE

EPI EPIPHAN AUTOMATED CAPTIONS

Fans of **Kiran Desai**'s work have been eagerly awaiting a new novel for nearly 20 years. Her 2006 book, *The Inheritance of Loss*, won both the Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Masterpieces take time, and it was undeniably worth waiting for *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny*, which is sure to capture the attention of major prize juries once again. This sweeping and intimate love story follows two young people whose fates intersect and diverge across continents and years, as they navigate the many forces that shape their lives: country, class, race, history, and family. Desai delves into her writing life, the nature of artistic ambition, and the complicated bonds that link. Moderated by **Eleanor Wachtel**.

Presented in partnership with Indian Summer Festival and The Dhahan Prize.

Thank you to our incredible 350+ volunteers!

90%

of volunteers surveyed in 2024 indicated plans to return KITS



Thank you to KITS Eyewear and Libro.fm for supporting the Volunteer Program.







Volunteer with us this fall!

The Festival runs from Oct 20–26. Positions are available Sept–Oct.

Apply by October 6, 2025.

writersfest.bc.ca/volunteer

2025 FESTIVAL | FESTIVAL EVENTS 54

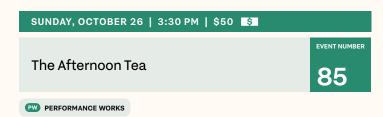
## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 2:00 PM | \$27 S EVENT NUMBER A Trio of Vast Ideas WY WATERFRONT THEATRE

These immersive, short interviews reveal profound observations, as Minelle Mahtani sits down with three authors of transformative nonfiction titles in back-to-back talks. Claire Cameron's How to Survive a Bear Attack weaves together a memoir about her experience with skin cancer and an investigation of a fatal black bear attack, in a meditation on the precious act of survival. In his defining essay collection Wînipêk, Niigaan Sinclair tells the story of Winnipeg—the place he calls "ground zero" of Canada's future—to illuminate the reality of Indigenous life across the country. elin kelsey is an environmental activist who leads with hope; she shares How to Be Hopeful, an inspiring and evidence-based guide to dealing with climate anxiety.



Join us at this free event to celebrate the latest work from **The Writer's Studio** at Simon Fraser University, and their anthology series' twenty-fifth anniversary! emerge 25: The Writer's Studio Anthology collects the work of this year's graduating class. Hear readings from those who have participated in the illustrious studio, 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.

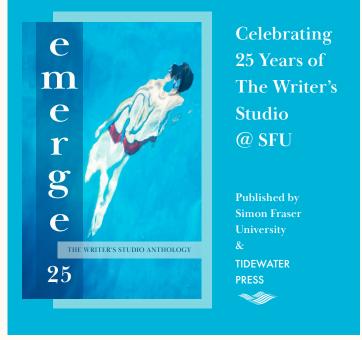
Presented in collaboration with **SFU's The Writers Studio**. Presented in partnership with **Peliplat**.



Savour an afternoon of outstanding readings and high tea delicacies, at this beloved Writers Fest tradition first started by our late founding artistic director, Alma Lee. The tables will be laden with scones, sandwiches, and cookies; the tea and coffee will be flowing, alongside a signature glass of sherry. Accompanying the sumptuous spread are readings of captivating fiction from celebrated authors: Katherine Ashenburg (Margaret's New Look), Michael Bennett (Carved in Blood), Terry Fallis (The Marionette), Fiona McFarlane (Highway Thirteen), Susin Nielsen (Snap), and Michael Redhill (The Trial of Katterfelto). Hosted by Sophie Lui.

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

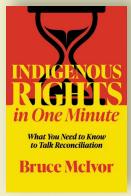
Michael Bennett's attendance generously supported by Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa.



## GREAT PLAINS | Fiction



"A visceral depiction of the inhumanity of oppression." —Don Aker



NIGHTWOOD | Nonfiction

Essential information for Canadians committed to Truth and Reconciliation.

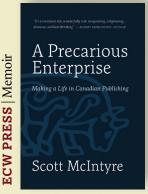


PLAYWRIGHTS | Drama

BTWN THE LINES | Nonfiction

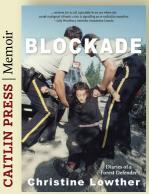
SHADOWPAW | Kids' Fiction

A woman's healing journey mirrored through the language of trees.

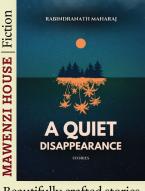


"The ultimate insider's POV."

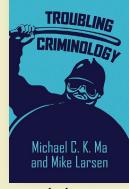
—Douglas Coupland



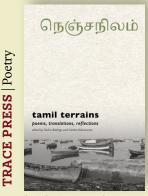
A BC bestseller celebrating resilience and successful environmental activism.



Beautifully crafted stories of older men and women confronting their pasts.



Untangles how we understand "crime" in our society.



What happens when a 2000-year-old language is itself displaced?



A send-off to "loved poets," written over four Novembers.



KEGEDONCE | YA Fiction

A battle rages between two wolves. Who shall wither?



"An exciting action-hero adventure..."

—Kirkus Reviews



"...beautiful art with deeply human storytelling..." —Goodreads

# ssential reading.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15 | 7:30 PM | \$70 AND UP (BOOK INCLUDED)

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 7:00 PM | \$27

### Closing Night Event: Susan Orlean with The Current's Matt Galloway

86

**GS GRANVILLE ISLAND STAGE** 

Our closing night event features an author and journalist who has been shaping the cultural narrative for decades. Along with *The New Yorker*, where she's been a staff writer since 1992, **Susan Orlean** has written for *Rolling Stone*, *Vogue*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *Esquire*, always with her distinctive voice. Having enthralled us with bestselling books like *The Library Book* and *The Orchid Thief*, Orlean invites readers into her own extraordinary story in her eighth book, *Joyride*. Infused with an irrepressible exuberance, Orlean's memoir traces her career through a golden era of journalism, and offers up invaluable advice for writers and anyone else pursuing a creative path. She speaks with CBC *The Current*'s **Matt Galloway** about confronting writer's block, the shifting landscape of journalism, and how she follows her curiosity to the most unexpected places.

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26 | 7:00 PM | \$27 \$

The Crime Scene

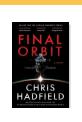
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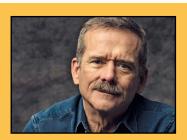
87

WT WATERFRONT THEATRE ASL ASL PROVIDED

Some of the most exciting writers working in the crime and thriller genres today gather from New Zealand, the US, and Vancouver, for an evening of page-turning crime fiction rooted in place and culture. **Michael Bennett**'s *Carved in Blood* follows a Māori former detective as she's called back to the force to investigate the murder of her ex-husband. In *Gray Dawn*, the latest book in **Walter Mosley**'s bestselling series, Easy Rawlins chases a mysterious and dangerous woman through gritty 1970s Los Angeles. And hometown hero **Sam Wiebe**'s *The Last Exile* finds PI Dave Wakeland at the centre of gang warfare on the streets of Vancouver. Join us at the scene of the crime. Moderated by **Jerry Wasserman**.

Michael Bennett's attendance generously supported by Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa.





DM DJAVAD MOWAFAGHIAN CINEMA

SPECIAL EVENT

### Chris Hadfield in Conversation

Presented in partnership with Book Warehouse, and with the support of Penguin Random House Canada and SFU.

A veteran of three space flights, capsule communicator for 25 shuttle missions, and former commander of the International Space Station, **Chris Hadfield** is one of the most seasoned and accomplished astronauts in the world. He's since turned his talents and experience to writing works of both fiction and nonfiction that bookstores can hardly keep on the shelves. His internationally bestselling books have topped the charts for months in Canada. Hadfield joins us in Vancouver with his new interstellar thriller, *Final Orbit*, probing China's secret role in the 1970s Space Race between the US and the USSR.

Full of intrigue and real history, *Final Orbit* captures with heart-palpitating clarity the beauty and terror of survival 270 miles above Earth. This novel could only be written by one of the most experienced astronauts alive. Don't miss this chance to hear Hadfield in conversation about his journeys to the stars, both on and off the page.

CHRIS HADFIELD is one of the most accomplished astronauts in the world. He was the top test pilot in the US Air Force and US Navy, and a Cold War fighter pilot intercepting armed Soviet bombers in Canadian air space. He served as capsule communicator for 25 Shuttle missions, as NASA's director of operations in Russia, and as commander of the International Space Station. Hadfield's books, An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth, You Are Here, and The Darkest Dark, have been international bestsellers. His debut novel, The Apollo Murders, became an instant #1 bestseller in Canada. (ONTARIO)

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9 | 7:30 PM | \$50 AND UP









## Margaret Atwood in Conversation with Carol Off

Presented with the support of Penguin Random House Canada.

How does one of the greatest storytellers of our time write her own life? Internationally renowned literary legend Margaret Atwood joins us with her long-awaited autobiography, Book of Lives—a must-read for fans of her deeply influential body of work, and anyone who wants to learn more about the life of this Canadian icon. This event will also include special musical guests!

Beginning with her unconventional, nomadic childhood spent mostly in the wild forest of northern Québec, Atwood unfolds the story of her life, linking seminal moments to the books that have shaped our literary landscape, from the cruel year that spawned Cat's Eye to the Orwellian 1980s Berlin where she wrote The Handmaid's Tale. In pages bursting with bohemian gatherings, her magical life with the writer Graeme Gibson, and major political turning points, we meet poets, bears, and larger-than-life characters that seem to come straight from the pages of one of her own novels. She'll share more about how her life has shaped her art, and vice versa, in this conversation spanning the entirety of her staggering career.

MARGARET ATWOOD is the author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays. Her novels include Cat's Eye, The Robber Bride, Alias Grace, The Blind Assassin, and the MaddAddam trilogy. Her 1985 classic, The Handmaid's Tale, was followed in 2019 by a sequel, The Testaments, which was a global number one bestseller and won the Booker Prize. (ONTARIO)





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### Publisher Thank You

This year, we are proud to host authors and illustrators from the following publishers. These publishing houses provide the Festival significant logistical support in ensuring we have a broad range of stories and perspectives to share each October.

Publishers that have also covered the cost of transportation for their authors are designated with the  $\uparrow$  icon.

Kids Can Press 🛨 **Anvil Press** Arsenal Pulp Press 🛨 Knopf Canada 🛨 Assembly Press 🛨 McClelland & Stewart + Biblioasis + New Directions Publishing 🛨 Book\*hug Press 🛨 **Nightwood Editions** Orca Book Publishers 🛨 **Brick Books** Penguin Random House Canada 🛨 Coach House Books Publishers Group Canada 🛨 FCW Press + Raincoast Books 🛨 **Graywolf Press** Greystone Books 🕇 Roaring Brook Press Hachette Book Group Canada 🛨 Drawn & Quarterly Harbour Publishing University of Alberta Press HarperCollins Canada 🛨 Sarabande Books Heyday Books 🛨 Simon & Schuster Canada 🛨 House of Anansi Press 🛨 Stonehewer Books 🛨 Kegedonce Press 🛨 Talonbooks Thistledown Press 🛨 University of Alberta Press 🛨 Vancouver Chinatown Foundation World Editions 🛨

### ELAMIN ABDELMAHMOUD

**ELBOWS UP!** 



**ELAMIN ABDELMAHMOUD** is the host of CBC Radio show Commotion. He was a founding co-host of the CBC Politics podcast Party Lines, and he is a contributor to The National's At Issue panel. His work has appeared in Buzzfeed News, Rolling Stone, The Globe and Mail, and others. (ONTARIO)



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### ANDRÉ ALEXIS OTHER WORLDS



ANDRÉ ALEXIS is a critically-acclaimed and award-winning author. His book, Fifteen Dogs, won the Giller Prize, the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, and Canada Reads. It was recently adapted for stage by Mirvish Productions (Toronto) and National Arts Centre (Ottawa). His short fiction work has appeared in The New Yorker. (ONTARIO)



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### KATHERINE ASHENBURG

MARGARET'S NEW LOOK



KATHERINE ASHENBURG's nonfiction books include The Mourner's Dance: What We Do When People Die, and The Dirt on Clean: An Unsanitized History. In 2018, she published her acclaimed debut novel, Sofie & Cecilia, and in 2021 she followed that work with the delightfully tart novel Her Turn. (ONTARIO)



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LINDA BAILEY THE GREAT DINOSAUR SLEEPOVER, LENA THE CHICKEN (BUT REALLY A DINOSAUR!)



LINDA BAILEY has written nearly forty books for children, including Carson Crosses Canada and If You Happen to Have a Dinosaur. Her books have been translated into twenty languages and her work has won multiple awards such as the Ontario Blue Spruce, Silver Birch Awards, and Vicky Metcalf Award. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### CAROLINE ADDERSON

A POND, A POET, AND THREE PESTS



**CAROLINE ADDERSON** is an award-winning author of books for young readers and adults. Her children's books include Norman, Speak! (illustrated by Qin Leng) and Babble! And How Punctuation Saved It (illustrated by Roman Muradov). She joins the Festival with A Pond, a Poet, and Three Pests. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



34 | PAGE 29 EVENTS:

### CHRISTIAN ALLAIRE

FROM THE REZ TO THE RUNWAY: FORGING MY PATH IN FASHION



CHRISTIAN ALLAIRE is an Ojibwe, French, and Italian writer who grew up on the Nipissing First Nation reserve in Northern Ontario. A senior fashion and style writer for Vogue, he works to bring Indigenous design and stories to the forefront of fashion. Allaire is based in Brooklyn, New York. (NIPISSING FIRST NATION/USA)



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### MONA AWAD

WE LOVE YOU, BUNNY



MONA AWAD is the bestselling author of Rouge, All's Well, Bunny, and 13 Ways of Looking at a Fat Girl. She is a threetime finalist for a Goodreads Choice Award, the recipient of an Amazon Best First Novel Award, and she was shortlisted for the Giller Prize. She teaches fiction at Syracuse University. (QUÉBEC)



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### MARTHA BÁTIZ

A DAUGHTER'S PLACE



MARTHA BÁTIZ is an award-winning writer, translator, and professor. She is the author of five books, including No Stars in the Sky; Plaza Requiem (winner of an International Latino Book Award); and the novella Bocα de lobo / Damiana's Reprieve (winner of the Casa de Teatro Prize). A Daughter's Place is her first novel. (MEXICO/CANADA)



2025 FESTIVAL FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS 60

KATE BEATON

SHARK GIRL, BODIES OF ART, BODIES OF LABOUR, DUCKS: TWO YEARS IN THE OIL SANDS





KATE BEATON is a Canadian cartoonist from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. A Mount Allison graduate, she launched the acclaimed webcomic Hark! A Vagrant while working in Alberta. Her witty, historically themed comics helped redefine the landscape of literary webcomics. (NOVA SCOTIA)

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BILLY-RAY BELCOURT THE IDEA OF AN ENTIRE LIFE: POEMS



BILLY-RAY BELCOURT, from the Driftpile Cree Nation, won the Griffin Poetry Prize for This Wound is a World. He was twice nominated for the Governor General's Literary Award. His bestsellers include A Minor Chorus and Coexistence. He is an Associate Professor at UBC. (DRIFTPILE FIRST NATION/ALBERTA)



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OTONIYA J. OKOT BITEK

WE. THE KINDLING



OTONIYA J. OKOT BITEK has written three books of poetry: 100 Days, A is for Acholi, and Song and Dread. She lives and works in Kingston, Ontario. We, the Kindling is her first novel. (ONTARIO)



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EDDY BOUDEL TAN THE TIGER AND THE COSMONAUT



EDDY BOUDEL TAN has been a finalist for the Edmund White Award and the ReLit Best Novel Award for his novels After Elias and The Rebellious Tide. He was named a Rising Star by Writers' Trust of Canada. His stories can be found in Joyland, Yolk, and various literary journals and anthologies. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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VINCE BEISER

POWER METAL: THE RACE FOR THE RESOURCES THAT WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE



**VINCE BEISER** is an award-winning journalist and author. His first book, The World in a Grain, was a finalist for the PEN / E. O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award. His work has appeared in Wired, Harper's Magazine, The Atlantic, and The New York Times, among other publications. He lives in Vancouver. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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MICHAEL BENNETT

CARVED IN BLOOD



MICHAEL BENNETT is the author of Better the Blood and In Dark Places, both of which won Ngaio Marsh awards. He is also the author of the young adult graphic novel Helen and the Go-Go Ninjas which, along with Better the Blood, was a finalist for the 2019 New Zealand Book Awards. (NGĀTI PIKIAO, NGĀTI WHAKAUE - AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND)



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TANYA BOTEJU

ALLYSHIP AS ACTION: 7 WAYS TO ADVOCATE FOR OTHERS, MESSY PERFECT





TANYA BOTEJU is a teacher and writer living on unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. Her debut novel, Kings, Queens, and In-Betweens, was named a Top Ten Indie Next Pick by the American Booksellers Association. Committed to anti-oppressive teaching and learning, Tanya hopes her books bend the universe even the tiniest bit toward justice. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

**DEEP CUTS** 

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HOLLY BRICKLEY

**HOLLY BRICKLEY** studied English at UC Berkeley and received an MFA in fiction from Columbia University.



Originally from Hope, British Columbia, she now lives in Portland, Oregon, with her husband and their two daughters. Deep Cuts is her first novel. (BRITISH COLUMBIA/USA)

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### CLAIRE CAMERON HOW TO SURVIVE A BEAR ATTACK: A MEMOIR



CLAIRE CAMERON's most recent novel. The Last Neanderthal, was a national bestseller and a finalist for the 2017 Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. Her writing has appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times, and The Guardian, and she is a monthly contributor to The Globe and Mail. (ONTARIO)



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### MIKE CURATO

### GAYSIANS, FLAMER



MIKE CURATO is an author and illustrator of books for children, teens, and adults. Mike's debut young adult graphic novel, Flamer, was awarded the 2020 Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ Young Adult. Gaysians is his adult debut. (PHILIPPINES/IRELAND/USA)





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### ANNE DE MARCKEN IT LASTS FOREVER AND THEN IT'S OVER



ANNE DE MARCKEN lives in the United States on the unceded land of the Coast Salish people. She is the founding editor and publisher of The 3rd Thing. (USA)



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### KIRAN DESAI THE LONELINESS OF SONIA AND SUNNY



KIRAN DESAI is the bestselling author of two novels, Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard and The Inheritance of Loss, which won both the Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award, Born in India, she moved to the US when she was sixteen and now lives in New York City. (USA)



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### тім соок THE GOOD ALLIES



TIM COOK is Chief Historian and Director of Research at the Canadian War Museum. His bestselling books have won multiple awards, including four Ottawa Book Awards for Literary Non-Fiction and two C.P. Stacey Awards. He is a frequent media commentator and is a member of the Order of Canada. (ONTARIO)



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### CHLOE DALTON

### RAISING HARE



CHLOE DALTON is a writer, political adviser, and foreign policy specialist. She spent over a decade working in the UK Parliament and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has advised, and written for and with, numerous prominent figures. She divides her time between London and the English countryside. Raising Hare is her first book. (UNITED KINGDOM)



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**CHASING SHADOWS** 

RONALD J. DEIBERT

RONALD J. DEIBERT is founder & director of Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto and a bestselling author. A leading expert on digital espionage and spyware, his work has earned global recognition and, in 2022, he was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. (ONTARIO)



25 | PAGE 25 EVENTS:

### JUNIE DÉSIL

### ALLOSTATIC LOAD



JUNIE DÉSIL was born to Haitian immigrant parents in Montréal and raised in Winnipeg. An accomplished poet, her debut collection, eat salt | gaze at the ocean (2020), was a finalist for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize. Junie mentors emerging writers at Simon Fraser University's The Writer's Studio. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



2025 FESTIVAL FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS 62

MARCELLO DI CINTIO PRECARIOUS: THE LIVES OF MIGRANT WORKERS



MARCELLO DI CINTIO is the author of four books, including Walls: Travels Along the Barricades which won the Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing, and Pay No Heed to the Rockets: Palestine in the Present Tense—a W.O. Mitchell Prize winner. His writing has appeared in The New York Times, The Walrus, Canadian Geographic, and Afar. (ALBERTA)



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### EMMA DONOGHUE

THE PARIS EXPRESS



EMMA DONOGHUE is an award-winning novelist, screenwriter, and playwright. Her novel Room has sold almost three million copies and the film adaptation was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Her historical fiction novels The Wonder and The Pull of the Stars were nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. (ONTARIO/IRELAND)

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### KYLE EDWARDS

SMALL CEREMONIES



KYLE EDWARDS is an Anishinaabe journalist and writer from the Lake Manitoba First Nation and a member of the Ebb and Flow First Nation. He has won two National Magazine Awards and was named Emerging Indigenous Journalist by the Canadian Association of Journalists. His work has appeared in CBC and Toronto Star, among others. (LAKE MANITOBA FIRST NATION/MANITOBA)

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### TERRY FALLIS

THE MARIONETTE



TERRY FALLIS, a Toronto native and McMaster engineering graduate, is a celebrated author. His debut novel, The Best Laid Plans, won the Stephen Leacock Medal and CBC's Canada Reads. Other notable works include No Relation. Poles Apart, and Albatross. He blogs at terryfallis.com. (ONTARIO)



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### CORY DOCTOROW

**ENSHITTIFICATION** 



CORY DOCTOROW is a science fiction author, activist. and journalist. In 2020, he was inducted into the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame. (CANADA/USA)



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### ANTONIO MICHAEL DOWNING

**BLACK CHEROKEE** 



ANTONIO MICHAEL DOWNING is the author of the acclaimed memoir Saga Boy and children's book Stars in My Crown. Antonio Michael is the current host of the CBC Radio program The Next Chapter. Black Cherokee is his debut novel. (ONTARIO)



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### CHRISTINE ESTIMA

LETTERS TO KAFKA



CHRISTINE ESTIMA is an Arab woman of mixed ethnicity (Lebanese, Syrian, and Portuguese) and the author of the short story collection The Syrian Ladies Benevolent Society. She has written for The New York Times, VICE, The Globe and Mail, Chatelaine, Toronto Star, and CBC. Christine has a master's degree from York University and lives in Toronto. (ONTARIO/PORTUGAL)



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### ELAINE FEENEY

LET ME GO MAD IN MY OWN WAY



**ELAINE FEENEY** is an Irish novelist and poet. Her debut novel, As You Were, won the Kate O'Brien Award, among others. How to Build a Boat was shortlisted for Irish Novel of the Year, longlisted for the Booker Prize, and was a New Yorker Best Book of the Year. She lectures at the University of Galway. (IRELAND)



WHITNEY GARDNER

FREE PIANO (NOT HAUNTED)



WHITNEY GARDNER is an author, illustrator, and cartoonist. She started drawing stick figures in second grade and somehow no one's been able to stop her. She is the creator of Fake Blood, Long Distance and Free Piano (Not Haunted). She is also the illustrator for Debbie Levy's Becoming RBG and Stephanie Cooke's The Racc Pack series. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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DON GILLMOR

ON OIL



**DON GILLMOR** is the author of To the River, which won the Governor General's Award for nonfiction. He is also the author of three novels, a two-volume history of Canada, and nine books for children. His journalism has appeared in Rolling Stone, Toronto Life, The Globe and Mail, and Toronto Star. He has won twelve National Magazine Awards and numerous other honours. (ONTARIO)

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LARRY GRANT

RECONCILING: A LIFELONG STRUGGLE TO BELONG



LARRY GRANT is the Elder-in-residence at the Justice Institute of BC and the University of British Columbia's First Nations House of Learning. He holds a President's Medal from UBC and an honorary Doctor of Laws from SFU. He lives with his wife on the Musqueam reserve in Vancouver. (MUSQUEAM/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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RACHEL HARTMAN

AMONG GHOSTS



**RACHEL HARTMAN** is the author of five young adult fantasy novels set in the world of Goredd: Seraphina, Shadow Scale, Tess of the Road, In the Serpent's Wake, and the upcoming Among Ghosts. Her novels have been on The New York Times bestseller list and have received many awards, including the Morris Award and Sunburst Prize. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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BILL GASTON

**TUNNEL ISLAND: STORIES** 



BILL GASTON is the award-winning author of seven novels and eight short fiction collections, including Sex is Red and Mount Appetite, as well as a book of poems and two memoirs, most recently Just Let Me Look at You. He lives on Gabriola Island with his wife, author Dede Crane. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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JILL YONIT GOLDBERG

AFTER WE DROWNED



JILL YONIT GOLDBERG is a Prairie-born former Montrealer living in Vancouver on unceded Coast Salish territories. Recent work has been included in Room Magazine and subTerrain, among others. She is co-author on The Fire Still Burns (Purich Books/UBC Press, 2023). She teaches literature and creative writing at Langara College. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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KATHLEEN GROS

CAROUSEL SUMMER



KATHLEEN GROS is a cartoonist living in Vancouver, British Columbia. She graduated with a BFA in illustration from Emily Carr University of Art and Design, and she published her first graphic novel, Last Night at Wyrmwood High, soon after. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



18 | PAGE 21 EVENTS:

CLAIRE HATCHER-SMITH A SKELETON IN THE CLOSET



CLAIRE HATCHER-SMITH is a speech-language pathologist who has worked with children with Down syndrome for thirty-five years. Her writing has previously been longlisted in the Mslexia Children's Novel Competition. Originally from Kent in the UK, she currently lives on Vancouver Island. A Skeleton in the Closet is her debut novel. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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2025 FESTIVAL FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS 64

### JON HICKEY

**BIG CHIEF** 



JON HICKEY is a former Steaner Fellow in fiction and earned his MFA from Cornell University. His short fiction has appeared in many journals and prizes. He is an enrolled member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and lives in San Francisco with his family. (LAC DU FLAMBEAU ANISHINAABE/USA)



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GORD HILL

THE ANTIFA COMIC BOOK: REVISED AND EXPANDED



GORD HILL is an author-illustrator whose works include The 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance Comic Book and The Anti-Capitalist Resistance Comic Book. He is a member of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation, whose territory is located on northern Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland in British Columbia. He has been involved in Indigenous peoples and antiglobalization movements since 1990. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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### **JAY INGRAM**

THE SCIENCE OF PETS



JAY INGRAM was the host of Discovery Channel Canada's Daily Planet from the first episode until June 2011. He is a distinguished alumnus of the University of Alberta, has received five honorary doctorates, and is a member of the Order of Canada. He has written twelve books, including Theatre of the Mind and Fatal Flaws. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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**PLUM JOHNSON** 

THE TROUBLE WITH FAIRY TALES



PLUM JOHNSON is a Canadian writer, artist, entrepreneur, and author of The Trouble with Fairy Tales. Her previous bestselling memoir, They Left Us Everything, won the 2015 RBC Taylor Prize and the 2016 Evergreen Award. (ONTARIO)



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### JENNIFER JONES

**ROCK STAR: MY LIFE ON AND OFF THE ICE** 



JENNIFER JONES is a curling icon, widely regarded as the greatest female curler of all time. A two-time Olympian and 2014 Olympic Gold medallist, she dominated the sport with six national titles, two world championships, and an astounding sixteen Grand Slam victories. Rock Star is her debut memoir. (MANITOBA)



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**BOB JOSEPH** 

21 THINGS™ YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT INDIGENOUS SELF-GOVERNMENT



BOB JOSEPH, president of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., has provided training on Indigenous relations to a diverse range of clients, including all levels of government, Fortune 500 companies, resource development companies, and small and medium-sized businesses. He is the author of the national bestseller 21 Things™ You May Not Know About the Indian Act. (GWAWA'ENUXW NATION/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### **GUY GAVRIEL KAY**

WRITTEN ON THE DARK



GUY GAVRIEL KAY is the international bestselling author of fifteen previous novels, including the Fionavar Tapestry series, River of Stars, Children of Earth and Sky, and A Brightness Long Ago. He has been awarded the International Goliardos Prize for his work in the literature of the fantastic. In 2014, he was named to the Order of Canada. (ONTARIO)

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TAE KELLER

WE CARRY THE SUN



TAE KELLER is the Newbery Medal-winning and New York Times bestselling author of When You Trap a Tiger, Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone, and The Science of Breakable Things. She lives in Seattle, Washington. (USA)



03 | PAGE 15

**ELIN KELSEY** 

HOW TO BE HOPEFUL



ELIN KELSEY, PhD, is an award-winning author, speaker, and thought leader. She has written numerous bestselling children's books, including You Are Stardust, and is the author of Hope Matters: Why Changing the Way We Think Is Critical for Solving the Environmental Crisis. (BRITISH COLUMBIA/USA)



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WESLEY KING

BENNY ON THE CASE



WESLEY KING is the award-winning author of over a dozen novels for young readers, including OCDaniel, Sara and the Search for Normal, and the bestselling Wizenard series with Kobe Bryant. His books have earned critical acclaim and multiple awards. He currently lives and writes in Newfoundland. (NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR)



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**EMMA KNIGHT** 

THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE COMMON OCTOPUS



EMMA KNIGHT is a co-founder of Greenhouse, an organic beverage company based in Toronto. Her first novel, The Life Cycle of the Common Octopus, was a number one national bestseller and a New York Times bestseller. (ONTARIO)



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CLARA KUMAGAI

SONGS FOR GHOSTS



CLARA KUMAGAI is from Canada, Japan, and Ireland. The recipient of a We Need Diverse Books Award Mentorship, Clara was also a finalist for the Jim Wong-Chu Emerging Writers Award and a Yoto Carnegie 2024 nominee. She is the author of Catfish Rolling and Songs for Ghosts. (JAPAN/ IRELAND/CANADA)



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**EVE LAZARUS** 

BENEATH DARK WATERS: THE LEGACY OF THE EMPRESS OF IRELAND SHIPWRECK



EVE LAZARUS is a reporter, author, and the host and producer of the Cold Case Canada true crime podcast. Her books include the BC bestsellers Cold Case BC; Murder by Milkshake; Blood, Sweat, and Fear; Cold Case Vancouver; and Vancouver Exposed. She lives in North Vancouver, BC. (BRITISH COLUMBIA/AUSTRALIA)



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DANIELLE LEAVITT BY THE SECOND SPRING



DANIELLE LEAVITT holds a PhD in history from Harvard University, where she has been a fellow at the Ukrainian Research Institute. She grew up in both Ukraine and the United States, and currently lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan. By the Second Spring is her first book. (UKRAINE/USA)



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MARSHA LEDERMAN

OCTOBER 7TH: SEARCHING FOR THE HUMANITARIAN MIDDLE



October

7th

MARSHA LEDERMAN is a columnist for The Globe and Mail and was previously The Globe's longtime Western Arts Correspondent. Before joining The Globe, Marsha worked for CBC Radio. Born in Toronto, she now lives in Vancouver. She has earned many awards for her writing, including, most recently, the 2024 Max Wyman Award for Critical Writing. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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AMANDA LEDUC

WILD LIFE



AMANDA LEDUC is a disabled writer whose non-fiction book, Disfigured: On Fairy Tales, Disability, and Making Space was nominated for the 2020 Governor General's Award. Amanda holds a Master's degree in Creative Writing from the University of St. Andrews. She has cerebral palsy and presently makes her home in Hamilton, Ontario. (ONTARIO)



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2025 FESTIVAL FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS 66

### CAROL LEE

### VITALITY



CAROL LEE is the co-founder and chair of the Vancouver Chinatown Foundation. With deep family ties to Chinatown, she is committed to its revitalization and the Downtown Eastside. Carol serves on several boards, including the BC Achievement Foundation. She is a recipient of the Order of BC (2022) and Order of Canada (2023). (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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DENNIS LEE

### WRESTLING WITH CADENCE



**DENNIS LEE** is the author of more than forty books. He is highly regarded for his meditative and erotic poetry, as well as his collections for young people, such as Alligator Pie. He wrote the song lyrics for Jim Henson's hit children's series, Fraggle Rock, and was Toronto's first poet laureate. Heart Residence, his collected poems, was published in 2017. (ONTARIO)

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### JEN SOOKFONG LEE

### THE HUNGER WE PASS DOWN



JEN SOOKFONG LEE was born and raised in Vancouver's East Side, and she now lives with her son in North Burnaby. Superfan was a finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Award and was a TODAY Show Recommended Read, Jen also wrote The Conjoined, The Better Mother, and Finding Home. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



EVENTS: 51 | PAGE 39 58 | PAGE 41 JONATHAN LETHEM

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF TENSION: NEW AND SELECTED STORIES



JONATHAN LETHEM is the bestselling author of thirteen novels, including Motherless Brooklyn, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award. His short fiction has garnered a Pushcart Prize and inclusion in The Best American Short Stories. The recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship, he lives in Los Angeles and Maine. (USA)



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### **COREY LIU**

### HE'S SO POSSESSED WITH ME



COREY LIU is a writer based in Vancouver. He has written for television shows like Family Law, Pinecone & Pony, and Davey and Jonesie's Locker, and was a co-executive producer of the Kpop series Gangnam Project. Corey loves horror movies and anime and wishes he liked the taste of cilantro. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



EVENTS: 06 | PAGE 16

CANISIA LUBRIN

THE WORLD AFTER RAIN: ANNE'S POEM





CANISIA LUBRIN's work has been recognized with the Carol Shields Prize, Danuta Gleed Award, Griffin Poetry Prize, the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature, the Writer's Trust of Canada Rising Stars prize, and others. Born in St. Lucia, she lives in Ontario, and is the poetry editor at McClelland & Stewart. (ONTARIO)



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### YIMING MA

### THESE MEMORIES DO NOT BELONG TO US



YIMING MA grew up in Toronto and spent a decade across New York, London, Berlin, and South Africa. His work has appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, Literary Hub, and elsewhere. His story Swimmer of Yangtze won the 2018 Guardian 4th Estate Story Prize. (CANADA/USA/ CHINA)

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### LINDEN MACINTYRE

### AN ACCIDENTAL VILLAIN



LINDEN MACINTYRE's bestselling novel The Bishop's Man won the Scotiabank Giller Prize. He followed that success with the novels Why Men Lie, Punishment, and The Only  $C\alpha fe$ , all national bestsellers. He is also the author of the acclaimed boyhood memoir, Causeway: A Passage from Innocence. (ONTARIO)



01 | PAGE 14 11 | PAGE 18 **ROZ MACLEAN** 

TOGETHER, A FOREST



ROZ MACLEAN is an award-winning Canadian illustrator and children's writer. Her books include More Than Words: So Many Ways to Say What We Mean and Together, a Forest, both with Henry Holt Books For Young Readers. She is passionate about education, inclusion and the arts. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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SARAH MANGUSO

LIARS



SARAH MANGUSO is the author of nine books, most recently the novels Liars and Very Cold People. Her work has been recognized by an American Academy of Arts and Letters Literature Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Hodder Fellowship, and the Rome Prize. She lives in Los Angeles. (USA)



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EIMEAR MCBRIDE THE CITY CHANGES ITS FACE



EIMEAR MCBRIDE grew up in the west of Ireland and trained at Drama Centre London before turning her attention to writing novels. Her books A Girl is a Halfformed Thing, The Lesser Bohemians, and Strange Hotel have won numerous awards. (IRELAND)



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FIONA MCFARLANE

**HIGHWAY THIRTEEN** 



FIONA MCFARLANE is the author of The Night Guest; The High Places, which won the International Dylan Thomas Prize; and The Sun Walks Down. Her short fiction has been published in The New Yorker and Zoetrope: All-Story. She teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. (USA)



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SCOTT MCINTYRE

A PRECARIOUS ENTERPRISE: MAKING A LIFE IN CANADIAN PUBLISHING



SCOTT MCINTYRE has been influential in Canada's fight for better publishing policy for over 40 years, serving on numerous boards and helping shape a UNESCO treaty that enshrines the principle of cultural diversity within international law. A member of the Order of Canada, he also holds an honorary degree from Simon Fraser University. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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BRUCE MCIVOR

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN ONE MINUTE



BRUCE MCIVOR is recognized nationally and internationally as one of Canada's leading lawyers in Indigenous law. Bruce represents First Nations across Canada and teaches at the University of British Columbia's Allard School of Law. His great-grandparents took Métis scrip at Red River in Manitoba. He is a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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HALEY MLOTEK NO FAULT: A MEMOIR OF ROMANCE AND DIVORCE



HALEY MLOTEK is a writer and editor. Her work has appeared in The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, The Paris Review, Voque, Elle, and Harper's Bazaar, among others. She's a founding member of the Freelance Solidarity Project in the National Writers Union, teaches at Concordia University, and is the editorial lead at Feeld. (QUÉBEC)



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SILVIA MORENO-GARCIA

THE BEWITCHING



SILVIA MORENO-GARCIA is the author of The Bewitching, The Seventh Veil of Salome, The Daughter of Doctor Moreau, Mexican Gothic, and many other books. She has won the Locus, British Fantasy, and World Fantasy awards. (MEXICO/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### WALTER MOSLEY

### **GRAY DAWN: AN EASY RAWLINS MYSTERY**



GRAY

DAWN

WALTER MOSLEY is one of America's most celebrated writers, awarded a PEN USA Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2020 National Book Award's Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, and named a Grand Master of the Mystery Writers of America. His writing has won the Robert Kirsch Award, numerous Edgars, and several NAACP Image Awards. (USA)

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### LEILA MOTTLEY

### THE GIRLS WHO GREW BIG



LEILA MOTTLEY is the author of the novel Nightcrawling, an Oprah's Book Club pick and New York Times bestseller, and the poetry collection woke up no light. She is also the 2018 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate. She was born and raised in Oakland, where she continues to live. (USA)



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SNAP

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### **CECILY NICHOLSON**

### CROWD SOURCE



CECILY NICHOLSON is an award-winning poet and professor in the School of Creative Writing at UBC. She has held the Ellen and Warren Tallman Writer in Residence SFU (2017), Writer in Residence at the University of Windsor (2021), and Holloway Lecturer in the Practice of Poetry at UC Berkeley (2025). (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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### SUSIN NIELSEN



SUSIN NIELSEN is the multiple-award-winning author of seven middle grade novels. Her books have won the Governor General's Literary Award and over a dozen young readers' choice awards. Nielsen is also a prolific screenwriter: her latest award-winning TV show, Family Law, airs around the world. Snap is her first adult novel. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### TERRY O'REILLY AGAINST THE GRAIN: DEFIANT GIANTS WHO CHANGED THE WORLD



**Against** 

Grain

TERRY O'REILLY is the bestselling author of My Best Mistake, The Age of Persuasion, and This I Know. He is also an in-demand speaker and broadcaster. His highly awarded radio programs have been broadcast on CBC Radio since 2005, and his podcast has been downloaded over seventy million times. (ONTARIO)



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### KENNETH OPPEL

### BEST OF ALL WORLDS



KENNETH OPPEL wrote his first novel at age fourteen and is now a multi-award-winning bestselling author. His books include the Silverwing trilogy, which sold over a million copies globally, and Airborn, winner of the Governor General's Literary Award and a Michael L. Printz Honor Book. Oppel lives with his family in Toronto. (ONTARIO)



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### SUSAN ORLEAN

### JOYRIDE



SUSAN ORLEAN has been a staff writer at The New Yorker since 1992 and is the New York Times bestselling author of seven books, including The Library Book and The Orchid Thief. She lives in Los Angeles and can be found at SusanOrlean.com and on Substack. (USA)



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### KIRSTEN PENDREIGH

### WHAT FISH ARE SAYING, WHEN A TREE FALLS



KIRSTEN PENDREIGH is a poet and children's author from Vancouver. Her children's books celebrate our early instincts to care for the plants and creatures that share our planet. They include Maybe a Whale, When a Tree Falls, What Fish Are Saying, and Luna's Green Pet. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### MARC PEREZ

DAYO



MARC PEREZ is a Filipino poet and writer whose work has appeared in The Fiddlehead, EVENT Magazine, decomp journal, CV2, and Vallum, among others. He has a BFA from the UBC School of Creative Writing. He is the author of the chapbook Borderlands, and Dayo is his first full-length poetry collection. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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ELIANA RAMAGE

TO THE MOON AND BACK



ELIANA RAMAGE holds an MFA in fiction from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She has received residencies and fellowships from the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center, Lambda Literary, Tin House, and Vermont Studio Center. A citizen of the Cherokee Nation, she lives in Nashville with her family. To the Moon and Back is her first novel. (CHEROKEE NATION/USA)

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### KAROLINA RAMQVIST

BREAD AND MILK



KAROLINA RAMOVIST is one of the most influential writers of her generation in Sweden. She is the author of five novels, and is widely celebrated for her powerful ability to provoke quiet yet fierce questions. Ramqvist has been awarded the prestigious P. O. Enquist Literary Prize for her novel The White City. (SWEDEN)



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MICHAEL REDHILL THE TRIAL OF KATTERFELTO



MICHAEL REDHILL is the author of many books including the novels Martin Sloane, shortlisted for the Giller Prize and winner of the Books in Canada First Novel Award. Consolation, longlisted for the Man Booker Prize; and Bellevue Square, winner of the 2017 Giller Prize. (ONTARIO)



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### **BONNY REICHERT**

HOW TO SHARE AN EGG: A TRUE STORY OF HUNGER, LOVE, AND PLENTY



**BONNY REICHERT** is a National Magazine Award-winning journalist, and the daughter of a Holocaust survivor. At forty, she guit her job to enroll in culinary school, and began exploring her complex relationship with food on the page. Born in Edmonton, she now lives in Toronto with her husband, Michael, and little dog, Bruno. (ALBERTA/ ONTARIO)

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### MARIA REVA

**ENDLING** 



MARIA REVA was born in Ukraine and grew up in Canada. Her fiction has appeared in The Atlantic, McSweeney's, The Best American Short Stories, and elsewhere, earning a National Magazine Award. She also works as an opera librettist. (UKRAINE/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### DAVID A. ROBERTSON

LITTLE SHOES, THE WORLD'S END, 52 WAYS TO RECONCILE





DAVID A. ROBERTSON is the bestselling author of the ongoing Misewa Saga, the forthcoming picture book Little Shoes, and new adult titles All the Little Monsters and 52 Ways to Reconcile. He is a member of the Norway House Cree Nation and lives in Winnipeg. (NORWAY HOUSE CREE NATION/MANITOBA)

EVENTS: 02













JACQUELYN ZONG-LI ROSS THE LONGEST WAY TO EAT A MELON



JACQUELYN ZONG-LI ROSS is a writer and editor based in Vancouver. Her fiction, poetry, essays, and art criticism have appeared in BOMB, C Mag, The Ex-Puritan, Fence, Mousse, and elsewhere. She holds a BFA in Studio Art from Simon Fraser University and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### ZIYAD SAADI

### THREE PARTIES



ZIYAD SAADI is a Palestinian Canadian writer and filmmaker based in Vancouver. He is a Nicholl Fellowship semi-finalist and winner of the MPAC Hollywood Bureau pilot writing competition. His short story, "The Third or Fourth Casualty," is featured in the Palestinian speculative fiction anthology Thyme Travellers. (PALESTINE/BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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### COLTRANE SEESEQUASIS THE THREADS OF TIME



COLTRANE SEESEQUASIS is a fantasy writer of Willow Cree heritage who grew up in Gatineau, Québec. Inspired by a love of nature as well as myths and folklore that challenge the limits of creativity, Coltrane joins a new generation of writers, adding his voice to the immersive genre of fantasy. (QUÉBEC/BEARDY'S AND OKEMASIS/SASKATCHEWAN)

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### SHEUNG-KING

### BATSHIT SEVEN



SHEUNG-KING's debut novel, You Are Eating an Orange. You Are Naked, was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction and Amazon Canada First Novel Award in 2021, His second book, Batshit Seven, won the 2024 Atwood-Gibson Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. He spends his time between Canada and China. (HONG KONG/ **BRITISH COLUMBIA)** 

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### NIIGAAN SINCLAIR

### WÎNIPÊK: VISIONS OF CANADA FROM AN INDIGENOUS CENTRE



NIIGAAN SINCLAIR is Anishinaabe from Peguis First Nation and a professor at the University of Manitoba, where he holds the Faculty of Arts Professorship in Indigenous Knowledge and Aesthetics in the Department of Indigenous Studies. Wînipêk is his bestselling debut. (PEGUIS FIRST NATION/MANITOBA)

WÎNIPÊK

51 | PAGE 39 83 | PAGE 54 THOMAS SCHLESSER

### MONA'S EYES



THOMAS SCHLESSER is the director of the Hartung-Bergman Foundation in the Antibes, France, and the author of several books about art and its relationship to politics in the 20th century. He is the grandson of André Schlesser, a well-known singer who founded the Cabaret L'Écluse. Mona's Eyes is Schlesser's American debut. (FRANCE)

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### **DONNA SETO**

### CHINATOWN VANCOUVER: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY



DONNA SETO is a writer, self-taught artist, and occasional academic. During the pandemic, she revisited her long-lost passion for art and started drawing buildings in Chinatown. Donna has a PhD in politics and international relations. She lives in Vancouver. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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MERILYN SIMONDS WALKING WITH BETH: CONVERSATIONS WITH MY HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD FRIEND



MERILYN SIMONDS is author of twenty books, including Woman, Watching: Louise de Kiriline Lawrence, and the Songbirds of Pimisi Bay. She writes in a wide variety of genres-personal essay, memoir, travel, literary fiction, and creative nonfiction, including The Convict Lover, which was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-fiction. (ONTARIO)

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### STEPHANIE SINCLAIR

### YOU WERE MADE FOR THIS WORLD. A STEADY BRIGHTNESS OF BEING



STEPHANIE SINCLAIR is Publisher of McClelland & Stewart, an imprint of Penguin Random House Canada. She is a Cree, Ojibwe, and German/Jewish settler. She is a fierce advocate and activist, and organizes publishing events to challenge colonial practices in publishing and to advance the work of reconciliation. She lives in Hamilton. (ONTARIO)

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**CURTIS SITTENFELD** 

SHOW DON'T TELL: STORIES



**CURTIS SITTENFELD** is the New York Times bestselling author of six novels including Rodham, Eligible, Prep, American Wife, and Sisterland, as well as the collection You Think It, I'll Say It. Her nonfiction has appeared in The New York Times, The Atlantic, Time, and Vanity Fair, and on public radio's This American Life. (USA)



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MICHAEL V. SMITH

SOUNDTRACK: A LYRIC MEMOIR



MICHAEL V. SMITH's books have been nominated for many awards, including the Amazon Canada First Novel Award and a Lambda Literary Award. Smith was the inaugural recipient of the Writers' Trust of Canada's Dayne Ogilvie Prize. Smith lives with his husband in Kelowna, BC, on the unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan people. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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KAREN SOLIE

WELLWATER



KAREN SOLIE grew up in Saskatchewan. Her previous collections of poetry — Short Haul Engine, Modern and Normal, Pigeon, The Road In Is Not the Same Road Out, and The Caiplie Caves — have won or been shortlisted for the Dorothy Livesay Award, Trillium Poetry Prize, Griffin Prize, the T.S. Eliot Prize, and more. (ONTARIO)



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SCOTT STEEDMAN

RECONCILING: A LIFELONG STRUGGLE TO BELONG



SCOTT STEEDMAN has worked in publishing for 35 years, including roles with Dorling Kindersley, Larousse, Raincoast, and Douglas & McIntyre. He teaches publishing at Simon Fraser University and is co-author of Art for War and Peace. He lives in Vancouver. (BRITISH COLUMBIA) AUSTRALIA)



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### DANEZ SMITH **BLUFF**



DANEZ SMITH is the author of Bluff and three previous poetry collections, including Homie, a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, and Don't Call Us Dead. winner of the Forward Prize for Best Collection and a finalist for the National Book Award. (USA)



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**TIMOTHY SNYDER** 

ON TYRANNY, ON TYRANNY GRAPHIC EDITION



TIMOTHY SNYDER holds the inaugural Chair in Modern European History, supported by the Temerty Endowment for Ukrainian Studies, at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. His bestselling books include On Tyranny, On Freedom, and Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin. (USA)

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KIM SPENCER

I WON'T FEEL THIS WAY FOREVER



KIM SPENCER is an award-winning, bestselling author. Her debut novel. Weird Rules to Follow, received a Kirkus starred review and won multiple awards, including a 2023 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award and a 2023 Jean Little First-Novel Award, Kim is from the Gitxaala Nation and lives in northwest BC. (GITXAALA NATION/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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SARAH SUK

MEET ME AT BLUE HOUR



SARAH SUK (pronounced like soup with a K) is the author of the young adult novels Meet Me at Blue Hour, The Space between Here & Now, and Made in Korea, as well as the co-writer of John Cho's middle grade novel Troublemaker. When she's not writing, you can find her eating a bowl of bingsu. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### BINDU SURESH

### THE ROAD BETWEEN US



BINDU SURESH is the author of the novella 26 Knots. A former journalist, she has written hundreds of articles for various newspapers, including the Montreal Gazette and the Buenos Aires Herald. She has a degree in literature from Columbia University and a medical degree from McGill University, and currently works as a pediatrician. (QUÉBEC)



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SUSAN SWAN

### BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY: A MEMOIR ABOUT TAKING UP SPACE



SUSAN SWAN is a novelist, non-fiction writer, and a professor emerita at York University. Her books include The Wives of Bath, The Biggest Modern Woman of the World, and What Casanova Told Me. She is also co-founder of the Carol Shields Prize for Fiction, the largest literary prize for women and non-binary writers. (ONTARIO)



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### **NILO TABRIZY**

### FOR THE SUN AFTER LONG NIGHTS



NILO TABRIZY is an investigative reporter at The Washington Post. Previously, she was a video journalist at The New York Times, covering Iran, race and policing, abortion access, and more. She is an Emmy nominee and the 2022 winner of the Front Page Award for Online Investigative Reporting. (IRAN/BRITISH COLUMBIA/USA)



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SAEED TEEBI

### YOU WILL NOT KILL OUR IMAGINATION



SAEED TEEBI is an award-winning writer and lawyer. His debut short story collection, Her First Palestinian, was a finalist for several awards, including the Atwood Gibson Writers' Trust Prize. His nonfiction has appeared in The Globe and Mail and The New Quarterly. Born in Kuwait, he resettled in the United States, then Canada. (PALESTINE/ ONTARIO)



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### SOUVANKHAM THAMMAVONGSA

### PICK A COLOUR



PICK A

SOUVANKHAM THAMMAVONGSA is the author of four poetry books and the short story collection, How to Pronounce Knife, winner of the Giller Prize and Trillium Book Award. Her stories have won an O. Henry Prize and appeared in The New Yorker, Harper's Magazine, The Atlantic, and Granta. Pick a Colour is her first novel. (ONTARIO)

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### MADELEINE THIEN THE BOOK OF RECORDS



MADELEINE THIEN has been shortlisted for the Booker Prize, the Women's Prize for Fiction and the Folio Prize, In 2024, she received the Writers' Trust Engel Findley Award, honouring a writer in mid-career. Born in Vancouver, Madeleine lives in Montreal and teaches part-time at Brooklyn College at The City University of New York. (QUÉBEC)



EVENTS: 13 | PAGE 19

### JEREMY TIANG

### STATE OF EMERGENCY



JEREMY TIANG is a novelist, playwright, and translator of over thirty books from Chinese. He was awarded the Singapore Literature Prize for his novel State of Emergency and for his translation of Zhang Yueran's Cocoon, and won an Obie Award for his play Sαlesman之死. Originally from Singapore, he now lives in New York City. (SINGAPORE/USA)

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**GEORGIA TOEWS** 

### NOBODY ASKED FOR THIS



GEORGIA TOEWS is the author of the critically acclaimed debut novel Hey, Good Luck Out There. She is also a writer for film and television. Born and raised in Winnipeg, she now lives in Toronto. (ONTARIO)



MIRIAM TOEWS

A TRUCE THAT IS NOT PEACE



MIRIAM TOEWS is the author of the internationally acclaimed and bestselling novels Fight Night, Women Talking, All My Puny Sorrows, and one prior work of nonfiction, Swing Low: A Life. Her novels have been made into feature films, including All My Puny Sorrows, and the Oscarnominated Women Talking. (ONTARIO)



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PAUL VERMEERSCH

NMLCT: POEMS



PAUL VERMEERSCH is a poet, multimedia artist, and literary editor. His books include Shared Universe: New and Selected Poems 1995-2020 and NMLCT. A professor of creative writing and publishing at Sheridan College, he also edits his own imprint, Buckrider Books, for Wolsak & Wynn Publishers. (BELGIUM/ONTARIO)



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RACHEL WADA WE CARRY THE SUN



RACHEL WADA is a freelance illustrator and designer. She lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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ISABELLA WANG

NOVEMBER, NOVEMBER



ISABELLA WANG is the author of Pebble Swing, a finalist for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize. Her work has been shortlisted for The Malahat Review's Far Horizons Award and The New Quarterly's Edna Staebler Personal Essay Contest. Wang's writing has appeared in over thirty literary journals and five anthologies. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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IRYN TUSHABE

**EVERYTHING IS FINE HERE** 



IRYN TUSHABE is a Ugandan-Canadian writer and journalist. She won the City of Regina Writing Award in 2020 and 2024, was a finalist for the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2021, and won the 2023 Writers' Trust McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize. Everything Is Fine Here is her debut novel. (UGANDA/SASKATCHEWAN)



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KATHERENA VERMETTE

PROCESSION: POEMS



KATHERENA VERMETTE is a Red River Métis (Michif) writer from Treaty 1 territory. Her poetry collection, North End Love Songs, won the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry. The Break won many awards, including the Amazon First Novel Award, katherena lives with her family in a cranky old house near the Red River. (TREATY 1/MANITOBA)



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JESS WALTER

SO FAR GONE



JESS WALTER is the author of seven previous novels, including the bestsellers The Cold Millions and Beautiful Ruins, the National Book Award Finalist The Zero, and Citizen Vince, winner of the Edgar Award for best novel. He lives in his hometown of Spokane, Washington. (USA)



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JACK WANG

THE RIVETER



JACK WANG is the author of the story collection We Two Alone, winner of the Danuta Gleed Literary Award, shortlisted for the Kobo Emerging Writer Prize, and longlisted for Canada Reads. Originally from Vancouver, he lives in Ithaca, New York, with his wife and their two daughters. (BRITISH COLUMBIA/USA)

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MELANIE WATT

NUTS ABOUT SCAREDY SQUIRREL



MELANIE WATT is the bestselling author and illustrator of the Scaredy Squirrel series, the Chester series, Leon the Chameleon, Augustine, You're Finally Here!, Have I Got a Book for You! and Bug in a Vacuum. (QUEBEC)



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SAM WIEBE

THE LAST EXILE: A WAKELAND NOVEL



**SAM WIEBE** is the author of the bestselling Ocean Drive, as well as the Wakeland novels, which include Sunset and Jericho, and Hell and Gone. His work has won the Crime Writers of Canada award, and been shortlisted for the Edgar, Hammett, Shamus, and City of Vancouver book prizes. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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MICHELLE WONG

HOUSE OF THE BEAST



MICHELLE WONG is a writer and artist from Hong Kong. She illustrated The Legend of Korra and Goosebumps graphic novels, and is the creator of the upcoming graphic novel, Terminal Hope. House of the Beast is her debut novel. (HONG KONG)



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CLEA YOUNG

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



CLEA YOUNG's stories have been included in numerous literary journals, three volumes of The Journey Prize Stories, and Best Canadian Stories 2025. She has twice been longlisted for the CBC Short Story Prize. Her debut story collection, Teardown, was published by Freehand Books. Young grew up in Victoria, and now lives in Squamish. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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IRA WELLS

ON BOOK BANNING



IRA WELLS is a critic, essayist, and an associate professor at Victoria College in the University of Toronto, where he teaches in the Northrop Frye stream in Literature and the Humanities in the Vic One program. His writing has appeared in The Globe and Mail, The Guardian, and others. (ONTARIO)



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IAN WILLIAMS

YOU'VE CHANGED



IAN WILLIAMS is the author of seven acclaimed books of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction, and is a CBC Massey Lecturer. Disorientation was selected as the Best Book of the Year by the Boston Globe. Reproduction won the Giller Prize. He serves as director of the Creative Writing program at the University of Toronto. (ONTARIO)



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REBECCA WOOD BARRETT

MY SUMMER CAMP HAS MEGA SLOTHS



REBECCA WOOD BARRETT is an award-winning writer and filmmaker living in Whistler. Her chapter book My Best Friend Is Extinct was shortlisted for the Red Cedar Award and won the Chocolate Lily Award. Rebecca is a passionate advocate for the literary arts, and enjoys supporting writers of all ages in their writing adventures. (BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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LIANN ZHANG

JULIE CHAN IS DEAD



LIANN ZHANG is a second-generation Chinese Canadian who splits her time between Vancouver, British Columbia and Toronto, Ontario. After a short stint as a skincare content creator, she graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in psychology and criminology. Julie Chan Is Dead is her first novel. (ONTARIO/BRITISH COLUMBIA)



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### 2025 Festival Moderators

Dialogue is the heart of the Vancouver Writers Fest. We understand the lasting impact a rich conversation can have on our collective ability to understand ourselves and the world around us. That's why we carefully choose each moderator for every event at our Festival and year-round.

We're lucky to collaborate with renowned journalists, academics, public speakers, authors, and experts across many fields, who travel from across Canada and the U.S. to lend their valuable perspectives and insights with authors and our audience. Some of the moderators we are delighted to welcome to the Festival this year include Matt Galloway, Elamin Abdelmahmoud, Eleanor Wachtel, Margaret Gallagher, André Picard, Mattea Roach, Canisia Lubrin (2025 GUEST CURATOR), Aislinn Hunter, John Freeman, David A. Robertson, and many more.

Visit our website for the most up-to-date list of moderators and all their biographies.

https://writersfest.bc.ca/festival-moderators



### Moderators

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Every effort has been made to

ensure the accuracy of this list. Please get in touch with us to

make any corrections.

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