

2022 Launch Notes

David Bergen

David Bergen's work has been nominated for the Governor General's Literary Award, the Impact Dublin Literary Award, and a Pushcart Prize. In 2005 Bergen won the Giller Prize for his novel *The Time in Between. Here the Dark*, a collection of short stories and a novella, was short-listed for the Giller Prize in 2020. His latest novel, *Out of Mind*, was published by Goose Lane in 2021.

Anthony Bidulka

Anthony Bidulka's books have been nominated for Crime Writers of Canada Awards, Saskatchewan Book Awards and he was the first Canadian to win the Lambda Literary Award for Best Men's Mystery. Heavily involved in community and volunteer pursuits, he was inducted to the University of Saskatchewan College of Education Wall of Honour, received the College of Arts and Science Alumni of Influence Award and named Saskatoon Citizen of the Year.

Robert Currie

Robert Currie, the author of thirteen books--both fiction and poetry--is a former Poet Laureate of Saskatchewan and a recipient of the Lieutenant-Governor's Award for lifetime achievement in the arts. A retired high school teacher, he also taught at the Saskatchewan Summer School of the Arts and the Sage Hill Writing Experience. He is thrilled to have Thistledown Press publish his new and selected poems, *SHIMMERS OF LIGHT* in 2022.

Khodi Dill

Khodi Dill is a Bahamian-Canadian writer, spoken word artist, and anti-racist educator from Saskatoon. Centering equity at the heart of his work, Khodi hopes that his writing will engage people of all ages in social justice and the arts. Dill is the author of the picture book *Welcome to the Cypher*, introducing young people to the transformative power of rap music. His riveting poetry can be found on YouTube.

Emma Donoghue (Virtual Only)

Emma Donoghue is a novelist, screenwriter and playwright. Her novel *Room* has sold more than two million copies, and won the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and was shortlisted for the Man Booker and Orange Prizes as well as the Scotiabank Giller Prize. Donoghue scripted the film adaptation, which was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Previous novels include, *Stir-Fry, Hood, Landing, Touchy Subjects, Akin, Slammerkin, Frog Music, The Wonder, The Pull of the Stars*. Donoghue's books for young readers are *The Lottery Plus One* and *The Lottery More Or Less*.

Brian Francis

Brian Francis's most recent work, *Missed Connections: A Memoir in Letters Never Sent*, was published in August, 2021. The book was inspired by his play *Box 4901* which premiered in 2020 to sold-out audiences and was nominated for three Dora Mavor Moore Awards. His most recent novel, *Break in Case of Emergency*, was a finalist for the 2019 Governor General's Literary Awards and his first novel, *Fruit*, was a 2009 Canada Reads finalist.

Will Ferguson

Will Ferguson is a three-time winner of the Leacock Medal for Humour, which includes one for *Beauty Tips From Moose Jaw*. His novel *419* won the 2012 Giller Prize and his most recent novel, *The Finder*, received the 2021 Arthur Ellis Award for Crime Writing. He lives in Calgary.

Tara Gereaux

Tara Gereaux (Métis-Settler) has published a novel, *Saltus* (Nightwood Editions, 2021) and a novella, *Size of a Fist* (Thistledown Press, 2015), which have been nominated for several Saskatchewan Book Awards, and she's won the City of Regina Writing Award twice. She has an MFA in creative writing, and her writing has appeared in various literary magazines. From the Qu'Appelle Valley, Tara is a descendant of the Red River Métis and a member of the Métis Nation in Saskatchewan.

Michelle Good

Michelle Good is a Cree writer and a member of the Red Pheasant Cree Nation in Saskatchewan. After working for Indigenous organizations for twenty-five years, she obtained a law degree and advocated for residential school survivors for over fourteen years. *Five Little Indians*, her first novel, is a national bestseller and won the HarperCollins/UBC Best New Fiction Prize, the Amazon First Novel Award, the Governor General's Literary Award and the Rakuten Kobo Emerging Writer Award.

Jerry Haigh

Jerry Haigh is a Kenya-born, 1965 Glasgow-graduate wildlife veterinarian from Saskatchewan. After university he returned to Africa, where he worked on species ranging from elephants to pelicans. In 1975 he moved with his family from Kenya to Saskatoon and a position at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon. For a further 34 years he worked with a wide variety of animals including polar bears, moose, caribou and reindeer.

Paul Huebener

Paul Huebener is an Associate Professor of English at Athabasca University. His latest book, *Nature's Broken Clocks: Reimagining Time in the Face of the Environmental Crisis*, was shortlisted for the 2021 ASLE-UKI Book Prize for Ecological Creative Writing. His previous book, *Timing Canada*, was a finalist for the Gabrielle Roy Prize. He is currently studying sleep, and he tries to conduct research for eight hours every night.

Warsha Mushtaq

Warsha Mushtaq is a writer, poet, environmentalist, and amateur astronomer. An avid climate activist, she has experience speaking, organizing, and leading at the local, state, national and international levels. Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate 2021-22 and passionate activist on the International Youth Council for Earth Guardians, she hopes to use her passion for regenerative initiatives, storytelling, and climate justice to examine anti-colonial, feminist, scientific, artistic, and diasporic relationships against the backdrop of unprecedented ecological collapse.

Zarqa Nawaz

Zarqa created the international CBC comedy series, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, the world's first sitcom about a Muslim community living in the west. Zarqa's memoir, *Laughing All the Way to the Mosque* appeared on the bestseller list of the Globe and Mail and her first novel *Jameela Green Ruins Everything* is being published by Simon & Schuster and her CBC Gem series entitled *ZARQA*, comes out on May 13th.

Jason Purcell

Jason Purcell is a writer and musician from amiskwaciwaskahikan, Treaty 6 (Edmonton, Alberta), where they are also the co-owner of Glass Bookshop. As a chronically ill writer, Jason writes at the intersection of queerness and illness and is the author of the chapbook *A Place More Hospitable* (Anstruther Press). *Swollening* is their first full-length collection.

Patricia Robertson

Patricia Robertson's new fiction collection, *Hour of the Crab*, has been described as as "electrifying," "unsettling," and "uncanny." Author Wayne Grady says, "Her stories re-align what we think we know about the world—they are that good." Robertson's first collection, *City of Orphans*, was shortlisted for B.C.'s Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. Born in the UK, she now finds herself in Winnipeg. She writes with one foot planted firmly in this world and the other somewhere else.

Scarrow, Kristine (Teen Writing Experience Instructor)

Kristine Scarrow is the author of the young adult novels *The 11th Hour*, *If This Is Home*, *Throwaway Girl*, and her newest release *The Gamer's Guide to Getting the Girl*, all published by Dundurn Press. She teaches writing and journalling as a healing art in the community, as well through her work as the writer-in-residence at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon.

Wayne Simpson

Wayne Simpson is an author and professional photographer based in Elora, ON. Determined to tell meaningful stories through portraiture, Wayne prides himself on being true to his subjects as he combines art and compassion together as one. Simpson's ultimate goal is to create images that evoke emotion and a sense of mystery. While his niche lies in portraiture and landscape photography, his versatility as a photographer carries into his commercial work and event photography, making his style distinctive in the industry. As an educator, Simpson conducts portrait and landscape photography workshops throughout Canada.

Theresa Slind

Theresa Slind is the author of *Only If We're Caught*, a collection of short fiction which was published by ThistleDown Press in 2021. Her writing has appeared in Grain, Prairie Fire, The Malahat Review, The New Quarterly, and elsewhere. She lives and works as a librarian in Saskatoon.

Kai Cheng Thom

Kai Cheng Thom is a writer, performer, lasagna lover and wicked witch based in Toronto/tkaronto. She is the author of five award-winning books in various genres, including the children's book *From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea*, which was featured on Julie's Library, a podcast hosted by Dame Julie Andrews. Kai Cheng is the winner of several literary awards, including the Stonewall Honor Book Award and the Publishing Triangle Award.

Daniel Scott Tysdal

Daniel Scott Tysdal is the ReLit Award–winning author of the short story collection *Wave Forms and Doom Scrolls* (Wolsak and Wynn), three books of poetry, the poetry textbook *The Writing Moment: A Practical Guide to Creating Poems* (Oxford University Press), and the TEDx talk “*Everything You Need to Write a Poem (and How It Can Save a Life)*.” He teaches at the University of Toronto Scarborough.

katherena vermette

katherena vermette (she/her/hers) is a Red River Métis (Michif) writer from Treaty 1 territory, the heart of the Métis Nation. She received the Governor General’s Literary Award for Poetry for her first book, *North End Love Songs* (The Muses’ Company). Her second novel, *The Strangers* (Hammish Hamilton) won the Atwood Gibson Writers Trust Fiction Prize and was named Chapters Indigo’s Book of the Year 2021. It was also longlisted for the Giller Prize.

Kevin Wesaquate

Kevin Wesaquate. Multi-Disciplinary Indigenous Arts Leader at SCYAP. He is the founder of the Indigenous Poetry Society and has hopes of building an increasing community of spoken word artists. His work has led to community initiatives like planting misaskwatomina shrubs near downtown Saskatoon. A collection of paintings that were created by Kevin Wesaquate still hang at the Saskatchewan Polytechnique Adult Education building.

Lisa Bird Wilson

Lisa Bird-Wilson is a Métis and nêhiyaw writer whose work appears in literary magazines, newspapers, and anthologies across Canada. She is chair and founding board member of the Ânskohk Indigenous Literature Festival. Lisa lives in Saskatoon and is the Executive Director of the Gabriel Dumont Institute, Canada’s first Métis post-secondary education and cultural institute. Her latest novel, *Probably Ruby*, is published in Canada by Doubleday (2021) and in the USA by Hogarth/Random House (2022).

Evan Winter

Evan Winter, winner of the Reddit/Fantasy Award for Best Debut Fantasy Novel, is a Barnes & Nobles, Amazon, and Locus best-selling author of speculative fiction. His debut novel, *THE RAGE OF DRAGONS*, is the opening to an epic fantasy quartet that TIME magazine named one THE 100 BEST FANTASY BOOKS OF ALL TIME, and its sequel has received starred reviews from Publishers Weekly, Library Journal, and Booklist.

Brandon Wint

Brandon Wint is a poet, spoken word artist and multi-disciplinary collaborator based in western Canada. He is presently the artistic director of Tree Reading Series. Brandon is the author of one collection of poetry, *Divine Animal* (Write Bloody North 2020), and several albums, including the recently-released *Freedom Journal: Antidotes to Violence*.

Workshops | Thursday, July 14

Poetry and Watercolour Workshop with Kevin Wesaquate (\$25 - Not included in Pass)

9:00AM - 12:00PM | North Studio, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Sponsored by Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Join Kevin Wesaquate as he takes attendees through a workshop illuminating the connection between art and poetry.

Short Film Writing Workshop with Daniel Scott Tysdal (\$25 - Not included in Pass)

1:00PM - 4:00 PM | Taylor Room, Moose Jaw Public Library

Sponsored by Saskatchewan Writers Guild

Daniel Scott Tysdal leads attendees through the basics of writing 10-minute scripts and what we can do with them in this introduction to writing short film scripts.

Breathing Life into Characters with Michelle Good (\$25 - Not included in pass)

1:00PM - 4:00 PM | South Room, Moose Jaw Public Library

Sponsored by Saskatchewan Writers Guild

What makes characters compelling? Is it relatability? Mystery? Complexity? Incongruity? All of the above? Conversely, what makes a character forgettable? In this masterclass, we will consider some forgettable and unforgettable characters and what combination of factors made them so.

Science, Art, Exploration and Writing with Warsha Mushtaq (\$25 - Not included in pass)

1:00PM - 2:00 PM | TBA

Sponsored by Saskatchewan Writers Guild

This workshop will draw connections between art and science, explore creativity and imagination, and open participants' eyes to the wonders of the natural world. Guided by storytelling, going out into nature and engaging in quick-writes inspired by observations of the natural world and astrophotography, and exploring ideas from the philosophy of science to ask big questions at the end of the experience.

Behind poems and stories are questioning minds. The works of poets have a refreshing clarity: they probe and seek answers with eyes wide open. I've loved to write since childhood because I'm fascinated by how writers conjure entire universes and capture the inexplicable beauty of life. Like scientists, writers make observations of "quantitative" and "qualitative" kind to investigate the complexity and beauty of the world.

Youth Events

Kids Ink with Khodi Dill (FREE - Registration Required)

July 14 | 9:00AM - 11:00AM | Taylor Room, Moose Jaw Public Library

Khodi Dill runs through the basics of spoken word poetry with kids ages 10 - 15 in this free workshop.

Storytime for Little Ones with Kai Cheng Thom (FREE)

July 14 | 10:00AM - 11:00AM | Library Front Lawn

Ages 4+

Teen Writing Experience with Kristine Scarrow (FREE - Apply Now)

July 11-15 | Online Only | Sponsored by SGI

Kristine Scarrow is back for an exciting week of in depth look into the writing process. This week long workshop finishes with an online session at the Festival where students read their work.

Features

Great Big Book Club (\$25 - Registration Required)

July 14 | 1:00PM - 4:00PM | South Room, Moose Jaw Public Library

An open discussion of katherena vermette's book *The Strangers* followed by a discussion with katherena vermette.

Film: Scarborough (\$10 - Included in Pass)

July 14 | 2:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Sponsored by DL Solutions

In Scarborough, 3 kids struggle to rise above a system that consistently fails them. A film based on the award-winning book by Catherine Hernandez.

Readception (\$20 - Included in Pass)

July 14 | 7:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

This event is a sneak peek at the rest of the weekend! It features desserts and mini readings from Evan Winter, Jerry Haigh, Patricia Robertson, Lisa Bird Wilson, and Robert Currie. Doors open at 6PM.

Saskatchewan Writers Guild Reception (FREE)

Following Readception | Lobby, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

End the evening with hors d'oeuvres and cocktails with the Saskatchewan Writers Guild. Chat with fellow book lovers and friends.

Emma Donoghue Interview (\$15 - Included in Pass)

July 15 | 4:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Emma Donoghue joins us virtually with a special interview. Moderator TBA.

Trivia Night (\$25 - Not included in Pass)

July 15 | 6:00PM, Doors open at 5:30PM | Bobby's Place

Trivia night returns with a fish and chip dinner.

Spoken Word Showcase (Entry by Donation)

July 15 | 8:30PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

This is a special event showcasing some of our favourite spoken word artists including Brandon Wint, Janelle Pewapsonias, Khodi Dill, and Kai Cheng Thom. Hosted by Cat Abenstein.

Climate to Change: Inspiration and Conservation (\$15 - Included in Pass)

July 16 | 4:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Featuring Warsha Mushtaq, Paul Huebener, and Jerry Haigh, this panel goes through how these writers were inspired to talk about conservation and what they see for the future.

Thistledown Press Book Launch (FREE)

July 16 | 5:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Thistledown Press is launching three special books by authors: Rita Bouvier, Lee Gowan, and Katherine Walker

Concert: Don Amero (\$25 - Included in Pass)

July 16 | 7:30PM | Mae Wilson Theatre, Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Last fall, Amero delivered his latest EP *Nothing Is Meaningless*, featuring the previously released 'You Can't Always Be 21' – skyrocketing his profile as he made appearances on The Marilyn Denis Show, ET Canada, Etalk, Your Morning, the CCMA Awards national broadcast and more, and he recently competed as a semi-finalist in the 2020/2021 SiriusXM Top of the Country competition in partnership with the CCMA. As the host of the 2021 MCMA Awards, Amero also took home three of the biggest awards of the evening; "Male Artist of the Year", "Interactive Artist, Duo or Group of the Year" and "Dauphin's Countryfest Festival Or Event of the Year" for his Amero Little Christmas Live @ The Burton Cummings Theatre (Live Stream).

Sunday Breakfast and Panels (\$30 - Included in Pass)

July 16 | 9:00AM - 12:00PM | Moose Jaw Cultural Centre

Breakfast | 9:00AM - 10:00AM | Lobby

Pick up individually packed breakfasts, enter our draws, and chat about your weekend with fellow attendees.

Cover to Cover: A Closer Look at Publishing | 10:00AM - 10:50AM | Mae Wilson Theatre

Look behind the scenes and authors talk about their publishing journeys. Featuring Evan Winter, Kai Cheng Thom, Wayne Simpson, and Jason Purcell. Moderator TBA.

Saskatchewan FESTIVAL of Words

Updated: April 27, 2022

Between the Sheets: The Relationship between Fans and Authors | 11:10AM - 12:00PM | Mae Wilson Theatre
Book clubs, Festivals, the internet and more. We explore how interactions with fans shape books and drive sales. Featuring katherena vermette, Will Ferguson, and Zarqa Nawaz. Moderator TBA.

Disclaimer: Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a possibility to see changes in events and the line-up leading up to the Festival. All schedules and Festival information will list the last day updated so please make sure to stay up to date.

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