



ST@NZA

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**Quarterly News from the
League of Canadian Poets**

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Our year in review

*From the desk of Nic Brewer,
Interim Executive Director*



2023 has been another full year for the League, and we've been grateful to have the support of our members, staff, and volunteers to get us through it. It was my first full year in the role of Interim Executive Director, and I've learned so much and appreciated every opportunity the role has presented with me – but I am certainly excited to have our fearless leader Lesley Fletcher returning in early 2024! Although it was no particular milestone, I celebrated 8 years with the League this November, and it's been a privilege to be part of the innovation, growth, and creativity this organization brings to Canadian arts, from my earliest days as a part-time Administrative and Communications Co-ordinator to today, being Interim Executive Director.

This past fall, we held the first Board retreat for our new, smaller Board, a dedicated team of volunteers who were up for the adventure of travelling to Ontario, staying in one big house together, and learning the finer details of the League's new governance structure and opportunities over the course of a weekend in late September. As well, your leadership team spent hours working to

develop a new strategic plan to carry the League through to summer 2027 – a date somehow simultaneously eerily futuristic and a few short steps away. We're excited to be bringing that strategic plan to our members in the spring of 2024.

Now in our 57th year, the League offers more funding opportunities, programs, and services than ever before, to our largest membership in history (at the time of writing, we have more than 1,000 poet members!). With a very small team and a fairly large roster of goings-on, we always seem to forget to photograph those goings-on, so please forgive our text-heavy reminiscing. (But hey, you all like reading, right?)

Awards and prizes

Thanks to the support of partners and donors, we were excited to recognize over a dozen incredible poets this year through a variety of awards, including:

- ◆ **Flavia Cosma**, winner of the Colleen Thibaudeau Award for

outstanding volunteer contribution

- ◆ **Adebe DeRango-Adem**, winner of the Raymond Souster Award, for *Vox Humana*
- ◆ **Em Dial**, winner of the Arts & Letters Club of Toronto Foundation Annual Poetry Award, for “Against Beauty”
- ◆ **Kevin Andrew Heslop**, winner of the Very Small Verse contest, for “Toulouse’s uncharacteristic heat”
- ◆ **Cornelia Hoogland**, winner of the Colleen Thibaudeau Award for outstanding volunteer contribution
- ◆ **Sana Huang**, first place junior winner of the Jessamy Stursberg Poetry Prize for Canadian Youth, for “Mirrors”
- ◆ **Cindy Patrick**, winner of the Lesley Strutt Poetry Contest, for “I Don’t Need Love You”
- ◆ **Vivian Sun**, first place senior winner of the Jessamy Stursberg Poetry Prize for Canadian Youth, for “Last Day of the Circadian Ache”
- ◆ **Gillizan Sze**, winner of the Pat Lowther Memorial Award, for *Quiet Night Think*



- ◆ **Pujita Verma**, winner of the National Broadsheet Contest, for “Tham Luang Cave Rescue”
 - ◆ **Matthew James Weigel**, winner of the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, for *Whitemud Walking*
- Thanks to all the judges and jurors who had the difficult job of narrowing down hundreds of submissions to select only a handful of winners and honorable mentions.

Microgrants

Through careful fiscal planning, and with the continued support of the **Canada Council for the Arts**, the **Ontario Arts Council**, the **Toronto Arts Council**, and our donors, as well as additional support this year from the **Toronto Arts Foundation**, we were grateful to provide poets with more than \$100,000 this year through our various microgrant streams. Our microgrants include honorarium and travel support for events, funding for workshops and one-on-one poetry consultations, and mentorship pairs.

National Poetry Month

National Poetry Month 2023 was celebrated all across Canada, with **more than 300 orders** placed for free posters and bookmarks to mark the occasion. **More than 1,000 posters and 17,000 bookmarks** were distributed to event organizers, schools, libraries, and more! **Poem in Your Pocket Day** was celebrated on April 26, 2023, with 15 poems selected for the occasion and designed into beautiful

Special thanks

All of the work the League does happens under the careful and generous guidance of your elected Board of Directors, and we're grateful for the many hours our leadership team has put into meetings, discussions, votes, and conversations over the past year. Our organization has had another busy year, and I'd like to thank our President, **Rayanne Haines**, our Past President, **Tracy Hamon**, our Treasurer, **Michael Andrews**, and all of our Directors for their expertise, guidance, and unwavering support.

LCP Staff

Laura O'Brien is the heart of the League's public-facing identity, responsible for the gradual journey towards cohesiveness in our materials, and for making sure that everything you need to know makes it to your inboxes and social media feeds. Laura single-handedly brings life to our beloved Poetry Pause, and is always ready to whip up a new graphic at a moment's notice when I've forgotten I need one.

Caitlin Lapeña is the newest addition to the League's team, and already in her short tenure has integrated into our little team seamlessly, fielding queries, solving problems, and boosting our online presence. We're grateful to have her on board as we hit the ground running in January for our busy season.

Nic Brewer has now had every job title at the League, and got seriously lucky when, shortly out of university, she landed her first big kid job at the League in 2015. As a queer, autistic writer, Nic holds the work of the League and the entire literary arts sector dear to her heart, and takes great pride in supporting the work of poets in Canada. When she describes the work of the League to non-arts people, she says "We try to get people hyped about poetry," and it is always a hit. (It seems everyone has a poet in their life!)

Those of you who are members of both LCP and TWUC may have noticed that I've modeled this new year-end missive off John's [annual letter to TWUC members](#), so I'd like to add a particularly special thank you to John, Siobhan, and all the amazing staff at TWUC for always sharing resources, ideas, and tools with us. We are grateful for the opportunity to expand our collective pool of knowledge in service of supporting the literary arts in Canada.

Happy holidays and happy resting to you all – we'll see you in 2024!

Cheers,

Nic Brewer

Nic Brewer,
Interim Executive Director
League of Canadian Poets
nicole@poets.ca

News from the League

LCP Office Holiday Closure

The League's office will be closed from December 22, 2023 - January 2, 2024. Our team wishes you a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. We look forward to more exciting poetry programming in 2024!

Cold Moon Contests

LCP's Cold Moon Contests are looking for poetry big and small! How much can you say in as few words as possible? The Very Small Verse Contest asks poets to keep it short and sweet – all poems must be 200 characters or less. If you prefer your poetry larger than life, then the National Broadsheet Contest is for you! One lucky poet will receive their winning poem on a handcrafted Broadsheet by artist Briar Craig. Winners are announced on March 21 (World Poetry Day). **Deadline is January 20, 2024.** [Find out more.](#)

Poetry Pause Hiatus

Poetry Pause needs your help. If you loved your daily poem dispatch, please help us restore Poetry Pause to its full potential by joining us as a [Patron of Poetry](#). Our goal is to raise \$15,000 to support a dedicated

Poetry Pause editor and co-ordinator, so that we can continue to publish and share Canadian poets for another year. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us make poetry accessible to more people. You may also consider setting up monthly donations! Recurring gifts help us streamline administration, and allow us to reliably count on your support. [Donate here.](#)

Thank you to everyone who participated in donating during Giving Tuesday this year, and for those who have donated during our Poetry Pause hiatus to help restore this beloved program!

Thanks to our incredible donors, you helped us raise more than \$3,000 in just two weeks. While we have a long journey ahead of us to our \$15,000 goal, we have been so grateful to see all the kind words and generous gifts to support the League and Poetry Pause this Giving Season.

Upcoming Open Mics from LCP

LCP members are invited to read and all are welcome to attend! Events will feature 10-15 poets maximum, who will read for 3-4 minutes (typically 1-3 poems). No payment is offered for participation; these are casual,

community-building events to help connect poets in similar regions or communities!

- ◆ GTA open mic – January 18, 2024: [Sign up to read or attend!](#)

National Poetry Month 2024

The League of Canadian Poets invites you to celebrate National Poetry Month this April 2024 with the theme of WEATHER. Check out the theme statement below, #NPM24 news, and revisit some weather-themed poems that have appeared in Poetry Pause in 2023. [Visit National Poetry Month 2024.](#)

NPM24 Poster & Bookmark request form

Would you like to receive free National Poetry Month promotional materials for your school, business, office, or event? The League of Canadian Poets is happy to be able to provide National Poetry Month materials free of charge to organizers and individuals celebrating National Poetry Month! Complete the form linked below to request NPM posters and bookmarks and get started with NPM: WEATHER this April 2024. We are grateful for the support of the Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts, which allows us to distribute these materials free of charge!

[Request a poster or bookmark today!](#)

Cross-Pollinations Virtual Rounds Series Supported by the Canadian Association for Health Humanities

and the Health Arts Research Centre, this Cross-Pollinations virtual rounds feature artists and Health Humanities professionals for multi-faceted conversations about healthcare, art, healing, and humanities. Next event is January 31, 2024 at 6:00 PM EST. [Register today!](#)

LCP Twitter

The LCP is grateful for everyone that we can connect with poetry on social media. This past year has seen major changes to the use & function of Twitter, and as a result, LCP has decided to exit the platform beginning in 2024. Your support is invaluable. We hope you will continue following us via [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), where we regularly post poetry news and updates!

LCP Community Committees

Join a Community Committee of the League! The League of Canadian Poets is excited to invite active members of the League to sign up for committees that align with their interests and passions. [Learn more and join a community committee.](#)

Member News

The League has simplified the process to submit member news for St@nza and social media promotion. If you are a member and have news you would like shared, [fill out this quick form](#). The next issue of St@nza will be out in March.

Bill Arnott's Beat

Airwaves & Verse



I met a poet who's a clown. Seriously. I'd never met a real clown before. Sure, class clowns, but they rarely got to hit their creative stride, shows invariably cut short by a trip to the principal's office, the yank of a hook wielded by some humour quashing teacher – you know the type – hit 'em with a cream pie or squirting flower, they simply don't appreciate the subtleties of performance art.

Turns out Vancouver's RC Weslowski, award winning spoken-word poet, is a professionally trained clown. And I admit, when I entered the Vancouver radio station for a guest spot on his Wax Poetic show, I was expecting (hoping?) he'd be adorned in a foam-ball nose and enormous red shoes. I was even ready with an opening salvo. (Hey, it takes a big fella' to fill those shoes!) In fact, I'd have settled for angry Joe Pesci. (What, you think I'm a clown?!) As you can see, I'd done my homework. But it wasn't to be. Not like that, anyway. If the radio-host/slam-poet extraordinaire was wearing make-up, it was subtle. No white pancake. No droopy mouth. There may've been a little something to help his cheekbones pop above the beard, but it was discrete.

When asked to do something like this, I assume the actual guest cancelled, as well as the backup guest. But no. This had been scheduled for a while. I knew the program. Enjoyed it online, its podcasts, and when I'm near an actual radio. RC has created a very special show on Vancouver Co-op Radio, showcasing a range

of poets, laureates and newbies alike. Frequently co-hosted by Lucia Misch, Kevin Spent, and others, it's now part of an established community of writers and performance poets, sharing the written word on the airwaves, adding an auditory element one can only usually get at live readings.

As a writer I enjoy sharing my work in my voice, literally, the most rudimentary of multimedia deliveries. I can add the cadence I intended. Put the emPHAsis on the right sylLAbLe as comic Mike Myers once said. But the reader in me also enjoys absorbing other writers' work in my own manner, a tempo that enables me to savour, ingest at a comfortable pace, take the time to figure out what's being said, or alluded to.

I appreciate writers wanting, needing, to read their own words, ensuring others won't ruin their work. That's where the performance medium comes into play. Which is what Weslowski and team bring in spades. RC, a skilled voiceover expert, facilitator and actor, has dominated international slam poetry events, including winning the Golden Beret. I knew about Green Berets from the movies, and asked RC if he knew how to kill a guy with his thumb. Turns out he does. Not because of his Golden Beret but rather from his work as a corporate workshop facilitator. I believe. That one I

may've made up.

But the interview went well. RC ensured that it did. Same as co-host Lucia Misch. They're good at what they do, along with everyone else who's helped produce this radio show. I felt privileged to experience it firsthand. To share space with experts. Humbled, in fact. Every poet, performer or not, should be thankful for programs like Wax Poetic, artists going above and beyond to create shared output in a convenient, accessible format. We owe this program, this crew, and this clown, our gratitude.

Bill Arnott is the bestselling author of [*Gone Viking: A Travel Saga*](#), [*Gone Viking II: Beyond Boundaries*](#), [*Gone Viking III: The Holy Grail*](#) (2023), and [*A Season on Vancouver Island*](#). He's been awarded by *The Miramichi Reader's Very Best Book Awards*, *Firebird Book Awards*, *ABF International Book Awards*, *Whistler Independent Book Awards*, and for his expeditions been granted a Fellowship at London's Royal Geographical Society. When not trekking the globe with a small pack and journal or showing off cooking skills as a culinary school dropout, Bill can be found on Canada's west coast, making music and friends.

[@billarnott_aps](#)

Review: *Another Open Door* by Ann Elizabeth Carson

Reviewed by Donna Langevin



Another Open Door

Aeolus House, 2023

64 pages, \$20.00

ISBN: 978-1-987872-56-9

Another Open Door is an inspiring melange of poetry, prose, music and artwork. As if to say, “Please enter without knocking,” the cov-

er photo features Ann’s clay sculpture that suggests a listening ear or a shell’s portal. In each of the book’s three sections the clay takes on a new shape: In “Archival River,” it appears to contain a riverbed. “In Lifelines” two abstract figures embrace each other with what looks like a stone between them. “For the Time Being” showcases two figures moving apart, then on the last page they come together to dance. Complementing our multimedia experience, some texts contain links and QR codes to videos and music composed by Jana Skarecky.

Opening the door to the first section, “Archival River,” we are introduced to the author’s “Then and Now” timeless friendship with her “Artemis sister,” whom she deeply misses. In “Eating Memories” we savour Ann’s childhood as she takes out her Swiss Army knife to cut off a remnant sliver of an ice block carved from Monhegan Island Pond. A passionate environmentalist, she vents her rage in this section, as she wonders “how my species of animal/so wildly, unpredictably and continuously creative/is still destroying the

world/creature by creature.” In “Bitter Sweet,” her poignant gratitude for her blessings includes the view of the trees outside her window, “their branches like a forest of paintbrushes tracing possibilities.”

Section 2 of this rich hybrid book welcomes the reader through the portal of the poet’s “awakening.” Her prose essay “Because of a Question” describes how she became a feminist. Born in 1929, “the year women officially became persons in Canada,” she guides us through the decades when “normal” women were expected to give up their careers upon marriage to become housewives, mothers, and satellites to their husbands. Later, as a single parent forced to support four children after a divorce from her alcoholic husband, she grows into an independent selfhood that finds strength and validation as a psychotherapist, poet, author and artist. Currently in her 90s and having to cope with the physical problems, loneliness, isolation and ageism afflicting the elderly, it is her love of nature and creativity that sustains her.

Section 3, “For the Time Being,” opens with an inventory of things the poet has lost, among them: “old friends, agile fingers, treble notes.” This is followed by a paean for something found: “children scuffling though fallen leaves” as her own feet “shuffle/kick through rusty oak,/

sun-yellow ash.” The imaginative poem “Once Upon a Far” misses a time when physical wellbeing wasn’t a fairy-tale, but in “Queen Ann” her refreshing sense of humour endears us as she settles on the “cushioned throne” of her walker.

Summing up her life in a haiku: “long life in a book/the pages turn revealing/more gaps than story,” this admirable poet bravely faces the fact that soon no more doors will open. As an elder myself facing many of the same challenges, I admire her refusal to indulge in self-pity. Instead, she celebrates “The Importance of Small.” Grateful for “day-to-day wonders,” she wakes up “amazed that I’m still here/to enjoy the first earth-stirrings, and a flash of birdwing.”

Donna Langevin’s latest of six poetry collections include *Timed Radiance* (Aeolus House, 2022) and *Brimming* (Piquant Press, 2019). She won second prize in the 2014 GritLIT contest and first prize in the Banister Anthology competition, 2019, and in the Ontario Poetry Society Pandemic Poem contest, 2020. *A Story for Sadie* was published by Piquant Press in 2023.

Fresh Voices 30

Welcome to the thirtieth edition of Fresh Voices, a project from and for the League's associate members, edited by Joan Conway and Blaine Marchand.

the burning of the dead

By Josephine LoRe

I never made a fire for you. I lit a candle, yes
but not a torch, a conflagration. a soundless
howl against incessant night. I could not
burn your things: the lists you wrote
the clothes you wore that held the secret
of your scent. instead I tied these all
together with the roughened rope
of memory. made a raft. and some nights
float out onto the sea of endless stars. listen
for the way you play guitar, strains soft and sad
your voice pure and light, an offering
to gods. why then do I wake to ash
adhering the lashes of my eye, ashes
in the side-part of my hair, the grit of ash
at back of tangled throat?

Tricks of Air Over Water

By Anthony Purdy

Their voices carry clear across the pond,
defy the gravity of what they say.

Three fields away
you can hear every measured word
of their hushed exchange –
articulated intimacy,
shared only with sheep and crows,
now rendered public
through a trick of air over water.

You feel ashamed to catch yourself
eavesdropping
on words achieved at such cost.

Stories your mother told
come back to you
about how, high above the ground,
when the balloon's burners cut
to sudden silence,
the only sound that carries
is the barking of dogs.

Today their voices are your dogs,
your burners the snorting of deer

in the bracken,
as they help themselves
untroubled
to late season apples.

Already the goldenrod has faded.

For Deborah

By Nan Williamson

Early morning, barbaric ice
crazed the window
in the bedroom where my sister
came to us to die.

Each day, the shadow of a blackbird
crossed it - swoop and rise - circled
in slow fluttering flight, then settled
A dark silhouette on a bare branch.
Deb woke at first light, eager for strong
coffee laced with cream and honey.
High on Dex , she marvelled at the cold
pale light of winter's sun,
the grey and cloud-piled sky, changing
hues and shapes, the snow-lined trees,
finches, jays, seen from her window
a frame for branches etched against the snow.
I treasure her glad moments of delight-
the sight of sun-rays striking blue bottles
on the kitchen window sill, crystal goblets
glinting, stems up on a red linen towel,
or green pears in a deep blue bowl.
From her window, she watched leaves
frost-crisped, break from trees and fall,
blackbirds feed below the barren maples.

She left us at eleven Easter morning.
All afternoon it was dark. It was snowing
and showed no sign of letting up.

White Quill Pen

By Lee Ann Eckhardt Smith

I wanted to write my life
large
on the face of the world
its impact crater-deep, permanent as stone.

I was given a white quill pen
fragile
as the songbird that lost it
and I flung it away.

I did not realize
until
years after fruitless chiseling:
that frail feather held indelible ink.

Heart Chakra

By donalee Moulton

More than merely to the left of lungs.

More than mere muscle mass.

This is centre stage –
spiral of chest, ribs, spine;

bridge between

bodily needs

and spiritual quests, however small

or intermittent.

Joy resides here.

On a good day/week/life,

you'll find this place when you see green,

not with envy or garden prowess,

not with gooseberries or gills,

in moments when the air is still, when the blood beating through your body,
stops.

You find it here watching some random kid walking,

Eyes half shut/ Adidas unlaced

Gliding an imaginary bow across an imaginary violin

With the passion of Paganini,

And you hear the music.

You find it when a giant cockroach skittles

across a wall and you hesitate,

awed for a spilt second

before you lift the heel of your boot.

summer sausage

By Norma Kerby

what you see is a real person
no artificial colours or flavours or preservatives
a properly sun-dried sun-wrinkled never used skin cream
jogger full of excitement on a sunny day
a jalapeno pepper sauce of a day with no apologies for
flakes of spicy distain blended into sun-ripened
tomato sauce ripped with paprika and chili sauce and
ground garlic of a laugh as rhubarb juice spiked by
carbonated ginger-ale gurgles out of the shade and
we lean over your phone to look at pictures of your
latest

this one might be serious a truly no-fat lean
hamburger of a honey who rides a mountain bike

but those sausages being barbecued at the sausage stand
all natural sausages made from shaggy buffalo who
graze on ragged wild grass those sausages waft odours
so deep down ranch home tasty we put fitness aside
and bite into spicy remnants of a bulky herbivore
saliva glands spilling out passion for flavours
all natural flavours captured in a special multigrain
submarine bun repurposed as a sausage glove

excitement for summer
all we remember is
excitement for summer
forgetting
seven months of rain and wind and snow
and tepid lovers
left melting
behind us

At Barber's Hole

By Janis La Couvée

For Frances

sheer green pools
and the river
strong and clear
tumbling over rock and ledge
on sandstone shelves

quiet on rocky shore
sun worshippers bronze
children dabble in shallows
while intrepid adventurers
leap from boulder to boulder
launch into pillows of foam
float and bump, buoyed by currents

treachery lurks, not far from the surface
perched above, on the path
a plaque and lifesaving ring
dedicated to a young friend
held, too long, in a watery grasp

The Hands with Experience

By Hunyah Irfan

I had to go with dark and light on both ends.
Where there was joy there was pain.
I had to go find myself
to seek peace, and solace
in a place where the spirit dwells.
And in a deep meditation I trained
to take away the suffering
with these hands.
I have seen much disturbance when I came.
There was conflict, fighting and interference
and yet I stayed true to myself
to seek enlightenment and strength.
Everyday I fear more, I fear less
because my body is now my spirit
forming a new bond, a new inner strength
with these hands.
The Hands with Experience

Book Cover

By Angel Edwards

silhouette in the doorway
fills up the whole space
slender too thin beauty
shadow stretched
incognizable face

sheer short skirt
long legged
by shadow exaggerated
her form is reflected
her head is tilted
lust is expected
anticipated
possible danger
lust in primal mode

there is so much more
dark succumbs to light
if you read the book
love enters in spite
Open the book
read it
take a look

Fresh Voices 30

Poet bios

Josephine LoRe has shared her poetry live and in global zoom-rooms. Her words have been put to music, danced, interpreted in ASL, and integrated into visual art. She has two collections, *Unity* and the Calgary Herald Bestseller *The Cowichan Series*, and has been published in literary magazines and anthologies in fifteen countries and five languages. “The Tea Set” was shortlisted for the *Room Poetry Prize*, and “Enough” was selected for use in a Public Service Announcement for Feed the Children. She respectfully acknowledges that she lives and creates on the ancestral and traditional lands of the Piikani, Siksika, Kainai, Tsuut’ina and Nakota peoples. www.josephinelorepoet.com

Anthony Purdy lives on the South Shore of Nova Scotia with his partner and two dogs. He has been writing stories and poems for about four years, and his work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in *The Antigonish Review*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *The Fiddlehead*, *FreeFall*, *Fresh Voices*, *The Goose*, *Grain*, *Poem in Your Pocket*, *Poet-*

ry Pause, *Prairie Fire*, and *Queen’s Quarterly*. His poem “Mariupol” won the 2022 Writers’ Federation of Nova Scotia Postcard Poem Contest. His story “Spoons” placed second in the 2022 Short Grain Fiction Contest. He recently completed a PK Page mentorship, funded by the League of Canadian Poets, with Margo Wheaton.

Nan Williamson is an emerging poet, a teacher, artist, and author living in Peterborough. She is a graduate of the Humber School for Writers, Toronto, 2013. Her chapbook, *leave the door open for the moon*, was published by Jackson Creek Press in 2015. Always interested in the verbal-visual connection, Nan plays with shapes, colours, and texture to wed form and content in paint and poetry. More than 70 of her poems have been published in Canada, the US, and the UK. For National Poetry month, April, 2023 the League of Canadian Poets sponsored a public reading featuring Nan and her small group of poetry writing colleagues.

Lee Ann Eckhardt Smith is an award-winning poet, the author

of two non-fiction history books, freelance writer of magazine articles, and a photographer. She has worked as a writing coach and taught workshops on how to write family history and memoir. She features poetry, photography and other writing on her website, www.leeanneckhardtsmith.com.

donalee Moulton's poetry has appeared in *Arc Poetry Journal*, *Queen's Quarterly*, *Canadian Literature*, *Prairie Fire*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *Atlantis*, *The Antigonish Review*, *South Shore Review*, *Carousel*, and *Whetstone*, among others. She is also a former publisher and editor of *The Pottersfield Portfolio* and editor of *Atlantic Books Today*. She is the author of the book *The Thong Principle: Saying What You Mean and Meaning What You Say*. donalee lives in Halifax happily surrounded by family, friends, pets, and words of all shapes, sizes, and syllables.

Norma Kerby has been published in journals, e-zines, magazines, and anthologies, most recently, the anthologies, *Heartwood* (League of Canadian Poets), *Another Dysfunctional Cancer Poem* (Mansfield Press), *Seed Dreams* (Writers North of 54), *Tending the Fire* (League of Canadian Poets), *Leap* (League of Canadian Poets) and *(M)othering Anthology* (Inanna Press), as well as her chapbook, *Shores of Haida Gwaii* (Big Pond Rumours Press).

Shortlisted (2021) and longlisted (2022) for the Federation of BC Writers Poetry Literary Contest, she writes about environmental, ecological and social issues, in particular those affecting rural and northern Canada.

Janis La Cuvée (she/her) is a writer and poet with a love of wild green spaces, dedicated to conservation efforts in Campbell River—home since time immemorial to the Liḡʷitḡaḡw people. Her work is published or forthcoming in *Paddler Press*, *dipity literary magazine*, *Dreamers Magazine*, *Litmora Literary Magazine*, *Book of Matches*, *New Feathers Anthology*, *Pure Slush*, among others, and has been anthologized in New York Writers Coalition's *Common Unity*. Her poem *The Man is Not* was short-listed for the inaugural Van Isle Poetry Collective contest.

Hunyah Irfan is a 31 year content creator, author, chef, poet and pageant competitor. You can find Hunyah at *Hunyah Travels Blog* and *Youtube Channel*.

Angel Edwards (Her/She) has performed as a solo artist singer songwriter guitarist around the Vancouver area for over 35 years. Prior to this Angel was a singer in many cover rock bands and pop rock duos. Angel as a solo musician has an extensive repertoire of vintage country, classic rock folk and

original indie rock pop music. She has written 4 books of poetry published by Silver Bow Publishing. Her short stories have been published by *Our Canada Magazine*, *More of Our Canada Magazine*, *Vancouver Weekly* and *The Galway Review* in Ireland. In 2022 numerous publications of her poetry and short stories by *The Lothlorien Poetry Journal* from Paris France and the UK. Her poetry has been published in numerous ezines including *Spillwords* from New York, as well as numerous E zines from Toronto, New Westminster, USA and UK. Angel is a long time member of SOCAN and BMI a member of The League of Canadian Poets and Vancouver Musicians Association branch of the

AFofM. Angel is a vegan, an animal lover and an ardent bird watcher.

Marlene Grand Maître has had two chapbooks published, most recently *Wild Kin* (Raven Chapbooks, 2023), and *Cancer's Rogue Season* (Frog Hollow Press, 2020). Her poetry has also appeared in many literary journals and in ten anthologies, including *I Found It At The Movies* (Guernica Editions, 2014), and *Worth More Standing* (Caitlin Press, 2022). One of her poems was selected for the LCP's Poem In Your Pocket, 2022). She is on the Board of the Planet Earth Poetry Reading Series Society in Victoria, BC.

FRESH VOICES

poetry from associate members of the League

New Members

Prince Amoako

Emily Austin (she/her) is a poet and novelist located in Ottawa, in the territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation. Her first book of poetry *GAY GIRL PRAYERS* is being published by Brick Books in 2024. Emily is also the author of two novels; *EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM WILL SOMEDAY BE DEAD*, and *INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SPACE*. “Everyone In This Room” was long listed for The Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour, shortlisted for the Amazon First Novel Award, and a finalist for the Ottawa Book Awards. Emily was born in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada. She studied English Literature and Religious Studies at King’s University College, and Library and Information Science at Western University.

Kristina Bresnen’s first book, *Pascal’s Fire* (Biblioasis), was published in April 2023. She holds an MA in English and Creative Writing from the University of New Brunswick. Her poems have appeared in *Prairie Fire*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Event*, *Arc Poetry*

Magazine, and elsewhere. She is from Montreal and currently lives in Vancouver.

Yoyo Comay

Dany Gagnon is an artist, game publisher, translator, and writer living in Montréal, Canada. In the last three years, her poetry has appeared in over two dozen publications and anthologies. She also publishes poems in French. Her poem “Errance” was displayed at la Promenade Bellerive in Montréal through the summer of 2023.

Kaila Gallacher is the author of “mo nighean: the universe inside the comma”; it is a mixed-media poetry chapbook that explores chronic illness, disability, and pregnancy. Her writing has been featured in various anthologies and literary journals in Canada and the UK. She has been a featured spoken word artist at various open mics and the 2019 Take Back the Night rally.

Hamish Guthrie

Nasser Hussain

Wren Jones

Miranda Krogstad

Janis La Couvée Janis La Couvée (she/her) is a writer and poet with a love of wild green spaces, dedicated to conservation efforts in Campbell River, BC - home since time immemorial to the Liḡwíłdaŋ^w people. Her work is published by *Dreamers Magazine*, *Litmora Literary Magazine*, *Book of Matches*, *New Feathers Anthology*, *Pure Slush*, *New York Writers Coalition*, *Paddler Press*, *Feral Poetry*, *Van Isle Poetry*

Collective, *Island Writer*, *Humana Obscura* and *pocket lint*. Find her at: janislacouvee.com Facebook: JanisLaCouveeOnline Twitter: @lacouvee

Zoë Landale

Josiah Nelson

Angelle McDougall is neurodivergent and a dedicated world traveler, retired college instructor, slow-food advocate, mother of two adult sons, graduate of The Writers Studio at Simon Fraser University (2022), and loom-knitting aficionado. Angelle lives

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in Edmonton, Alberta and writes poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. She also enjoys chronicling the fantastic adventures shared with her author husband on their travels.

Amani Omar is a Somali Canadian author, spoken word poet, visual artist and creative arts entrepreneur based in Hamilton, Ontario Canada and Ottawa, Ontario Canada. Her work is rooted in Black and Muslim representation, social issues, self and community love and compassion, and Somali Culture. Her goal is to inspire young creatives to explore their unique voices and bring about more diversity in the media through her artistic work. *The Ocean's Barwaaqo* is her first collectively published book, which focuses on Somali fantasy and representation through literary works. She conducts writing and performance workshops for community members of all ages and stages, and was awarded the 2022 GOG Award for "Innovation in a permanent collection" for *Breaking The Vault: Art and Poetic Liberty* (Art Gallery of Hamilton, 2021) with the collective Hamilton You Poets.

Zach Polis

Namitha Rathinappillai (she/they) is a fat, queer, disabled, Tamil published spoken word

poet, organizer, and workshop facilitator. They have been creating, performing, commissioning, and competing as a poet, locally and nationally, since 2018. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice, and a Masters of Arts in Sociology. They are currently based in Toronto, and was the first female and youngest director of Ottawa's Urban Legends Poetry Collective (ULPC). You can find more at namitharathinappillai.com.

Sarah Rauch

Jill Solnicki

Affrica Spence

The LCP would like to extend a big welcome back to our members who have returned to the League this quarter: **Bassam, Matthew Heinz, Julie Paul, Tom Prime, Sabyasachi Nag, Brandon Pitts, Douglas Walbourne-Gough, Terry Watada, Cynthia Woodman Kerham and Onjana Yawnghwe.**

And Congratulations to **Hunyah Irfan, Thandiwe McCarthy, Marc Perez and Marjorie Silverman** who have upgraded to Full membership!

Member News

Member News

Want to see your poetry news in St@nza? [Fill out this quick form](#). The next issue of St@nza will be out in March 2024

Kathy Ashby

Hello all, This is my first book of poetry. Something for everyone. Check out praise for *From the Rim of the Bowl*.

Blurbs: “Kathy Ashby’s poems are fresh, lively and full of energy. They have a down-to-earth, grass-roots quality, with genuine charm and an appealing bounce to them. There is also much artfulness and flair to her writing, which has the versatility to tackle a wide variety of subjects and ranges of moods. Ashby writes engagingly and convincingly both about the realm of nature and people’s relationships in ways that can be at once deeply serious yet playful. A sense of life well-observed and well-lived shines through.” – Allan Briesmaster, author of *The Long Bond and Windfor*

“I have had the great opportunity to be in Writers groups and workshops with Kathy Ashby for over twenty years. I love her writing and her poetry. With poetry Kathy has the ability to make the words dance off the page. Without hes-

itation I would recommend this book to all poetry readers.” – Maria Duncalf-Barber, author of *Carrying Our Altars Within*
“Kathy’s poetry is a journey into the heart. She is visually descriptive, sometimes deep and meditative, sometimes emotive, and always brave. Everything she has to say about Planet Earth is powerful. This collection is a delight.” -- Tamsen Tillson, writer and founding member of Climate Action Muskoka
Order: *From the Rim of the Bowl* by Kathy Ashby, Paperback | Barnes & Noble® ([barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com)) also Amazon.com. You can also order through your local library or bookstore through Ingram Distribution. Also check out *From the Rim of the Bowl* ([silverbowpublishing.com](https://www.silverbowpublishing.com)).

Fern G. Z. Carr

FERN G. Z. CARR recently enjoyed two successful solo poetry readings. She was also delighted to discover that she had a biographical listing in Kiddle – a children’s encyclopedia. This entry was a part of the category, “Notable people with the name Fern”.

Fern was honoured to have had her book, *Shards of Crystal* and her YouTube Wordsmith channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@ferng->

zcarr), promoted at a Kelowna movie theatre prior to a movie screening. This was the second time the theatre highlighted her work with Fern speaking Mandarin in a different short film prior to each movie.

Louise Carson

Louise Carson has recently been published in The Haiku Foundation's Haiku of the Day; Haiku Canada Review Fall/Winter 2023; *GUSTS: Contemporary Tanka*, Fall/Winter 2023; *bottle rockets*; *Event magazine*; and *The Best Canadian Poetry 2024*. Her latest mystery *The Cat Looked Back* was published by Signature Editions.

George Elliott Clarke

Since December 2020, George Elliott Clarke has commissioned 41 songs from five composers to score his curatorial selection of works by Canadian poets. To enable this project, "GEC" has also mounted nine public presentations of the commissioned pieces in his patented concert series, "5 Poets Breaking Into Song," which has also been supported by such organizations as the Aurora Public Library, the Halifax Public Libraries, the Tartan Turban Reading Series, the League of Canadian Poets, and the East And West Learning Connections. Now, the first CD from the "5 Poets" song-commissioning project has just been issued:

Wound Turned to Light: New Songs by James Rolfe, Redshift Records (TK540) Toronto (ON), 2023. 19 tracks, including 16 songs

commissioned by GEC, including, "Bombastic" (Rolfe/GEC) and "To the Poet" (Rolfe/GEC). Other tracks include: A.F. Moritz ("Marigold"); Andrea Thompson ("Wound Turned to Light"); Louise Bernice Halfe ("Burning in This Midnight Dream"); Leonard Cohen ("For E.J.P."); Choucri Paul Zemokhol ("Moon"); Boyd Warren Chubbs ("After the Love at Victoria Street"); Amatoritsero Ede ("V"); Luciano Iacobelli ("and then a second dream"); Giovanna Riccio ("Namesake"); Ayesha Chatterjee ("The way spring jabs"); Banoo Zan ("Phoenix IV"); Richard Sanger ("Last Paddle"); Astrid Brunner ("Prelude" and "Minuet 1"); and Anna Yin ("Spirit Tree").

<https://redshiftmusicsociety.bandcamp.com/album/wound-turned-to-light> Clarke has also published the final installment of his epic, *Canticles: Canticles III* (MMXXIII) (Guernica Editions): chronicles the birth of the fictitious "Africadian Baptist Association" of Nova Scotia in 1853, and the role in this achievement played by an ex-Virginian enslaved person, the very real but mysterious Rev. Richard Preston, (ca. 1791-1861) who somehow escaped the tobacco plantations of Virginia, then became an ordained minister via the West London Baptist Association, and then became "the Apostle to the African Race," engineering the construction of 17 Black Baptist churches and chapels all around mainland Nova Scotia, 1832-1861, thereby creating a distinct Black North Atlantic people.

Rosemary Clewes

Aeolus House published my fifth book of poetry + a chap book, launched on June 11/23. It is titled *Rain on My Skin* by Rosemary Clewes.

Amanda Earl

Beast Body Epic, a new long poem collection provoked by my near-death health crisis is now out with AngelHousePress. You can pick up a copy of the book via AngelHousePress.com. *Beast Body Epic* is for anyone who's circled the drain or knows someone who has. The book is about having the shit kicked out of you & surviving.

"Amanda Earl's *Beast Body Epic* delivers on the promise of its title, fusing visual, lyric, and narrative poems with classical mythology to tell a story that's part body horror, part fever dream, and part testament of survival from a poet who refuses to die." Jim Johnstone, author of *The King of Terrors*

"*Beast Body Epic* is a hypnotic chronicle of illness and recovery witnessed through a kaleidoscopic looking-glass. Equally tender and brutal with honesty, Earl gives us a beguiling long-form poem about what the body and spirit can endure and how we can survive and thrive. Wisdom crafts this work, a deeply lived understanding that can only come from enduring the unendurable. Luscious and wildly resonant, *Beast Body Epic* will astound, move, and give you strength." Sandra Ridley, author of *Vixen*

"In *Beast Body Epic*, Amanda Earl refracts the experience of unwellness through an assortment of communications. She leans into visual poetry, the epic, allusion, dissociation, memoir, verse, prose, fable, allegory, and other modes in order to tell a complex story in a surprisingly succinct work. The variation is not only necessary, it's seamless, and Amanda's text flows with the protagonist through crisis into stasis and onward." Elee Kraljii Gardiner, *An Introduction to Beast Body Epic*.

Launches took place in Montreal (November 5 & 12, Accent Reading Series) and Toronto (The Tranzac Club Living Room, November 19). More info on readings, reviews and interviews are also available on AmandaEarl.com. The book is available for purchase online via AngelHousePress.com or from me directly via eft. \$20 plus shipping.

Maria Figueredo

Maria Figueredo has released her poetry in song on two albums in the past three years. The first, "Live to Love: Vivir para amar", released in December 2021, is bilingual Spanish/English and features a range of musical styles from the Latin American folkloric tradition reinterpreted by her, and original ballads, as well as lyrics added to a classical piece of the turn of the 18th century. The second "Jupiter on Tuesday" (Dec. 2022) has a bilingual version of "Fly Me to the Moon" as well as original songs such as "Lake House" and "It's You" as well as other folkloric

reinterpretations. See more at www.mariafigueredo.com or on streaming platforms such as YouTube, Spotify, iTunes/Apple Music, Vimeo, Amazon Music, and Deezer.

Raymond Helkio

Raymond Helkio hosted some of Toronto's most dazzling, brazen, saucy, shameless, flashy and flamboyant poets at Buddies In Bad Times Theatre in October and November, featuring David Bateman, performance artist, poet & host of Dirty Queer Poetry at The Black Eagle, and Michelle Hillyard, co-director of The Art Bar! There was a small collection of money that will be distributed among the performers immediately following the event. This was an all ages, PWYC, licensed event. More Info: <https://raymond-helkio.com/poetry-open-mic>
<https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/tal-lulahs>

Hunyah Irfan

Performed at PCAWA December 6th Virtual Vigil for Remembrance Day for Women Against Domestic Violence.

Marvyne Jenoff

I am pleased to share that my poem, "Song Without Nouns" was posted online in Poetry Pause series: www.poets.ca, search for my name. This poem also appears in my book *Climbing the Rain*, Silver Bow Publishing, 2022.

I am pleased to be part of a beautiful new anthology, *Hologram: an Homage to P.K.Page*, in memory

of this well-known Canadian poet and visual artist. Edited by Yvonne Blomer and D.C. Reid, the book was published earlier this fall by Caitlin Press. It includes poems and brief reminiscences by poets across the country and intersperses colour reproductions of some of Page's visual art. My poem, "It's There," referencing her paintings based on hands, also appears in *Climbing the Rain*, my latest book of poetry, published in 2022. <http://www.marvyne-jenoff.org/in-print.html>. There will be an online launch for Hologram sometime in November.

Penn Kemp

Launching soon: *Intent on Flowering, anthology*, Rose Garden Press, December 2023. Contributing poets: Katie Jeresky Gayatri, Penn Kemp and Jessica Lee McMillan. "3 favorite reads in 2023", <https://shepherd.com/bboy/2023/f/penn-kemp> My choices: Emma Donoghue, Susan McCaslin and Harold Rhenisch.

December 6, 2023. Black Mallard Reading Series featured Madeline Bassnett and Jennifer Wenn. Penn read "Invocation" for the 14 women killed in the Montreal Massacre. Open mic, Mykonos Restaurant, 572 Adelaide St. N., London ON Sunday December 10, 3-4:30 pm Grosvenor Lodge, 1017 Western Rd, London, ON N6G 1G5. Heritage London Foundation presents the fourth concert of the 2023 Community Music Series, featuring poet Penn Kemp and cellist Lucas Tensen along with shakuhachi. Audience

participation in singing carols. Want a sense of the workshops I offer? <https://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/news/local-news/sound-poet-shares-secret-finding-her-muse>. You can hear more on “The Craft of Writing”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cn2HRTLuQOA> More news: www.pennkemp.weebly.com

Christine Lowther

My fourth poetry collection, *Hazard, Home*, will be released February 2nd, 2024 by Caitlin Press! The best “wildlife trees” are past their prime and often deemed hazardous. The book also has sections on waters, sounds, birds, and people.

DC Reid

This is turning into a big year for me. My memoir, *A Man And His River*, came out and won the gold medal in the Professional Outdoor Media Association of Canada book contest for 2023. In addition, *Hologram, an Homage to PK Page*, which I edited with Yvonne Blomer, has just been published. *My Selected and New* book of poems will be out in September. And my tenth book of poems, *Canada, a Country of Poets and Museum of Human Rights*, has just been finished. I will have a book of my poetry translated and published into Chinese with Anna Yin, by the end of the year.

Frances Roberts Reilly

Poetry Wales Award winner for my Romani poem *Ils for Tea*.

Michele Rule

It was a great honour to win third place in the 2023 Wine Country Writers Festival non-fiction category this past September!

Marjorie Silverman

Marjorie Silverman’s debut collection, *(Un)spoken*, has recently been published with Now or Never Publishing. *(Un)spoken* takes the reader on a journey through negative affects, sexuality, and responses to violence and trauma. Constructed as dialogues that engage directly with the reader, the poems explore the impact of repressed grief and highlight how trauma lodges in the body as eating disorders and self-inflicted wounds. Anchored in Jewish cultural identity and written in a resolute feminist voice, this collection offers a contribution to current feminist and queer conversations about sexual and psychological violence, how we survive in chilly domestic atmospheres, and what it means to obey and resist our training as ‘nice girls’ within heterosexist systems. For more information: <https://nonpublishing.com/-un-spoken>

Lindsay Soberano Wilson

Lindsay Soberano Wilson’s poem *The Japanese Red Maple* from her debut poetry collection *Hoods of Motherhood* (Prolific Pulse Press LLC, 2023) is a Pushcart Prize Nominee. Her second poetry collection, *Breaking Up With the Cobalt Blues: Poems for Healing*, is forthcoming and explores mental health, (2024),

published by Prolific Pulse Press LLC. Her poetry recently appeared in *Fevers of the Mind 8: Inspire Me* and *Fine Lines Literary Journal*. Lindsay is working on non-fiction about her grandmother's Holocaust survivor story.

Eva Tihanyi

When Lightning Strikes the River, a 14-track album for which Eva Tihanyi wrote all the lyrics (and Carlie Howell composed the music) was premiered on November 12, 2023, at the Performing Arts Centre in St. Catharines. A chapbook containing the lyrics, photos from the recording sessions, and other materials is now available. Visit www.evatihanyi.com for more information.

RC Weslowski

Mashed Poetics celebrates its 15th year of putting on unique music and spoken word mash up shows in 2024. To kick things off we will be performing Bon Jovi's "Slippery When Wet" album on January 25th at "Vivace's on the Drive" on Commercial Drive in Vancouver. We have 10 poets writing 10 new poems inspired by the music of the album plus we have a cover band "The Wet Slippers" playing all the songs with poets performing in between the music. Doors at 7 show at 8:30. \$15 in advance. [2:21 PM] Caitlin Lapeña. Poets performing: Sheri-D Wilson, Junie Desil, Shannon Rayne, Steffi Tad-Y, Joseph Dandurand, Julie Parrell, Victoria Fraser, Jennifer Zilm, Beni Xiao, Ransford Brempong.

Elana Wolff

Elana Wolff has new poems forthcoming in *Galaxy Brain*, *The Nashwaak Review*, *Prairie Fire*, and *Pinhole Poetry*, and a review of her collection *SHAPE TAKING* (Ekstasis Editions, 2021) forthcoming in *Montréal Serai*.

Bänoo Zan

Woman, Life, Freedom Anthology Fundraiser Poetry, Music, Silent Auction. Featured poets: Katerina Fretwell, Sahar Golshan, Mohineet Kaur Boparai, Sonja Greckol
Featured Musician: Shahriyar Jamshidi + Silent auction of artwork by Katerina Fretwell, Daniel Maluka, & more. This event took place on Tuesday, October 24 at the Tranzac Club in Toronto.

Shab-e She'r (Poetry Night) 10th Anniversary

Canada's most diverse & brave poetry reading + open mic series
Featured poets: Paulina O'Kieffe-Anthony & Hollay Ghadery + Open Mic for poetry in any language. Hosted by Bänoo Zan
This event took place on Tuesday, November 28th at the Tranzac Club in Toronto.

In Memoriam

Ian Ferrier

On Friday November 3rd, Ian passed away in the palliative care ward of the Royal Victoria Hospital surrounded by his loving family. He was a cherished figure in the Montreal and Canadian arts scenes, having organized hundreds of spoken word shows and performed in hundreds more. He touched many people through his work and many more with his kindness and his gracious spirit.

Ian is survived by his two children, Michael and Tadhg; his mother, Betty; his five siblings, Jim, Cathy, Andrew, Janet, and Alex; and his partner Sarah Beth. We will miss him deeply.

For nearly four decades, Ian Ferrier has been a creative and inspirational force in Montreal's literary community. He has spent his career creating opportunities for local, Canadian, and international artists to develop their artistic processes and share their polished productions.

[Read "Remembering Ian Ferrier" from the Quebec Writers Federation.](#)

Richard Stephenson

wounds heal quickly

footprints once dry, now wet

behind us on the shore

– (Parksville, BC)

from *Tidings of Magpies*, Richard Stephenson, 2008

Richard William Stephenson (b. March 4, 1952, Victoria, BC) passed away on October 18, 2023 (Victoria, BC) surrounded by his loved ones, while his favourite jazz albums played. Rick is survived by his devoted wife of 43 years, Gepke (nee Polet), his children: Christian, Marika, and Adrian (Amanda), his grandson, Remy, and his siblings: Larry (Sherry), Donna, and Debbie, as well as many adoring nieces, nephews, in-laws, and cousins.

For the majority of his life, Rick was a dedicated and accomplished writer, publishing more than 40 works of poetry, haiku, and fiction, not to mention five forthcoming titles, such as the soon to be released, *An Abominable Swamp Slob Named Bob*, a series of YA/Sci-Fi, creature-feature, cryptid poems. While he loved writing for kids, most of his titles are adult books, including numerous collections written about the time he spent living in Nigeria. His early work as Editor in Chief of *Prism international* sparked his love of magazines, anthologies, e-zines, and journals, where he later published hundreds of reviews and poems, both nationally and internationally.

[Read the full obituary](#)

Gloria Barkley

Gloria passed away at home on June 14, 2023 with family by her side. She will be dearly missed by those who knew and loved her. Rest in Peace Gloria Barkley.



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