

Freelance

Saskatchewan Writers' Guild

Fall 2022, Vol. 52 No. 4

THE QUANDARY OF **WEIGHTY** TOMES

2 POETS REFLECT
ON CREATIVE
NONFICTION (PART 1)

PROVOKED BY COLLAGE

THE GUILD PRIZE
FLASH FICTION
WINNER
PG. 12





windscript

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Windscript publishes the best of Saskatchewan high school students' poetry and prose.
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NOTICE OF SWG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the
Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the
Saskatchewan Writers' Guild will be held on



Saturday, October 22, 2022

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

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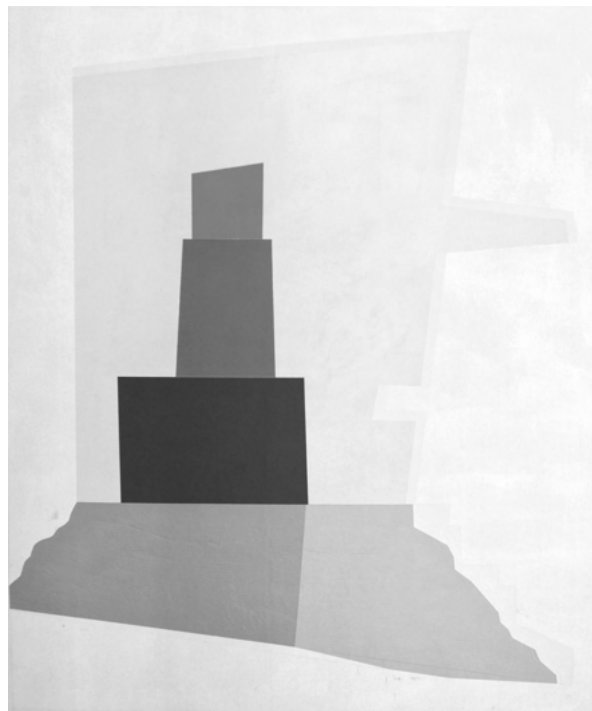
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Jeff Nachtigall
Modern Man, 2018
Acrylic on canvas
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Contributors



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The Saskatchewan Writers' Guild (SWG) is a not-for-profit membership driven organization that strives to sustain and enhance an environment in Saskatchewan where writers and all forms of writing flourish; to promote the well-being of all writers; and to advocate on their behalf.

The SWG serves a membership spanning the entire province of Saskatchewan in Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10 which encompasses the unceded territories of the nēhiyawak (Cree), Anihšīnāpēk (Saulteaux), Dakota, Lakota, Nakota and Dené Nations and the Homeland of the Métis Nation.

How to Submit to Freelance

Pitches for *Freelance* are welcome for editorial review. If accepted, articles will be edited for clarity. The basic criteria to meet in submitting materials are readership interest, timeliness, and quality. Viewpoints expressed in contributed articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the SWG. We do not accept poetry or prose at this time.

Copyright for articles, reports, photographs, and other visual materials or text remains with the creator and cannot be used or reprinted without permission. SWG pays for one time rights/use only. Payment for articles is 20 cents a word. Photographs are paid at a rate of \$25 each. Feature artwork payment is \$150.

Freelance is distributed four times per year and is complimentary to members of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild.

Ad rates

The following advertising rates apply for placement in one issue. A 15% discount is available for ads placed in all four issues of *Freelance*. All advertising rates are subject to GST.

Full page: \$150
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1/4 page: \$50
1/8 page: \$35
Business card: \$25
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SWG members receive a 25% discount.

For more information, contact
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Madonna Hamel worked as a journalist and currently writes a weekly column, Pop89 where she won 2021 columnist of the year. In 2020, her piece *Hearth Day*, won first place in Prairie Fire's CNF contest. She's working on a novel based on her one-woman show *Mother's Apron*. She lives in Val Marie, gateway to Grasslands National Park.



Judith Silverthorne is an international-award winning author. *Honouring the Buffalo: A Plains Cree Legend* is her first all-ages picture book, which has received international and national awards. Judith works as a freelance writer/scriptwriter, an instructor, editor, and consultant. She is the owner and CEO of Silverlight Productions Inc. and produces films and documentaries for television.



Edward Willett is an award-winning writer, editor, publisher, podcaster, and the author of more than sixty books of science fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction for readers of all ages. His Shadowpaw Press, founded in 2018, publishes both new books and new editions of notable, previously published work.
edwardwillett.com



Jody C. Jones is an entrepreneur, librarian, and Kidlit writer. She is a member of SWG and CANSCAIP. She lives in Moose Jaw with her family and two dogs. This is her first published article.



Steven Ross Smith has published fourteen books of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. He is also an arts journalist. His final book in the flutter-tongue series – coda: fluttertongue 7 – was published with Jackpine Press in 2021. His new collection of short fictions – Glimmer – is published by Radiant Press. He lives and writes in Victoria, BC.



Jeff Nachtigall's multi disciplinary approach includes painting, sculpture, printmaking and photography, as well as curating, writing and community-based projects. He has exhibited widely across Canada and the United States, and his work can be found in public, corporate and private collections. jeffnachtigall.com



Rachel Laverdiere is a writer, potter, and educator based in Saskatoon. She is the CNF editor at Atticus Review and creator of the creative writing program Hone & Polish Your Writing. Her CNF has most recently appeared in Grain, The New Quarterly and Pithead Chapel. Sign up for her bi-weekly newsletter (or her courses) at rachellaverdiere.com



Bernadette Wagner's work on uranium was shortlisted for the 2021 John V Hicks Long Manuscript Award for Poetry and the 2020 City of Regina Writing Award. She recently launched the B Print Ink Writers' Room, a home for information about the writing and meditation webinars, workshops, and courses she offers.
bernadettewagner.ca



WRITERS ASK

WITH ANNE LAZURKO

“How can I get feedback on my work?”

As writers who have decided to publish, we obviously want readers. Yet once we have them we are left to hold our breath and hope for affirmation of our years of hard work and writing skill and, maybe most importantly, confirmation that our writing speaks to someone; that it matters.

Feedback comes from readers, critics, and our peers, and I think it's important to differentiate those audiences both because they view our work from very different places and because a writer's access to them can be limited by geography, where we're at in our career and the nature of our work.

Let's start with **the critics**. We'd all like our work to appear in national media, but the limited space any of them give to books these days mostly goes to the next big thing, or authors who are already a big thing. Your publisher will likely send review copies to all these outlets: CBC Books, Globe and Mail, Post Media outlets, Winnipeg Free Press etc. It can't hurt to try, BUT if you are with a small press or self-published you might want to be more targeted with those coveted Advanced Reader and review copies.

Don't underestimate your provincial and local media outlets. A piece in the Leader Post might end up in the Calgary Herald (Post Media), or an interview on CBC Saskatchewan might get picked up nationally. Small town newspapers are almost all owned by one organization, so attention in one might get you noticed across the province. Be

sure to explore all your options.

Good review opportunities exist outside traditional media. Though they might not have the reach, **our peers** can often provide in depth and thoughtful reviews geared toward niche markets that fit with your book and potential reader. Many who review in these markets are fellow writers. I worked with my publicist to identify a list of potential markets, organizations and individuals who might be interested and we both pitched to, and found, willing reviewers at Prairie Fire magazine, the Miramichi Reader, and the Historical Novel Society.

Interviews are another great way to get your book noticed. Many writers work for small literary magazines or online sites and do really great interviews. They've read your book and ask relevant questions, giving you the opportunity to talk about why you wrote it and the deeper ideas behind your book. Readers I've met are quite interested in my background and writing process, so well thought out answers to interview questions can garner just as many readers as a review. I was fortunate to be interviewed for the Artisanal Writer and upcoming in the My Entertainment World Author Series and Rob McLennan's 12 or 20 Questions blog series.

While not a review, articles you write that are related to your work can reach a very large audience of both other writers and readers. My publicist pitched an article I wrote to Literary Hub that was picked up and published.

If you have very specific knowledge of a topic or the craft, investigate where you might land a piece that will focus some attention on the work you want to promote.

And finally, I don't want to say use your writer contacts, but use your writer contacts. Almost all of the lovely blurbs I received for the cover of my book came through friendships I've nurtured over the years. Or those of my editor (she knows everyone!). Ask writers you know well, and be sure their work is similar enough to your own to make sense on your cover. And use their blurbs and comments on your social media and websites. Their endorsements might help get that coveted review.

Always, always, in all of the above cases, be ready to reciprocate.

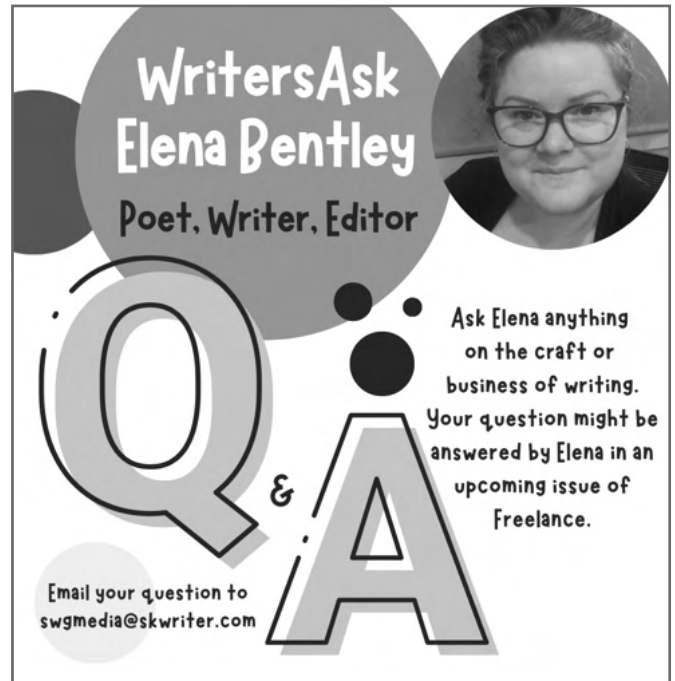
And then there are **readers**. Sites like Goodreads, NetGalley, Bookhub, Google books—the list goes on—offer readers a chance to comment on your work. In all cases, it is lovely to get good reviews from readers, but take the bad ones or the 'didn't finish' with a grain of salt. Reader tastes are as varied as our own. Post some if you like, but never engage with a reader except to hit the like button or say thank you. Don't let one bad review haunt you if you've received ten good ones. If there is something to be learned, take it and move on. Your ego will survive.

That's true for any review, they are a conversation between the reviewer and the reader, not the author, and butting into that ecosystem to comment or protest only makes you look bad.


Of course I want readers to love my books, and many do, judging by Goodreads and NetGalley feedback, but my most recent book demands a lot of the reader. Will it be a bestseller or award-winner? Who knows? Publishing is fickle and I remind myself of that every time I search for new feedback on the web. What? I'm as obsessive about it as the next writer, but I've come to realize that not being reviewed or listed does not mean my book is crap. It may only mean I am not as visible as some authors because of geography, or the size and scope of my publisher, or because my work is not main-stream enough. And I ask you, in a world where everything is streamed, is it so bad to be a tributary?

And that's a wrap for me. Thanks so much for reading these Writers Ask columns. I've enjoyed offering what wisdom I can. Keep writing; good things will come. ⑤

Anne Lazurko is an award-winning novelist and poet. Her novel *What is Written on the Tongue*, a story set in and about the Indonesian war of independence, was launched in April 2022 by ECW Press. *Dollybird* (Coteau 2013) won the WILLA Literary Award for Historical Fiction and was shortlisted for the Saskatchewan fiction award.



WritersAsk
Elena Bentley
Poet, Writer, Editor



Q & A

Ask Elena anything on the craft or business of writing. Your question might be answered by Elena in an upcoming issue of *Freelance*.

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TWO POETS REFLECT ON CREATIVE NONFICTION

by Bernadette Wagner

For more than a decade I've been curious about the connections, intersections, and interconnections between creative nonfiction (CNF) and poetry. Recently, I engaged in an email exchange with Carla Braidek, a poet from Big River who is also writing essays. We explored our thoughts on the movement between poetry and CNF as readers and writers. Carla and I explored too much for one article to cover. So, in the Winter issue of *Freelance* Carla will share her thoughts and reflections on our digital dialogue about creative nonfiction and poetry. What follows is my reflection on our back-and-forth.

In the process of building my latest manuscript, *Situate Uranium*, I wrote a lyric essay to ground the body of work in my Prairie roots and political activism. Early on, however, the essay became a prose poem. More recently, after an intense two weeks of cutting, revising, and polishing its poetry and prose, the entire manuscript transformed into poetry. Not a shock, I suppose, for those who know me as a poet, but definitely a surprise for me because I had intended the work to be a hybrid of poetry and CNF.

On my way to writing in the genre I wrote a lot of letters, lobby documents, news releases, political essays, and rants

for nonprofit organizations, newspapers, magazines, and blogs. And two books of poetry. In 2009, almost immediately upon completing edits for my first collection, *This hot place*, I wrote the table of contents for an essay collection about my political work. Back then I didn't have the skills to write the CNF I wanted to write so that manuscript hasn't yet materialized. So, to improve my skills I signed up for SWG workshops, attended a CNF session at the former CMU School of Writing in Winnipeg, and joined the Creative Non-Fiction Collective (CNFC). The organization delivers some of the best conferences I've ever attended and

I've had the good fortune to take in workshop sessions, master classes, and presentations by Brenda Miller, Dinty Moore, Lee Maracle, Myrna Kostash, Betsy Warland, Waubgeshig Rice, Omar Mouallem, Kate Braid, Tanya Talaga, Susan Olding, and Trevor Herriot, to name just a few.

Twenty-some years ago at the Ness Creek Music Festival a mutual friend introduced me to Carla Braidek, and we've built a friendship in the intervening years. Our recent email exchange provided questions and considerations about CNF and poetry. We found it challenging to define what, other than line breaks, really separates the two

genres. How they're alike, how they're different, is subtle. I love what dee Hobsbawn-Smith said at the launch of her latest book, *Bread & Water: Essays*. "Poetry and CNF are like this," she said as she crossed her fingers.

Many years ago, Dorothy Livesay's autobiography, *Right Hand Left Hand: A True Life of the Thirties: Paris, Toronto, Montreal, The West, and Vancouver. Love, Politics, The Depression and Feminism*, moved me deeply and demonstrated how political activism, creative nonfiction, and poetry could all work together. Carla hadn't read that book with "a mouthful of a title" but we both loved Lorri Neilsen Glenn's, *Threading Light: Explorations in Loss and Poetry*. Neilsen Glenn's book, which she identifies as a "parcel of essay and verse and anecdote," shines light into dark places with beautiful prose and poetry and deep emotion. It strengthened my determination to write more CNF and to learn to do it well.

Lorri's title brought forward the topic of emotionality and we recognized

how it's present in all genres. I find it easier to express emotion in poetry. I can create a Speaker who is and is not me and imbue the poem with whatever it needs to create emotion. I can lie to tell a bigger truth. But in CNF, particularly in the short forms I've been exploring, I am the Speaker. I can't hide. I can't lie. Well, I could, but that defeats the purpose of the *non* in CNF.

Carla mentioned that CNF seems more open than poetry. "It lays things out. It opens up. Yes, it may be more exposing," she said. "But I also think it doesn't need to be. I think here again some of the best I've read stays in the facts, the hardware so to speak. And it is just the way it is presented that evokes the emotion." One might (incorrectly) assume from Neilsen Glenn's title that her book could be sad or even depressing. But it's not. Far from it. It is a very healing read bringing light to the challenging pieces in our lives. The best CNF does just that. It lights the way for the reader.

Maybe that's part of the reasons

why, for decades, writers of CNF struggled to have the genre recognized on par with poetry and fiction. Rarely did granting agencies in the country financially support writers or publishers of literary nonfiction. It's one of the main reasons for the existence of the Creative Non-Fiction Collective, a national, writer-driven organization of creative / literary nonfiction writers. Their work and the work of publishers, readers, writers and others has been integral to the recent boom in CNF.

Though we weren't able to finish the conversation and present it as we'd originally anticipated, our back-and-forth has confirmed that for me writing CNF is very similar to writing poetry. Our conversation allowed me to slow down and check into my process, to see that it's the same for both genres. I free-write then edit, rewrite and polish. The difference seems to lie in how I shape it on the page, wander through the subject, and explore my thoughts and feelings. ⑤



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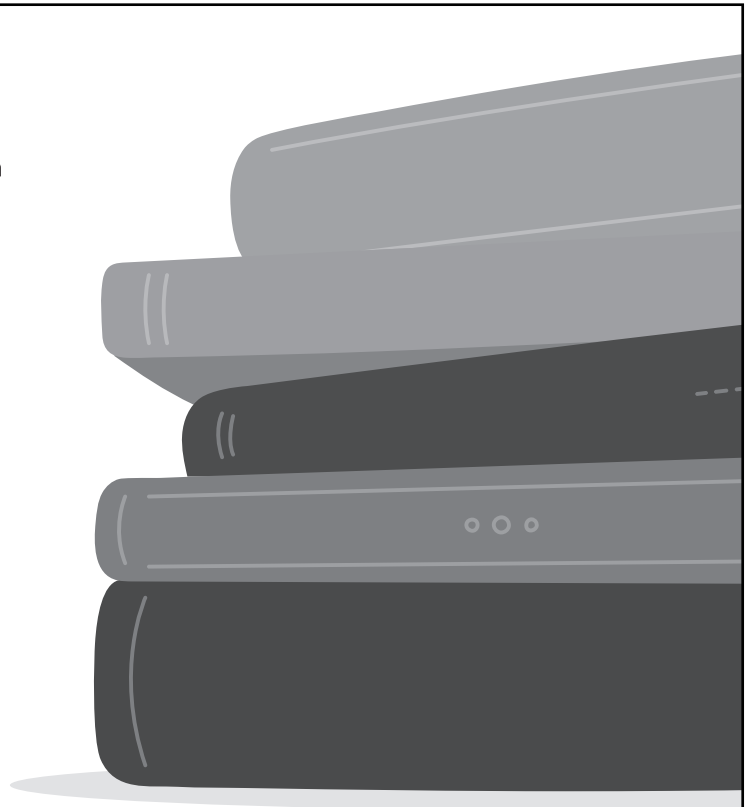
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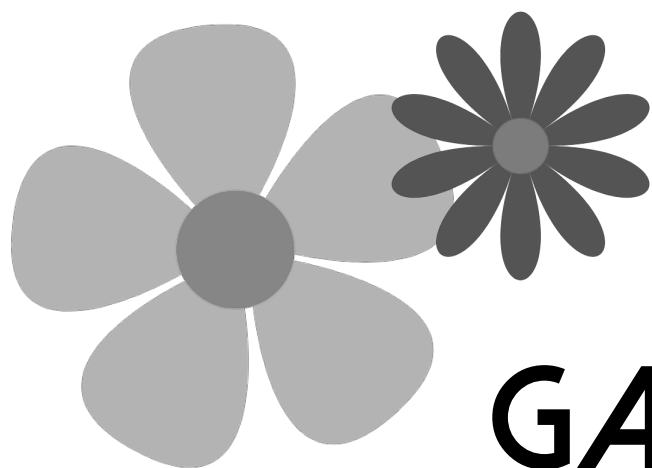
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THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM

MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

by Edward Willett

Authors who are regularly interviewed often profess to hate one particular question, the cliché of clichés: “Where do you get your ideas?”

(One oft-quoted response to this question is that given by the great science fiction author Harlan Ellison, who claimed he picked up his ideas from a post office box in Schenectady, New York, where they were regularly sent by a service to which he subscribed.)

In my podcast, *The Worldshapers*, I ask that question in a variety of ways because I believe, however much authors claim to hate it, it’s still a valid question. In the podcast, I’m usually focused on where the author got the idea for the specific book we’re discussing, but there is a deeper version of the question that gets touched on, on occasion, about which I’ve thought a great deal. It’s not focused on the specific idea-seed from which grew a fully-flowering novel, but rather (uh-oh, I’ve fallen into a metaphor and I can’t get out!) one that’s focused on the idea-garden as a whole: How do you turn your brain into fertile ground for ideas, and how do you get those ideas to take root and grow?

I firmly believe part of being a writer is genetic, and there’s not much you can do about that. Some people are simply born with brains that are predisposed to the creation of fictional tales. Many authors have told me they started telling stories almost as soon as they could talk.

That’s all very well and good if *you* are one of those people, but not everyone who becomes a writer was a teller of tales in toddlerhood. You can still develop a successful idea-garden even if you don’t have a creative green thumb, and it starts with fertilizer.

You can fertilize your idea-garden with the words of the writers who came before you, layering it with a rich compost of descriptions and dialogue, characters and comedy, action and adversity, pathos and puns ... and did I mention alliteration?

All writers struggle with the same challenge: to craft what seem to be real human beings, real places, and real situations using nothing more than (in English) twenty-six abstract symbols. And when you see how well other writers meet that challenge, it both inspires you to meet the challenge

yourself and offers instruction in how to do so.

Through reading, we learn how tales are crafted—and desire to craft our own as effectively as those we have read. Our well-fertilized mind-gardens are then ready for the planting of ideas ... and as *Field of Dreams* tells us in an entirely unrelated context, “If you build it, they will come.”

In this instance, “they” are ideas, not long-dead ballplayers (although the idea of a ghostly voice telling an Iowa farmer to build a ballpark in his cornfield was a doozy). And once they arrive, they will grow if you’ve prepared the ground properly.

However, as any gardener can tell you, the real work comes after the sprouting of seeds. I’ve often said that writing (if I may momentarily replace my metaphor with a simile) is like a muscle you exercise. The more you use it, the stronger and more flexible it becomes.

Creativity can be practised. In fact, it *must* be practised if it is going to be sustained long-term. And you practise it, as a writer, by writing; by taking those little shoots of ideas and nurturing

them into full-grown stories.

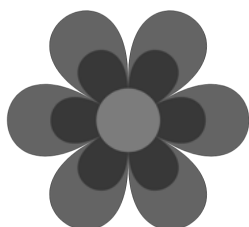
One author I interviewed, inspired by Ray Bradbury, wrote a short story a week for a year. She drew ideas from the news, from TV shows, from random encounters with strangers, from books, from a million different places. By practising the generation of ideas, she made the ideas come more readily: she bolstered her creativity.

I've worked with a lot of young writers, and sometimes, they have a single burning idea that they're convinced will make a great book. Sometimes, they're right. But I've also seen writers fail to move beyond that first great idea, worrying it to death in an attempt to make it grow, overwatering, sometimes, or over-pruning—and when that idea fails to flourish, they give up.

To be creative, reliably, book after book, story after story, you must not only work at it, you must be prepared to move on, to let go of previous work and previous ideas. Make the most you can out of an idea, then move on to a new idea.

Back in the garden, as a plant grows, you tend it. Eventually, if all goes well, its flowers brighten your yard or its fruit, your table, but then, it's done. You remember it fondly, but you're already working toward the next planting.

At the end of the Leonard Bernstein musical version of *Candide*, the characters, after adventure, tragedy, and farce, sing, "Make Our Garden Grow." The title could well be the slogan of writers everywhere as they nurture the green shoots of ideas into the flowers and fruits of fiction, day after day after day. ⑤



QUERY LETTERS: FOR PICTURE BOOKS

by Jody C. Jones

You've revised and polished that picture book manuscript until it gleams. Now it's time to submit! Your query letter shouldn't be more than one single-spaced page. It is a business letter, so keep it professional. A good query letter will contain four components: introduction, hook, biography and marketing, and conclusion. While a query letter for any category of book will contain these same components, there are major differences in the way the hook is written for a picture book.

Additionally, you submit the entire manuscript for a picture book. This is due to their length; most are not over 500 words. Fiction novels and narrative nonfiction will require a synopsis, as well as sample chapters. The entire manuscript must be finished, revised, and proofread before you submit, so it's ready if an editor or agent asks to see it. Nonfiction books without a narrative arc will require a proposal and a few revised chapters; this is what usually sells the book.

Introduction

In the introduction, be sure to address your letter to the specific editor or agent by name. Give them the title of your

manuscript, category or genre, and word count. Briefly tell them about the theme or subject of your book. You can always lead with the hook if you don't have a personal connection with that editor or agent.

Hook

The hook (or pitch) captures the imagination and leaves the reader wanting to know more. While the pitch for a novel may be up to three paragraphs long, the pitch for a picture book is not usually more than three sentences long. Picture book writers, this is the one part of the letter where you can break with the business tone and write in the tone of your manuscript. You are a writer; now is the time to show how well you write! The voice of your pitch should parallel the voice of your picture book. If the narrative arc is communicated, your hook can even be written in the voice of your character. This is also unique to picture books.

The pitch is often written in third person; switch back to first person for the remainder of the letter. While most hooks are written in present tense, past tense is suitable for picture book biographies. You can share the takeaway of the

...you submit the entire manuscript for a picture book.

...you can break with the business tone and write in the tone of your manuscript.

...the pitch for a picture book is not usually more than three sentences long.

story, but not how the story ends. If you grab them with the hook, they'll want to read your manuscript to find out how the main character arrives at the take-away and plot ending. This is another way that the hook differs for picture books. Pitching a novel will require you to reveal as much of the story and your main character as possible, usually including the ending.

Biography and Marketing

The biography and marketing section should be writing-related unless it's important to the story. For example, your manuscript is about service dogs and you're a dog trainer. This is the section where any previous publishing experience will go. Mention your education if it's relevant to writing. Talk about your platform and how you're able to help market the book. List paid writing memberships, such as SWG and CANSCAIP. You don't have to include all the above; less is more in this section of your letter. Most publishers request comparison titles for picture books. "Comp" titles shouldn't be more than five years old. Avoid comparing your book to a bestseller.

Don't worry if you're new to writing

and have no experience! What really matters is the hook and the manuscript. The biography and marketing paragraph shows the editor or agent that you are professional and that you understand the industry.

Conclusion

In the conclusion of your letter, tell them the manuscript is attached or pasted below, depending on the specific guidelines for that publishing house or agency. Let them know if it's a simultaneous submission. Mention any additional submission-ready manuscripts. They must be available if requested. Agents are interested in investing in you as a writer and in your career, not just in one book. In closing, thank them for their consideration and give a professional sign off such as Sincerely or Best Regards.

Extras

Remember that you shouldn't submit the same manuscript to multiple editors within the same publishing house; also, don't submit the same manuscript to multiple agents within the same agency.

Additionally, if you receive a pass from one editor at a publishing house

or one agent at an agency, that means a pass from the entire publishing house or entire agency. Do your research and submit to the best possible choice regarding your work. If you receive a pass, it is not a pass on you as an author; it's a pass on the manuscript.

Query more than one publishing house or agency at a time. You're not limited to one submission only. If you want someone to help you through your entire career, it may be best to submit to agents. Many publishing houses are closed to unsolicited manuscripts. Again, read the submission guidelines carefully. If a certain publishing house is open to submissions and you have a manuscript that you think would be right for them, go for it! Many writers get their start with a publishing house and find an agent after publishing a book or two. The most important thing to remember is to do your homework on the best possible editor or agent to submit to and follow the submission guidelines. Good luck! ⑤

THE GUILD PRIZE: SHOWCASING SW/G MEMBERS' FLASH FICTION AND POETRY

The Guild Prize is a response to the desire to offer members more opportunities to have their work reviewed by a jury and published.

SWG's Executive Director Tracy Hamon and Program Manager Yolanda Hansen were interested in finding ways during the pandemic to provide our members with opportunities to publish their work. In addition to our anthology *apart: a year of pandemic poetry and prose*, and a special issue of *spring*, The Guild Prize was created to not only heighten member engagement and showcase their talents, but to also provide a publication opportunity in *Freelance*—a boost to any writer's career.

The Guild Prize is awarded twice a year—in the fall for flash fiction and in the spring for poetry.

The SWG is pleased to present the first winner of The Guild Prize to Carla Barkman for her piece, "Four Children."



"Having my flash fiction piece acknowledged in this way encourages me to keep experimenting with prose, putting time and energy towards something that I hope will be accessible to other people as well as being fun (and therapeutic) to create," Carla said after learning she had won.

Carla is a family physician in Regina with interests in northern/remote

health care, addictions, and Narrative Medicine. Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Room*, *Intima*, *Grain*, *NeWest Review*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, *prairie fire* and other literary journals. In addition, her work was included in the

anthologies *apart - a year of pandemic poetry and prose* (SWG), *Line Dance* (Burton Books), and *Groundswell: the best of above/ground press 1993-2003*. Her poem, "Last evening I stumbled," placed second for the *Vallum* Poetry Award. Carla recently completed a BA (English) at the University of Regina.

Judge's Note

"The author of 'Four Children' has crafted a piece that incorporates several key elements of a good flash story—brevity, a strong image to anchor the piece, and a twist at the end—and explores the theme of 'ancestors' in a unique and vivid way. The depth of character reverberates off the page through Audrey and the narrator, as well as through the sparse, carefully chosen repetition, and as a reader you know that there's a lot more to these characters and their lives beyond the words on the page—you can feel the story behind the story. That, to me, makes for strong flash fiction."

Nicole Haldoupis

Nicole Haldoupis is a queer writer from Toronto living in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. She's the current managing editor at Breakwater Books and a former editor of *Grain* magazine. She completed an MFA in writing at the University of Saskatchewan in 2016. Her book of linked flash fiction, *Tiny Ruins* (Radiant Press, 2020), was shortlisted for four 2021 Saskatchewan Book Awards and the 2022 Bressani Literary Prize.

Congratulations also to our Honourable Mention Elizabeth Gardiner for 'Tea with Moshum.'

W I N N E R



FOUR CHILDREN

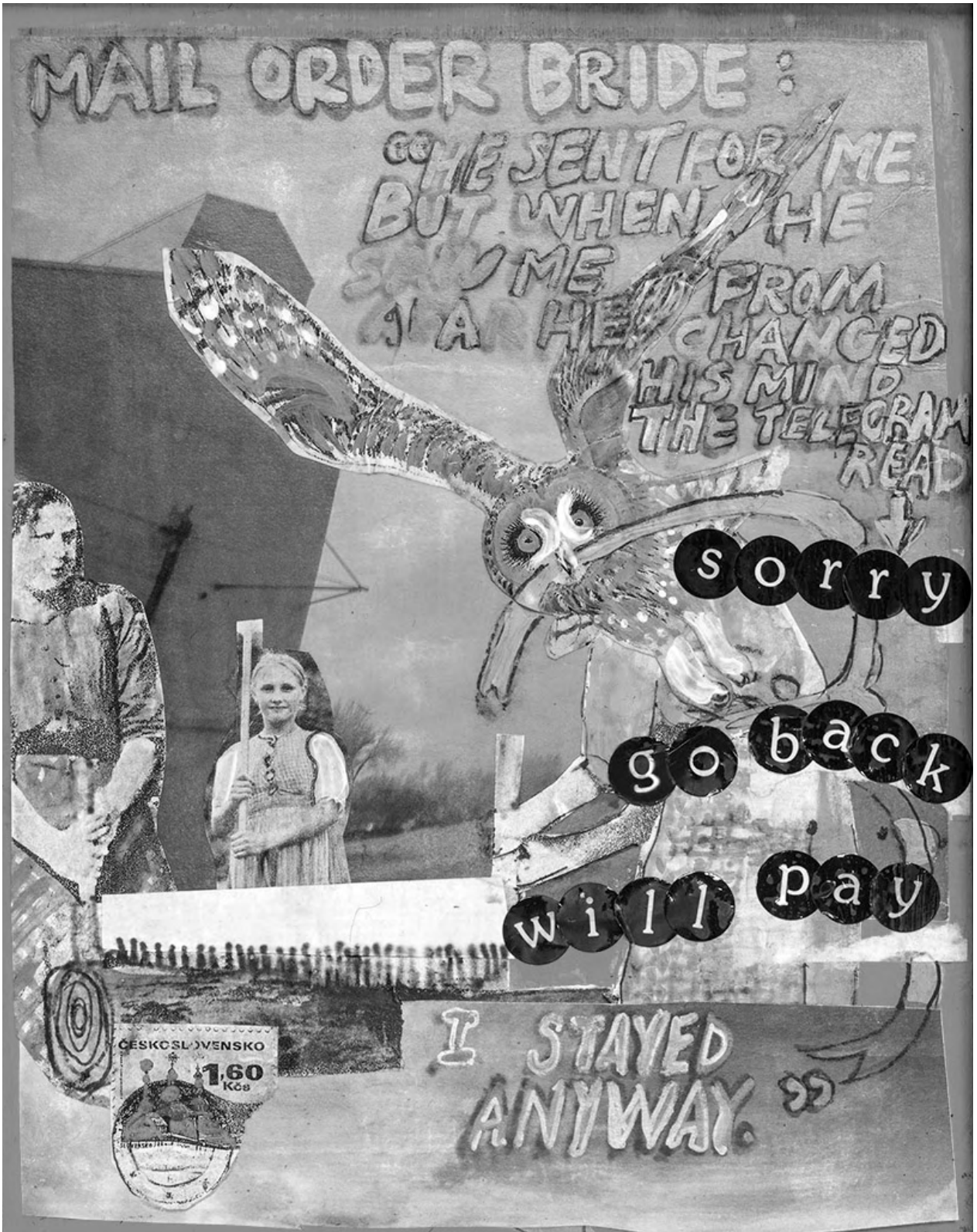
Carla Barkman

Audrey is sixteen, the oldest of four children. Her parents are deacons at Cornerstone Bible Church. One day, home from school, she finds a cat impaled on a garden hoe. Her mother does not come running but tells her, over the phone, to drown it.

At twenty, Audrey has a baby girl, who is me. Though born with thick black hair I am bald by three months of age; I have lost it. My hair, that is. Audrey is a hippie. Her parents do not allow her to attend Woodstock; a new decade, nevertheless, begins.

At twenty-four, she is married and pregnant again. She met John at a lake east of Winnipeg, in the Canadian Shield. Prowling, he asked her to drive his boat so he could ski. It is gold. The boat, that is. Her sister has married a lawyer whose cottage faces the water across from the public beach.

Twenty-eight years old, Audrey lives in a split level bungalow whose front yard faces a park. Kids who fall from monkey bars knock on her door, looking for bandaids, rides to the hospital, juice. She has three young daughters. The third one screams and screams. The older two sleep in a bunk bed, spotted with measles. Her husband hopes, still, for a son.



"Mail-Order Bride"
Collage by Madonna Hamel

PROVOKED BY COLLAGE

by Madonna Hamel

I once heard a famous author claim he was inspired to write an entire novel based on seeing a fat man seated in a restaurant looking out the window watching a woman walk by. Really? I thought. An entire novel? I find that hard to believe. And yet, a collage made five years ago remains the inspiration for a novel I've been working on for the last four.

It began when I put a call out for aprons to compliment our little museum's collection of men's cowboy hats. We received all kinds: hand-sewn, pristine cross-stitched beauties, and worn-out, bibbed workhorses, including one made from a flour-sack. And they came with stories.

Jacquie Carlier loaned us two - one utilitarian, the other strictly for "company." I can picture her now, spying the guests coming up the drive, whipping off the splattered workhorse and replacing it with her lovely chiffon skirted apron. Jack Gunter delivered his mother's apron along with a hand-written testimony to all the women on the prairie, without whom "we men wouldn't be worth a damn."

I started researching aprons, and eventually began making collages based on the stories shared with me and found in journals, history books and local photographs.

My first apron-inspired collage started with a photograph of a young woman on a farm, sawing logs, circa 1890. She looks tired and a little stunned, her expression says: This is not what I signed up for. I played around with the image, finding a background, then adding an owl pulling at her apron strings with his beak.

One of my sources was that rich 1976 compendium of prairie history *A Harvest Yet to Reap*. In it I found an anecdote taken from a book called *Laughter in the Old West*. The story was no doubt meant to entertain its readers rather than enlighten them as to the plight of young women finding themselves alone in a strange land.

A young Mountie, the story goes, equipped with binoculars,

awaited his mail order bride-to-be outside the Macleod train station. He wanted to get a good look at the young woman to "avoid being disappointed." When the bride-elect stepped off the train there was no one there to meet her. From his vantage point on the hillside, the Mountie had his binoculars trained upon her and was giving the lady a careful and thorough-going study. At last, he came to the decision that she wouldn't do. He dispatched his orderly with a note of regret and sufficient funds to send the woman back to her home.

In my mind I matched the jilted bride with the girl sawing the wood. But, how would I pull the two stories together in one collage?

Before living in Val Marie and working at the museum I worked in radio, writing scripts for a daily show. Every script required a bill, an aural billboard advertising what's coming up later in the show. Its function was to keep the listener tuned in, so it had to be succinct and snappy. At the time I was making the new collages I was re-reading old comic books. It occurred to me that the collages could resemble comic book cells and I could bill each character's story in a word balloon above the picture. That way I could marry my journalism with my love of comics and collage.

Eventually I entitled that first collage: "Mail-Order Bride." The bill for the collage reads: "He sent for me. But when he saw me from afar he changed his mind. His note read: Sorry. Go back. Will pay. I stayed anyway."

Out of that first collage grew "The Apron Pocket Archives": three collage exhibits of twelve collages each; a residency and performance at The New Dance Theatre in Regina; and "Mother's Apron", a ninety minute monologue that toured Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC. And now, a novel-in-progress.

In the meantime, the aprons kept coming. I acquired one from a local farmer, worn when the men got together in the fall to make sausages. Going through archival material for images



"The Making of the Last (Harvest) Supper"
Collage by Madonna Hamel

of men in aprons I found a photograph of a camp cook from Alberta named Charlie Lehr. (Canada Archives has him listed as Charlie Liar and I've since kept this misnomer for a character in my novel.)

Charlie Liar, in my collage "Camp Cook", and now in my novel, is the youngest and only boy of a family of ten. His sisters and his mother were his teachers. The collage bill reads: "At first they watched me like a hawk. Then I started to watch them. Now I can cook for 40 men at a time. They taught me everything I know."

Aprons have deep pockets; they can hold big stories and secrets, literally and figuratively. And so can collages. The trick to getting a story out of a collage lies in relaxing and letting interesting juxtapositions happen. The real reveal comes when I get spontaneous, shuffling and randomly placing images beside each other.

Setting the "Mail-Order Bride" collage beside the "Camp Cook" collage generated a third character: the "Boarding House Owner." So vivid was Mrs. Prothero, the new character, that I felt she was giving dictation. Through the voice of the jilted bride, I began scribbling:

"This is nothing new, said Mrs. P. She was referring to my newly jilted status as much as her proffered apron: Her tool and toolkit, uniform and habit, flag and shelter. Pot-holder and tear-wiper. Her catch-all. Indispensable. This one borrowed, this one blue. This is nothing new. Mrs. P. whispered in my ear as she wrapped me in her embroidered embrace. I have one nice frock, no bridal gown, but I have plenty of aprons. And as for men? There'll be others too. Out here, men out-number women eight to two. This is nothing new."

When it came to collaging a centrepiece for the collage exhibit I knew it had to be something epic, something biblical,

worthy of the apron muses. I'd been going through old art history books, looking for medieval women in aprons, gawking at Michelangelos and DaVincis. I turned the page and there it was.

Gathering all the aprons I'd collected I invited every woman in town to come to a photo-shoot at the Seniors Centre. I set up a long table and, with Vi Laturnus in her original flour sack apron at the heart of the picture, I positioned the women in front of various kitchen utensils - mixing bowls, rolling pins, carving knives and spatulas. Each woman assumed a pose echoing DaVinci's classic and the basis for "The Making of The Last (Harvest) Supper." The bill was a farmer's quote: "I don't know how they did it, but every harvest those women performed the loaves and fishes miracle, every time."

You've no doubt heard the marketing and psychology slogan: It's all about relationships. The phrase explains a successful collage perfectly. Collage is the quickest way of bringing two solitary stories together to provoke a new one. "It's so easy," the singer Lhasa de Sela said to me in an interview, talking about her own collages, "you take this picture of a girl and you put it beside that picture of a toadstool and suddenly you have a story."

You don't need to have an idea when you begin a collage. In fact, it's better if you don't. Think of yourself as a guest at a dinner party put on by a hostess who has the knack of placing the least likely people together and ends up brokering a whole new beautiful friendship. If you're lucky, you're near enough to eavesdrop and jot down a few good lines.

Recently, a friend gave me a set of old encyclopedias. I turned the lines of text vertically to represent sheaves and stalks of grasses and wheat. I painted the text, but left some words untouched, allowing them to peak through the grass, forming new poems and phrases just laying, waiting to be plucked and stooked into stories.

There's a quote attributed Albert Einstein that goes: "A work of genius is an accident meeting a prepared mind." I have a writer friend who prepares for strokes of genius by spending her downtime cutting images out of magazines and putting them in separate tins with labels like: cups, houses, accidents, etc. Later she'll pull from the tins and pair images, then write stories from her selections.

Recently I read a journal call for "collage memoir" submissions. The form was described as "a process of collecting thematic bits of material—poetry, historical records, lists, and micro-essays—and finding the through line to shape a story." Whether one begins with visual collage or ends with written collage, the success of a story or memoir depends hugely upon the strength, surprise and pull of juxtapositions. We may not be inspired to write about a fat man. Nor about a woman walking under a window. But a fat man watching a woman walking under a window? Now you're talking. ⑤



THE QUANDARY OF WEIGHTY TOMES

by Steven Ross Smith

Books. Books are beautiful, inspiring. Books seem to grow on me. Books come in many sizes, shapes, and weights – from that letter-pressed broadsheet, to the hand-stitched chapbook, to the carry-bag-sized paperback, to the chunky door-stopper art book, and the hardcover, multi-volume, philosophical treatise series. Books can be trouble – with their content, or with their bulk. An armful of books is heavy. A full box heavier still. A truckload...well!


In the past three years I've been on the move. My books have moved with me. How did I get so many books? Okay, I've used that word, "book/s," ten times, well now, eleven. That symbolizes their ubiquity, their preponderance in my surroundings. My relationship with books covers seven decades. Here's the backstory...

I can't recall with certainty the first book I bought with my own money. It might have been a collection of Sherlock Holmes stories; or maybe the blue-covered paperback copy of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, first published in 1961. My high school English teacher suggested that we read it though it was not on the course. I recall laughing out loud at its satiric humour. I cherished and tended that copy, keeping it on my bookshelves and it's still there.

These books must have begun my habit of acquiring, because I recall my father making a bookshelf for my bedroom when I was a teen. Then followed college years where I had to buy prescribed course books. I remember *Understanding Media, Expanded Cinema*, the hardcover *History of Music*, and an anthology of romantic poets.

In my early twenties I developed a growing interest in poetry and avant-garde artists and writers, which meant seeking books in those subjects as I haunted new and used bookstores. I remember being tempted by a book, but feeling penurious, turning it down even when the price was modest. I recall the breakthrough moment when I thought, *books are my nourishment*, and gave myself permission to buy any book I wanted. And I did – among them, e.e. cummings, bpNichol, bill bissett, Michael Ondaatje, Margaret Atwood, Samuel Beckett, Roland Barthes, and Gertrude Stein, for starters. The bulking up began. And with that, the need for more bookshelves. More books accrued at writer-colleagues' launches, at yard sales, as gifts. This went on for decades, but in a way, it seemed that I blinked, and books germinated, reproduced, materialized.

The growing collection reflected my reading life, my specific interests, writers I'd met, and literary heroes. It was also a working



library. I used the books for research, as aids in writing for periodicals, for panel presentations, for introductions, for creative stimulation and inspiration.

In 2019, I made the first of three moves within two and a half years. These moves meant packing my books three times, with increasing awareness of their bulk, their weight, their relative relevance and currency, and the potential quandary presented to my survivors – primarily my son, an only child with no siblings to help him figure out what to do with books he would be unsure of, or whose merit or value I'd not explained to him.

As I began packing for the first move I culled a few books with reluctance, donating them to the Banff Public Library for their used book sales. I also donated a collection of chapbooks to the Banff Centre Paul Fleck Library's large and significant collection of artists' books. Then when I was moving again, to Saskatchewan, the Banff Public Library happily received several more boxes of books.

But used books – unless they are rare first editions, or specialty limited editions – do not always find such a welcome and possible after-life. I will come back to that thread a bit later.

In that first move, I filled more than fifty liquor boxes with books. I had to pick up each book, put it in a box, move every box, and then do the process in reverse at the other end, lifting and opening boxes, handling each book, and shelving or, in some cases, culling further titles, which meant boxing them, determining where they might go, carrying them to my car, putting them in the trunk, then lifting them back out at their destination. A fitness program unto itself.

Some titles were so specialized that I had a hard time imagining a purchaser. I have no idea which books serendipitously found new homes, and which ended up in recycling or shredding – book purgatory. It's strange how an object of value for one person can become demoted, then discarded. So how could I choose which books to put at risk? I established only one hard guideline – I would keep the all books by my iconic writer-heroes, the ones who had influenced me most. The process after that was emotional and based on a book's relevant personal value. I must retain hope that the cast-offs found appreciative, readerly hands and eyes. I have, with satisfaction, given a few books to friends who are still collecting.

Where else do, or can, culled books go?

It is a writer's stroke of good fortune if he or she is supported by an archive or special collections institution. I'm lucky that Special Collections at the University of Saskatchewan has been receiving and archiving my 'papers' now for well over a decade. They were willing to receive a selection of my books bearing signatures and personal dedications from other authors. I still have many signed books on my bookshelves – the ones I can't part with yet.

But more winnowing was necessary. In some communities, arts organizations, such as the Saskatoon Symphony, will receive

books for fundraising book sales. In Banff and Saskatoon, I took books to church-run thrift stores. The Salvation Army stores may take books, and there's the apparently charitable Value Village which, it seems, will take anything.

But we book collectors are discriminating, right? So, along my culling path, seeking well-suited final homes for certain books – valued items by successful Canadian authors and others – I approached literary-minded used bookstores in Calgary, Saskatoon, and Victoria. I offered a mix of contemporary books, and many small press editions from the sixties and seventies. The discerning store in Calgary said "yes, these are notable books, but I can't sell them. Sales for books like these aren't happening." Westgate Books in Saskatoon rifled through my box and selected less than a dozen books and gave me a store credit on a piece of paper, which I soon lost. Peryton Books, also in Saskatoon, willingly received a donated box of vintage sets I'd collected by two authors – the pulpy Jim Thompson and mysterious Ben Traven.

Surprisingly, a tiny but crammed store in Victoria – Sorensen Books – took about half a box of books and actually paid me a sum in hard cash! The owner gave me back the half-box she didn't want and I loaded it into my trunk. On strolls through my neighbourhood, I slip books into those lovely little crafted sidewalk book exchange boxes.

So far, I've reduced my collection by about one-third. My study and dining area are 'down' to seven book-holding pieces of furniture with twenty-eight individual shelves. Oh, and there's the book stacks on side tables. All in all, over 1400 books remain within view and reach. A heck of a lot by some people's standards, but not that many for the obsessively acquisitive. An acquaintance, Kate, who also just moved, and hence our synchronous predicament, sent me a picture of her wall of about 3000 books saying, "I am running out of space and cannot bring myself to part with any. They are my special and irreplaceable friends." A few days later she added: "Today I just filled another bookcase in another room and still there are stacks of books on the floor."

I understand. My retained volumes' presence gives me comfort and inspiration, and a kind of knowledge. And creativity oozes, drifts, flies from their covers and pages and filters into my brain. Books hold and preserve that precious material – language and images – in many shades and forms, and offer ideas and provocations, fancies and depths, knowings and questions. I need to hold such realms close. But, as others keep coming in the door, I must still let some go.

I have no wisdom to offer, just the process I've described, seven decades long. I cherish the beauty of the book, the fingered pages, the calling spines – the physicality, the materiality, the tactility of the object in your hands – a living radiating energy preserved from extirpation.

As I settle into a stuffed chair for a bit of reading, shift a book in my hands, and anticipate its zing, I notice that my shoulders ache. I wonder how that happened. ⑥



HONOURING THE BUFFALO:

FOLLOWING IN RAY'S FOOTSTEPS

by Judith Silverthorne

Photos provided by Judith Silverthorne

I couldn't possibly have imagined anything as fortuitous as doing a book tour in Europe ... the opportunity to make contacts for new markets, meet and present to new audiences, and have new promotional and personal encounters was phenomenal. In fact, the evolving success of *Honouring the Buffalo* far exceeded expectations of what Storyteller Ray Lavalée, illustrator Mike Keepness, and I had envisioned when we first set to work on the book.

We never anticipated how far-reaching it would become. Nor could we have projected how the book would come full circle in Ray's desire to "bridge the cultural gap" as he called his vision to communicate awareness of his culture to people in other parts of the world. Little did I know I would travel with his story to the very countries he had toured a decade or more before.

Although we had connected years earlier, sometime around 2010, Wisdom Keeper Ray Lavalée approached me to write the oral story about the buffalo and their sacredness to his Cree People. I felt honoured that he had chosen me to help preserve this important story for future generations. I've had an affinity for buffalo since I was a child but hadn't explored this connection much, so was thrilled when Ray began teaching me about them from his perspective and relaying his oral story.

Although we completed the book by 2011 and I approached traditional publishers over a couple of years to see if there was interest, the result culminated in the decision to hybrid-publish it. With financial support from Creative Saskatchewan, I teamed

Photos: (inset) Storyteller Ray Lavalée; Judith presenting in Bern, Switzerland.

up with Your Nickel's Worth Publishing, added my resources, and set the project in motion. This led us to the creation of extraordinary artwork by Mike Keepness and to the gifted Cree translation by Randy Morin. With the addition of meticulous photos of items from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, taken by Jeff Sawatzky, and the honed editorial skills of Jean Okimâsis and Arok Wolvengrey, the book launched in 2015.

Excitement around the book flourished, and I initiated audio versions in various languages, eliciting the help of Martine Noël-Maw for the French version. She, in turn, was instrumental in taking the book to Éditions de la nouvelle plume (ÉNP), who excitedly published the French/Cree translation in 2016. By this time, Ray Lavalée had passed, but not before he had entrusted me with his legacy to carry the book forward to new audiences in as many ways as possible, and this I did with Mike's kind assistance.

Martine Noël-Maw and ÉNP further negotiated and secured a German publisher, MONS Verlag, with financial support from the Canadian-German publishing initiative sponsored by Canadian Heritage in partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts. MONS Verlag arranged for the launch of the German/Cree translation in 2019, during the biggest book fair in the world in Frankfurt, Germany, with over 300,000 people in attendance. In conjunction with the launch, I did a flurry of TV interviews, presentations, and autographing sessions, accompanied by a framed photograph of Ray Lavalée, to make sure

he was recognized as the Knowledge Keeper behind this book. I also attended various social functions in addition to networking with agents and publishers. What an opportunity to promote and sell books while spending time with writers from all over the world, sometimes at the same dinner table!

Then it was Canada's turn to be the once-in-a-lifetime host country of the Frank-

We never anticipated how far-reaching it would become. Nor could we have projected how the book would come full circle in Ray's desire to "bridge the cultural gap"...

furt Book Fair. Although delayed by a year because of COVID-19, the event proceeded in October 2021. This coincided with requests for an author tour to various locations in Germany, again arranged by MONS Verlag. By this time Mike Keepness had also passed, and I was left to carry on their legacy alone. I packed my photos of Ray and Mike to share the journey.

Although I wasn't one of the official 54 Canadian delegates, I was one of only about eight Canadian writers who attended the Book Fair in person. I did presentations and interviews throughout the Book Fair, and connected with Daniel Parr, the program and services officer at SaskBooks at their booth, and with Annabel Townsend, owner of the Penny University Bookstore in Regina, among others.

Before leaving Frankfurt, I was honoured to give a presentation in Buchhandlung Weltenleser, the award-winning international bookstore where the delightful owner, Maria Lucia Klöcker, had hired an actor to do the reading in German and an interpreter to translate while I spoke, all of which was filmed and later uploaded to their website. This experience still carries a special place in my heart, and I so wished Ray and Mike could have been present and welcomed not only there but in the other European cities I was privileged to travel to.

The first stop in Germany after Frankfurt took me on a scenic train ride along the castle-studded Rhine River to Cologne, where a lovely, literary-loving delegate and the renowned Kölner Dom (gothic cathedral) welcomed me. I gave several readings at libraries and schools and was treated to a special supper by community leaders, who extolled the attributes of the buffalo story Ray had once shared there himself.

Then on to Marburg by train to do readings at an international high school the next morning, followed by a delightful afternoon of tea and great conversation with Dr. Martin Kuester—the head of the Marburg Centre for Canadian Studies



Judith poses with bookstore owner in Frankfurt.



Judith presenting in Cologne with the help of an interpreter.

whom some Canadian writers know—and a tour of the university library and its dazzling array of four million books.

I criss-crossed the country by rail, slogging heavy luggage up and down long, steep staircases and rushing from one track to another to get on the right train at the right time in the right direction. No easy feat, and often one that meant long, exhausting days, or that meals were missed, but so rewarding in response, and the experience of meeting so many amazing and receptive people in every community I went to.

By the time I arrived in Bad Berleburg, I didn't think anything could be better. I gave a presentation and reading at the local library, with the aid of an interpreter, as a special guest for their Literaturpflaster Festival, followed by an autograph session. They had also prepared a special exhibition of Mike Keepness's artwork, enlarging prints from the book and displaying them in the reception area of a prestigious local bank. I was asked to talk a little about Mike's life and work as a painter, and to participate in a short, interpreted dialogue with the audience about his artwork.

When they learned of my love of bison, arrangements were made for me to go to the Wisent-Wildnis, a local bison wildlife park. Did I mention that my accommodations were across the road from the palace of a prince of the local principality? This prince was the very person who initiated and continues to support this huge species protection project aimed at resettling bison in Germany for the first time in 235 years. Visitors can see the bison firsthand at the park enclosure, and the bison

are also being reintroduced into the wild.

Amid the book circuit, Canadian embassies in other countries learned of my presence in Europe, and I found myself changing flights home and scrambling to make further travel arrangements within each country. I was astounded to find myself following Ray's trail of so many years earlier, though I was also to tread new ground.

From my last German stop in Berlin, I flew to Vienna, then Geneva, and on to Neuchâtel and Bern, then flew to Brussels, and travelled into Luxembourg. Only time will tell how well book sales were boosted by my presence, but the connections I made at festivals, and with educators, museum, gallery and bookstore staff, and people in general over the five weeks I was there, felt like an accomplishment as a representative of Canadian books and writers.

But the greatest achievement for me was being able to share Ray's story in the countries he had visited twenty years earlier. I know he would have been so pleased to see his culture being shared in his favourite countries of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and glad that his story had made it to readers in Belgium and Luxembourg I'm honoured to be a small part of this legacy and so pleased to be invited back again to Europe this summer to see it flourish further. ⑤



Judith with group she presented to in Luxemburg.

INS AND OUTS OF LITERARY MAGAZINES:

MORE THAN PUBLICATION AND PRIZES

by Rachel Laverdiere

My son graduated from high school the year I turned forty. Thrilled by the open road to his future, he reminded me that I was middle-aged and challenged me to start working towards my dreams. I'd wanted to be a writer from the time I learned to read. I was motivated but had no idea how to start, so I googled for advice and found an article encouraging writers to aim for one hundred rejections per year. I calculated that I'd need two submissions per week to attain the quota. Submitting to literary magazines has since changed my life.

Seven years into my writing journey, my achievements—more than seventy publications, contest placements, and inclusion in anthologies and on shortlists—far outweigh the more than six hundred rejections I've received. Through volunteering as a reader and later editor for literary magazines, I've built a reputation and gained a foothold in the literary community. More importantly, I've become part of a thriving group of writers that, more than anything else, fills the travel journal in my mind. My commitment to submitting has created my literary world.

Perseverance, dedication, and passion have fueled my successful writing journey, but literary magazines have been the vehicle. When I first set out, I needed validation. Thankfully, my first publications came within months. The editors worked with me to polish my work and helped build my confidence and further my writing skills. Before long, I volunteered as a reader for a literary magazine. Publication in online magazines increased my presence on Twitter and helped me grow my writing community. Then I became an editor for a literary magazine, a writing instructor, and a writing coach, and finally, I used my expertise in curriculum development to create Hone & Polish Your Writing, my creative writing program. Without literary magazines, I could not have built my reputation in the community.

Along the way, I've met hundreds of writers at various stages of their journeys. I asked them to share how submitting to literary magazines and contests has been beneficial. The remainder of this article is a compilation of their opinions. I also interviewed two accomplished Canadian writers, Rowan McCandless and Cindy Matthews. Rowan writes in Winnipeg and Cindy in Bruce County, Ontario. Both recently published their debut collections and credit landing their book deals to publication in literary magazines and contest placement.

By regularly submitting to literary magazines and contests, you become a better writer. You'll take yourself more seriously as a writer if you have a submission system. For example, submitting to two journals every Tuesday can help you organize your writing schedule. Submission guidelines often have built-in constraints such as word counts, themes, and deadlines. Sending your work to literary journals also highlights the importance of revision. If you've received personal rejections on a piece, keep looking for the perfect match. Once you've received a dozen form rejections, it's time to reassess whether the piece requires more revision or whether you're submitting to places that don't align with your work. Good writing is often accomplished in rewriting.

Reading literary magazines helps you stay current with editors' tastes and writing trends. This is the most time-consuming part of submitting but also the most important. If you're new to the world of literary magazines, don't worry—they're easy to find. Check your local library or bookstore, subscribe to Duotrope (paid) or Submittable (free), use a search engine, or follow literary magazines on social media. Before submitting your work to a magazine, read at least one recent issue to familiarize yourself with its style. For example, Rowan McCandless,

creative nonfiction editor of *The Fiddlehead*, says she is especially drawn to lyric essays that tell a compelling story with a unique voice and structure. Even if a journal doesn't match your style, take time to note work that resonates with you. Consider using a technique you admire in your own writing practice. If a writer's style is similar to yours, read their bio or google them to see where they've published for potential places to submit your work. Send the author a fan email or follow them on social media. It's never too early to grow your literary community.

Many literary magazines offer writing resources, nominate for awards, and hold contests. While looking for a fit for your writing, you might come across workshops (free and paid) and articles or resources for writing craft. Magazines often include this information in their newsletters. Sign up, and these opportunities will land in your inbox. The contest submission pool is often smaller than the regular submission pool, so it can be easier to win a contest than to be selected for a magazine issue. Though heftier contest fees often include a year's subscription and are a good way to support the magazines you love, entry fees add up quickly. Before entering a contest, determine who the judge is. An outside judge's preferences might differ from those of the regular editor(s). Check the magazine's website for an interview with the judge for a glimpse of what might draw them in and help you place in the contest. Make sure your writing aligns. Placing in a contest gains the attention of readers, editors, and publishers—plus it looks great in an author bio.

Submitting to literary magazines and contests means editors or judges are reading your writing. This offers more than the possibilities of publication and winning prizes. The writing community is small, and there's a lot of movement in the literary world—readers become editors, editors become judges, and so on. Submitting might also get you nominated for awards or attract the attention of a publisher later on. For example, Rowan McCandless's writing was longlisted for the Journey Prize, won the Constance Rooke CNF prize, and received gold in the National Magazine Awards. Recently she co-won the Eileen McTavish Sykes Award with her debut collection of essays, *Persephone's Children*, which chronicles her journey as a biracial woman escaping the stranglehold of a long-term abusive relationship. She says:

Being published directly influenced my manuscript's acceptance with Dundurn Press. I had a piece published in the anthology, Black Writers Matter. Months later, the editor of this anthology, Whitney French, took a substantive editorial position with Dundurn. I was approached by Whitney, who asked if I had anything ready to be looked at. I mentioned my manuscript and she was interested in my project. I forwarded it and straight away it was picked up by the Press. I didn't need to query agents or publishing houses.

Publishing in literary magazines and placing in contests helps advance your writing career. A list of publications on your literary CV shows that your writing is in demand and can help land an agent or a publishing contract. This is especially true when publishing a collection of essays, short fiction, or poems because these genres are more difficult to sell.

Cindy Matthews's list of publications helped her find a publisher for her debut collection of short stories, *Took You So Long*, in which characters wrestle with identity and find ways to become "unstuck." She says:

I believe that getting my writing accepted by magazines has helped me build credibility as a writer. Getting paid by publications helped to further develop my credibility with my peers. For instance, my application to the Writers' Union of Canada was recently accepted. Having had my work paid for and published in literary magazines certainly boosted my success with that process. Similarly, when I applied for a Recommender Grant through Ontario Council for the Arts, having a resume showing paid, published work gave me credibility as a writer.

When pitching—giving a brief description to convince a selection committee to choose you—for conferences, seminars, or workshops, including a long list of publications confirms your expertise. Credits with more reputable journals can help you land jobs, receive grants or funding, or get into graduate programs, especially MFA programs.

Submitting is the only way to get published, but it offers so much more. Reading literary journals while searching for a good fit for your submissions will nourish and strengthen your writing. It's also a great way to stay current on editors' preferences, trends, and current opportunities, and build your writing community.

I can't imagine a version of my life that doesn't include my son's challenge for me to start living my dream of becoming a writer. The turnkey to my success in the literary world has been my commitment to submitting to literary magazines. For me, the most important benefit of publishing in literary journals is the community of writers it has brought me. Seven years down the road, I'm thankful for the relationships I've forged with other writers, editors, and students I've met along the way, and I'm grateful to support and work with other writers and help them navigate their writing dreams. I hope to meet you somewhere down the road! ☺

Books



***Apothecary's Garden* by Jeanette Lynes**

In Belleville, Ontario, a twenty-eight-year old spinster, Lavender Fitch, barely scrapes by, selling flowers from her garden at the train station, her position in life greatly diminished after the death of her father, the local apothecary. One day, a glamorous couple step off the train. The lady is a famed spirit medium, Allegra Trout accompanied by her handsome but disfigured assistant, Robert. With her striking beauty and otherworldly charms, Allegra casts a spell over Belleville from the moment she arrives. Lavender is captivated by the medium and hopes Allegra might be able to contact her dead mother for clues to the location of a secret cache of money. Robert and Lavender grow close, much to Allegra's disapproval. Will Robert and Lavender's relationship blossom or will it be abandoned when he leaves for the next town? Will Lavender find her mother's gift or be forced from her home and beloved garden?

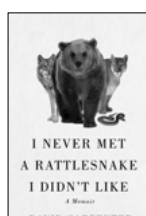
Publisher: HarperAvenue
ISBN-13: 978-1443464666



***What's Past is Prologue* by Gail Bowen**

When Libby Hogarth, the go-to lawyer for the rich or famous who have committed heinous crimes, comes to Regina to deliver the prestigious Mellohawk Lecture, she is met with a torrent of hostility. Libby Hogarth had successfully defended Jared Delio, a wildly popular national radio host, against charges of sexual abuse brought against him by three Regina women. Zack and Joanne Shreve's commitment to protect Libby goes beyond the fact that in defending Delio, Libby had simply applied the principles at the root of the justice system. Zack and Libby were the last two students to article with Fred C. Harney, a brilliant alcoholic lawyer who changed both their lives. Sawyer MacLeish, Libby's associate, was like a much-loved son to Joanne and she fears that Sawyer will suffer collateral damage from any attack on Libby. Joanne's fears are not groundless, and when the inevitable happens, Joanne, Zack, and their extended family must pick up the pieces.

Publisher: ThistleDown Press
ISBN: 9781771872270



***I've Never Met a Rattlesnake I Didn't Like: A Memoir* by David Carpenter**

David Carpenter's collection of essays explores a city boy's love of the wild, a passion that has enriched his life from boyhood. At 80, this irrepressible Saskatchewan raconteur examines his intense fascination with predators large and small, and his awe in the face of the variety of creatures that may be out to get us—or who are out to get one another. How does this combination of fear and wonder affect our relationship with the natural world? And why has Carpenter personally been both drawn to, and repelled by, so many wild animals, including alligators, wolves, cougars, and particularly deadly rattlesnakes?

Publisher: ThistleDown Press
ISBN: 9781771872270

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST SWG MEMBERS

Krista Black
Nickel Blake-Nongauza
Daniel Bliss
Lynne Boucher
Wilfred Burton
Ji Hyun (Cathy) Cha
Maddy Clincke
Marnie Deighton
Gordon Edgar
Miguel Fenrich
Laurel Floyd
Katherine Gilks
Tana Hoff
Aspen Huggins
Rita Idowu
Sandy Jenkins
Diana Koenning
Joshua Kopriva
Jackie Lay
Amanda Marcotte
A.E. Matheson
Daryl Olson
Janette Platana
Kelly-Anne Riess
Shivangi Sharma
Emily Speight
Tyrone Spray
Allyson Stevenson
Diane Totland
Ashley Vercammen
Jena Wagmann
Kara Websdale
Jamen Willis

News

Candace Savage Wins 2022 Cheryl & Henry Kloppenburg Award for Literary Excellence

Candace Savage was awarded the prestigious Cheryl & Henry Kloppenburg Award for Literary Excellence at the awards luncheon on September 28, 2022 in Saskatoon. Candace has published a wide and eclectic range of books for adults and children. Judges remarked that her literary record, “the equivalent of an established artist’s songbook or portfolio, is both substantial and admirable.” Candace has been recognized with several awards including the Hilary Weston Writers’ Trust Prize for Nonfiction.



Mark Abley Named SWG Fall Facilitated Retreat Writer-in-Residence

The SWG is pleased to announce that Mark Abley has been named as Writer-in-Residence for the Fall Facilitated Retreat. A nonfiction writer, poet and journalist, Mark is a Rhodes Scholar and a Guggenheim Fellow. His many books include *The Organist: Fugues, Fatherhood, and a Fragile Mind*, *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages*, *Conversations with a Dead Man: The Legacy of Duncan Campbell Scott*, and several poetry collections and children’s books. He grew up in Saskatoon and has lived for many years in Montreal.



Jill Robinson SWG Virtual Writer-in-Residence

The SWG is pleased to announce Jill Robinson as our Fall 2022 Virtual Writer-in-Residence for September 1 to November 30, 2022. Jill Robinson lives on the west coast now, but part of her will remain forever in Saskatchewan, where she lived from 1993 – 2009, and again in 2020-2021. She’s worked with rural writers in a number of SWG and Sk Arts Board programs, including “Write In Your Community,” and is keen to work again with writers who may be feeling alone out there.



SWG receives donation through RBC Emerging Artists Program



The SWG is pleased to announce that we have received an Emerging Artist donation of \$15,000 through RBC in support of our Youth Poet Laureate Program. This donation will be paid out over the next three years at \$5,000 per year.

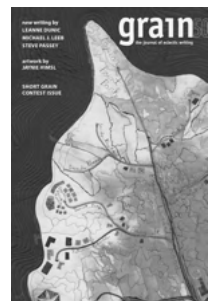
“We thank the RBC and are thrilled to be partnering with them to bring focus to our Youth Poet Laureate Program and raise awareness for emerging poets in Saskatchewan,” says Tracy Hamon, Executive Director, SWG.



Our 4th Youth Poet Laureate, Lauren (Lo) Klassen is a community-based educator and poet living on Treaty Six territory. Her term runs until July 31, 2023.

Grain Fall Issue 50.1 Out Now

Celebrating 50 years, *Grain*’s issue 50.1 is available now to purchase at grainmagazine.ca. This issue features Short *Grain* Contest Winners: Fiction - P.J. Worrell, Anthony Purdy, Trent Lewin; and Poetry - Lindsay Cavanaugh, Tamsyn Farr, and Jody Baltessen.



save
the
date

**SWG Member
Holiday Reception**

Thursday, December 8

Details to come.

SWG Events

OCTOBER

Fall Virtual Writer-in-Residence

Now until Nov 30

Online via Zoom

Cost: Free for eligible members

Our Fall Virtual Writer-in-Residence Jill Robinson is available to work with SWG members writing at all skill levels, in all genres, living outside Regina and Saskatoon. More details and registration at skwriter.com.

2022 SWG Annual Conference and AGM: *An Alphabet of Writers*

October 21 & 22
Atlas Hotel, 4177
Albert Street, Regina
Some events
livestreamed
Registration required:
cost varies

Our 2022 Conference *An Alphabet of Writers* celebrates a community of writers. Our two-day conference will include writing workshops, exciting panels, the 2022 Hicks Awards and Caroline Heath Memorial Lecture, AGM and a chance to share your work on

the Community Stage. Pass options include a full pass, online pass to view some livestreamed conference events, or purchasing individual tickets. Register at skwriter.com.

Tān'si Talk - "Kiskowehikew: conversations about spirit, star relations, dreams, sasq'ets (wild man)" with Julianna McLean

Thurs., Oct. 27
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Online Via Zoom
Cost: Free

Okiskowehikew-Seer, Medium/Clairvoyant Julianna McLean from James Smith Cree Nation will share her experience as okiskowehikew-Seer and share supernatural stories from varying sources, including her own. There will be an opportunity for attendees to share their supernatural stories or ask Julianna for clairvoyant guidance in the group chat. Joining Julianna will be host Elena Bentley.

Generating Essay Topics & Pitching and Publishing with Krystal Kavita Jagoo

Thurs., Oct 13 and 27
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Cost: \$30 for members, \$40 for non-members

What does it take to be a published essayist? *Generating Essay Topics and Pitching and Publishing* will explore this question through the practice of essay topic generation and writing, and a review of strategies for pitching and publishing writing, especially in terms of paid work.

Opening Doors Through Stories: Imagine

Sat., Oct 29, Nov 5, 12, and 19
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Participants should prepare to be in-person OR online
Cost: Free

Presented by the SWG and Regina Open Door Society, this four-week workshop series, facilitated by Marie Powell, is free for participants wanting to write their stories with

passion and confidence. Open to newcomers to Canada living in Regina. Permanent Residents with CLB level 6 or higher are encouraged to register. To register, please contact Aziz at volunteer@rods.sk.ca or call 306-352-3500.

NOVEMBER

First Draft: Conversations on Writing with S. Portico Bowman and Anthony Bidulka

Tues., Nov 1
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

The Tango: Your Money and Your Life

What is more important? Your money or your life? What if it feels like getting enough of the former is costing you the latter because you're a writer? You need time. You have to have money. It's not easy to balance the tango of forces related to making a living, making a family, or new friends, asking for a new puppy, and making time to write. It's possible you have figured out how to have meaningful, lucrative work, but you are not connecting to the

audience you need. The rejections pile up next to the paid bills. Are you willing to risk the reverse? What does that look like? What does that feel like? Money and motivation are visible and invisible obstacles that drain your energy in more ways than one. However, there are steps and strategies I've practiced over the years that I would like to share. Please join S. Portico Bowman and host Anthony Bidulka. We're going to learn to dance.

Bushwakker Writer's Corner Reading: Fifth Edition

Sat., Nov 5
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Bushwakker Brewpub,
2206 Dewdney Ave,
Regina, SK
Cost: Free

Join us as we celebrate the talents of local authors Donna Gartshore, Gail Bowen, Brian Bowman, Ven Bugamudré and Tara Gereaux. Bushwakker will have local food, drinks, and a special dessert for sale while we make ourselves cozy in the year-round Writer's Corner found near the back of the brewpub.

Finding Your Voice for Live Readings with Amanda Marcotte

**Tues., Nov 8 and 15
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**
In-person, SWG office,
100-1150 8th Ave,
Regina, SK
Cost: \$30 for
members, \$40 for
non-members

Part of life for many writers includes live readings, audiobooks, and podcasts. Workshop facilitator Amanda Marcotte is ready to help beginners find their voice and confidence behind the microphone. She has tips, tricks, and exercises from her career as a radio journalist for CBC to help writers do a dynamic reading that brings their words to life. This interactive workshop features practice reading in front of a small group of fellow participants, as well as one on one support.

Penned Up!

**Wed., Nov 9
7:00 - 9:15 p.m.**
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

A two-hour period for folks to drop in and

write, build community, meet writing goals, commit to writing and protect creative time. Events occur online on a monthly schedule between September and May.

Fall Facilitated Retreat Nov 10 - 13 St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster SK Cost: \$350 Bursary available

Join Writer-in-Residence Mark Abley for our 2022 Fall Facilitated Retreat at St. Peter's Abbey. This is a great opportunity for emerging writers to work on their writing, consult a writer-in-residence and enjoy the inspiration of St. Peter's Abbey. Details and application form available at skwriter.com. Doris Hillis Bursary available for an eligible BIPOC writer working on poetry or drama. Application deadline Oct 13.

Youth Creative Writing Workshop with Francine Cunningham - "Why writing and sharing your story is important"

**Thurs., Nov 10
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.**
Online via Zoom

Free, but registration required

Host Jennifer Gardiner and presenter Francine Cunningham will hold a conversation on creative writing for youth.

Legislative Library Reading (a Saskatchewan Book Awards event)

**Wed., Nov 23
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

Join the SWG on behalf of the Saskatchewan Book Awards, and the Legislative Library for an online, lunch-time reading celebrating some of the winners from this year's Saskatchewan Book Awards.

DECEMBER

Silhouettes and Negative Space with Samantha Jones

**Thurs., Dec 1
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.**
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free for
members, \$30 for
non-members

Let's talk about the other part of poetry—the

negative space around the words. In this micro-workshop we will look at poems that use the shape of arranged words, lines, and stanzas to strengthen themes or add layers of meaning. We will explore how the silhouette of a poem can bolster key messages and we will look at how some poets have used empty space in or around their works to make a point or to add metaphor. In addition to discussing a few published works, we will create some poems of our own that employ visual aspects and we will tinker with a few approaches to creating verse that takes on a specific shape on the page. You will leave this workshop with ideas about how you can use negative space in your poetry writing, a draft of a visual poem (or the beginnings of a visual poem idea), and experience trying a few different approaches to visual poetry composition.

First Draft: Conversations on Writing with Sandy Bonny (Host TBD)

**Tues., Dec 6
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**
Online via Zoom

Cost: Free

This online talk series dives into themes that affect our writing lives. Writing helps us to understand and to communicate findings to our audiences. Sometimes we are driven by these themes, other times they're the things that hold us back – what we learn through the process can be revolutionary. The quest to be understood unifies all writers.

Tân'si Talk – Presenter TBD

**Wed., Dec 7
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

Tân'si means welcome/ hello in Cree, and we welcome you to these conversations with Saskatchewan Indigenous writers and hosts. Each one-hour discussion is a conversation about writing and storytelling, and features authors working in different genres. Join us virtually throughout the year for an exploration of topics like children's books, memoirs, Residential Schools, poetry, short stories, and histories.

Members Holiday Reception

Thurs., Dec 8
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Regina German Club
1727 St John St, Regina
Cost: Free

Meet up with other members, SWG staff and Board as you enjoy refreshments and a cash bar. Watch *Ebriefs* for details.

JANUARY

Tān'si Talk – 'Inuit Canadians: past, present and future' with Dr Norma Dunning

Thurs., Jan 12
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

Presenter Dr. Norma Dunning will be reading from her works of fiction and nonfiction that describe Inuit from long ago and into present day.

Penned Up!

Wed., Jan 11
7:00 - 9:15 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Cost: Free

A two-hour period for folks to drop in and write, build community, meet writing goals, commit to writing and protect creative time. Events occur online on a monthly schedule between September and May.

Novel Structure and Short Story Structure with Judy McCrosky

Tues., Jan 24 and 31
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Online via Zoom
Cost: \$30 for members, \$40 for non-members

Structure is one of the most important facets of writing fiction or nonfiction. It needs to be front and centre for the writer, and yet almost invisible to the reader. If you have started a short story, novel, or other piece of writing, and run out of steam, leaving the piece unfinished, chances are this happened because you don't understand structure. With this

workshop you will easily learn how structure supports the characters and plot of your story. And, you'll be able to use it to finish almost anything you begin.

Writing North 13 Jan 26-28 St. Andrew's College, USask, Saskatoon & Online via Zoom Cost: Free

The SWG and the USask MFA in Writing Program are pleased to present Writing North 13. All events will be free, open to the public. Full details will be announced by December.

Calls, Contests

OCTOBER

Kloppenburg Hybrid Grain Contest

Deadline: Oct 15

Are you looking for a writing challenge? If so, we're looking for literary-based hybrid work that defies genres, bends rules, scavenges, juxtaposes, toys with truth. Our new Kloppenburg Hybrid Grain Contest is not for the meek of pen! It's for writers who create their own literary landscape. Judges: Steven Ross Smith and Liz Howard. Six prizes will be awarded including: Two \$1000 first prizes; two \$750 second prizes; and two \$500 third prizes. grainmagazine.ca

Event Magazine Creative Nonfiction Contest

Deadline: Oct 15

Prizes: \$3,000 in total, plus publication in *Event*. Entry Fee: \$34.95 per entry; includes a one-year subscription (or renewal) to *Event* and all applicable taxes and shipping. eventmagazine.ca

2023 Alberta Literary Awards Call for Jurors

Deadline: Oct 28

The Writers' Guild of Alberta is calling all avid readers, writers, teachers, students, or people who just straight up love literature to join our awards jury this season. This is an opportunity to be "in the room" when the 2023 finalists and winners are chosen. Every year the WGA presents awards in ten categories, plus the city book prizes, and we could not do this without the hard work and deliberation of our juries.

writersguild.ca

NOVEMBER

Call for Editors for Windscrip Vol 39

Submission Period:
Oct 1 - Nov 15

Windscrip magazine is the SWG's annual magazine that showcases poetry, short fiction and nonfiction by Saskatchewan high school students. We are seeking emerging Saskatchewan editors to fill two positions: a

ts & Professional Development

hybrid role of Managing Editor + Poetry or Prose Editor and an Associate Editor who will work in the other genre. For application details, visit skwriter.com.

Call for Applications Saskatoon Public Library Writer-in- Residence

Deadline: Nov 18

Term Contract Position from Sep 1, 2023–May 31, 2024. The Writer-in-Residence acts as a mentor to writers in the community, reviewing manuscripts and providing criticism and advice about publishing. saskatoonpubliclibrary.ca

DECEMBER

Call for Submissions Windscript Vol 39 Submission Period: Oct 1 - Dec 15

Saskatchewan high school students are invited to submit poetry and/or prose. Selected writers will receive payment and two complimentary copies of *Windscript* which will be launched in May 2023.

JANUARY

Call for Applications Winter Writers Retreat Submission Period: Nov 1 - Jan 5

The Winter Retreat held in February at St. Peter's Abbey is for established and practicing writers and artists who are able to work independently. For details, visit skwriter.com

Call for Submissions The Guild Prize Poetry Contest Submission Period: Oct 3 - Jan 10

SWG members are invited to submit poetry on the theme of "erasure." This might include reflections on the act of erasing, or the complexities of memory. Also, the theme may be interpreted in form: erasure poetry. skwriter.com

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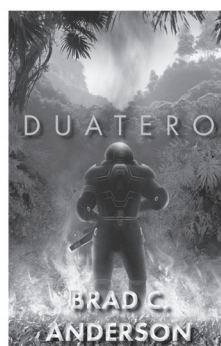


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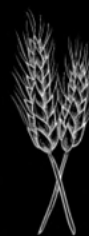
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Grain

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Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway

Lisa Bird-Wilson

Dr. Norma Dunning

Trevor Herriot

Jim Johnstone

Suzy Krause

Tonia Laird

Kagiso Lesego Molohe

Tolu Oloruntoba

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