

VIWF Reading List 2010

Caroline Adderson (CAN), *The Sky is Falling*

The Sky is Falling deftly intertwines themes of first love, sexual confusion, and the dread of nuclear disaster with the comical infighting of a cast of well-meaning political activists, and the timelessness of the great Russian classics. (Fiction, Thomas Allen & Son, Sept. 2010)

Sandra Birdsell (CAN), *Waiting for Joe*

After losing it all—job, house, savings, future—Joe takes off hitchhiking in an attempt to find meaning in a world that has disappointed his every expectation. (Fiction, Random House, Sept. 2010)

Gail Bowen (CAN), *The Nesting Dolls*

In the twelfth mystery of Bowen's bestselling Joanne Kilbourn series, a new mother is assaulted and murdered, instigating both a search for her killer and a distressing custody battle over her six-month-old child. (Crime, McClelland & Stewart, Aug. 2010)

Aaron Bushkowsky (CAN), *Curtains for Roy*

Curtains for Roy is a hilarious and poignant peek into the world of theatre, where the greatest drama is offstage and the best performances take place behind the curtain. (Fiction, Cormorant, Jun. 2010)

Eleanor Catton (NZ), *The Rehearsal*

In the aftermath of a high-school sex scandal, a group of teenage girls is jolted into an intoxicating new awareness of their own potency and power, with the sudden public scrutiny turning their every act into a performance and every platform into a stage. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Apr. 2010)

Denise Chong (CAN), *Egg on Mao*

Egg on Mao tells the story of Lu Decheng, a small town bus mechanic whose daring gesture humiliated a repressive regime in front of the entire world. (Fiction, Random House, Sept. 2009)

Ivan E. Coyote (CAN), *Missed Her*

In her passionate and humorous new collection, Coyote takes readers on an intimate journey through her experiences growing up queer in the Canadian north and living out loud on Canada's west coast. (Fiction, Arsenal, Oct. 2010)

Emma Donoghue (CAN), *Room*

Room is home to Jack, but to Ma, it's the prison where Old Nick has kept her for seven years. Jack's curiosity is building alongside Ma's desperation and the room can't contain either of them for much longer. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Aug. 2010)

Ann Eriksson (CAN), *Falling from Grace*

Faye Pearson, a three-and-a-half foot tall female scientist doing research in the tallest trees on Vancouver Island, finds herself pit with a ragtag group of protesters against the might of a multinational logging corporation. (Fiction, Brindle & Glass, Mar. 2010)

Terry Fallis (CAN), *The High Road*

A brilliant follow up to his first novel, *The Best Laid Plans*, this satire continues the story of Honest Angus McLintock, an amateur politician who dares to do the unthinkable: tell the truth. (Fiction, Random House, Sept. 2010)

Ken Finkleman (CAN), *Noah's Turn*

Noah's Turn tells the darkly humorous story of Noah Douglas, whose all-consuming envy leads him to cross the line between ordinary human weakness and outright depravity when he kills his more successful friend with a machete. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Aug. 2010)

Jon Paul Fiorentino (CAN), *Indexical Elegies*

Indexical Elegies is a whip-smart poetic investigation of anxiety in all its many manifestations. (Poetry, Coach House, Oct. 2010)

Tess Gallagher (US), *Dear Ghosts*

In this collection, the ghosts of the past are conjured and communed with as part of the poet's present existence. (Poetry, Greywolf, May 2006)

VIWF Reading List 2010

Camilla Gibb (CAN), *The Beauty of Humanity Movement*

Set in contemporary Vietnam, this is the story of a country undergoing momentous change and the story of how family is defined, not always by bloodlines, but by the heart. (Fiction, Random House, Aug. 2010)

Paulo Giordano (IT), *The Solitude of Prime Numbers*

A stunning meditation on loneliness, love and the weight of childhood experience. (Fiction, Penguin, Mar. 2010)

John Gould (CAN), *Seven Good Reasons Not to Be Good*

Matt takes a long-awaited trip from Vancouver to Toronto so he can save his friend, wave off his dad and find something of himself he lost long ago. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Aug. 2010)

Katherine Govier (CAN), *The Ghost Brush*

Set in 19th-century Japan, *The Ghost Brush* tells the story of Oei, the daughter of the great Japanese printmaker Hokusai, who defies all expectations of womanhood with her artistic ability, but remains dutiful to the father who denies her talent and steals her future. (Fiction, HarperCollins, May 2010)

Wayne Grady & Marilyn Simonds (CAN), *Breakfast at the Exit Café*

Part travelogue, part exploration, *Breakfast at the Exit Café* is a road trip into the reality behind the cultural myth that is America. (Non-Fiction, Douglas & McIntyre, Sept. 2010)

Charlotte Gray (CAN), *Gold Diggers: Striking it Rich in the Klondike*

Charlotte Gray creates a fascinating panorama of a frontier town during the Yukon Gold Rush of 1896, where desperados, saloon keepers, gamblers, dance hall girls, churchmen and law-makers were thrown together in a volatile time. (Non-fiction, HarperCollins, Sept. 2010)

David Grossman (ISR), *To the End of the Land*

Set in Israel in recent times, this epic yet intimate novel places side by side the trials of war and the challenges of everyday life. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Sept. 2010)

Genni Gunn (CAN), *Solitaria*

Set against the countryside of Italy's Adriatic coast, *Solitaria* is a tale of longing and family honor told from two different perspectives: that of Piera, the self-proclaimed matriarch, and her Canadian nephew, David. (Fiction, Signature, Fall 2010)

Paul Harding (US), *Tinkers*

An old man lies dying. As time collapses into memory, he travels deep into his past where he is reunited with his father and relives the wonder and pain of his impoverished New England youth. (Fiction, HarperCollins, May 2010)

Michael Helm (CAN), *Cities of Refuge*

In *Cities of Refuge*, a single act of violence resonates through several lives, connecting closeby fears to distant political terrors. At the story's centre is the complex relationship between a 28-year-old woman and the father who abandoned her as a child. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Apr. 2010)

Jack Hodgins (CAN), *The Master of Happy Endings*

The Master of Happy Endings is a compelling story of how a man in his late seventies manages to arrange one more great adventure for himself. (Fiction, Thomas Allen & Son, May 2010)

Quintin Jardine (UK), *Blood Red*

Primavera Blackstone becomes the prime suspect in *Blood Red* after a powerful councilor, with whom she was feuding, is found dead. (Crime, Hachette, April 2010)

M.T. Kelly (CAN), *Downriver*

M.T. Kelly's poems of grace, grit and determination speak of the city and countryside. (Poetry, Exile, Dec. 2009)

VIWF Reading List 2010

Myrna Kostash (CAN), *Prodigal Daughter: A Journey to Byzantium*

Prodigal Daughter: A Journey to Byzantium is a spiritual and historical journey that begins in Edmonton, ranges around the Balkans, and plunges into a renewed vision of Byzantium that delivers the author to an unexpected place, the threshold of her childhood church. (Non-Fiction, University of Alberta Press, Sept. 2010)

Marc Levy (FR), *The Children of Freedom*

Eighteen-year-old Jeannot and his younger brother, Claude, have found refuge in Toulouse, but freedom is a fleeting illusion in the South of France during the Second World War. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Apr. 2009)

Andrea Levy (UK), *The Long Song*

The Long Song tells a story of Jamaica during the last turbulent years of slavery and the early years of freedom that followed. (Fiction, Penguin, Apr. 2010)

Yiyun Li (US), *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl*

In lyrical prose and with stunning honesty, *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl* reveals worlds both strange and familiar, creating a mesmerizing tapestry of life in China and America. (Fiction, Random House, Sept. 2010)

Billie Livingston (CAN), *Greedy Little Eyes*

Fiercely independent, yet struggling to fit in, isolated but exploding with love and longing, Livingston's characters whisper and roar as they wrestle with the notion of "normal." (Fiction, Random House, Jun. 2010)

Derek Lundy (CAN), *Borderlands*

Derek Lundy turns sixty at the end of a year in which three good friends have died. He feels the need to do something radical and sets out on his motorcycle to investigate the U.S. borders. (Non-Fiction, Random House, May 2010)

Claudio Magris (IT), *Blindly*

In a shifting, choral monologue, a man recounts his life, which has passed through the horrors, the hopes and betrayals and the revolutions of the last century, as well as through widely different lands and seas. (Fiction, Penguin, Apr. 2010)

Karl Marlantes (US), *Matterhorn*

The timeless story of a young Marine lieutenant, Waino Mellas, and his comrades in Bravo Company, who are dropped into the mountain jungle of Vietnam as boys and forced to fight their way into manhood. (Fiction, Publishers Group Canada, Apr. 2009)

Yann Martel (CAN), *Beatrice and Virgil*

Beatrice and Virgil is a shattering and ultimately transfixing work that asks searching questions about the nature of our understanding of history, the meaning of suffering and the value of art. (Fiction, Random House, Apr. 2010)

Don McKay (CAN), *Strike/Slip*

In this extraordinary collection, Don McKay walks the strike-slip fault between poetry and landscape. Behind these poems lies the urge to engage the tectonics of planetary dwelling with the rickety contraption of language, and to register the stress, sheer and strain — but also the astonishment — engendered by that necessary failure. (Poetry, McClelland & Stewart, Feb. 2006)

David Mitchell (IR), *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet*

Working at the farthest-flung outpost of the powerful Dutch East Indies Company during 1799, Jacob sees the gap shrink between pleasure and piety, propriety and profit. (Fiction, Random House, Jun. 2010)

Andrew O'Hagan (UK), *The Life and Opinions of Maf the Dog, and of His Friend Marilyn Monroe*

Set in the early 1960s, this joyful literary comedy, full of wit and pathos, features the celebrities and literati of the day, in New York and Hollywood. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Oct. 2010)

VIWF Reading List 2010

Kathy Page (UK/CAN), *The Find*

The Find is a compelling story about discovery, inheritance and fate, and a moving exploration of the possibilities that hide within a seemingly impossible relationship. (Fiction, McArthur & Company, Apr. 2010)

Miranda Pearson (CAN), *Harbour*

Harbour looks at ways humans are driven to construct territory in whatever space is available, however borrowed or makeshift. (Poetry, Oolichan, Oct. 2009)

Kate Pullinger (UK), *The Mistress of Nothing*

A lady's maid, Sally, sets sail to Egypt with her mistress, where she learns a brutal lesson: freedom is a luxury that a maid can ill afford, and when she grasps more than her status entitles her to, she is cruelly reminded that she is *The Mistress of Nothing*. (Fiction, McArthur & Company, Sept. 2009)

Pascale Quiviger (UK/CAN), *The Breakwater House*

The Breakwater House is the story Lucie, Claire, Aurore and Suzanne, and the complicated relationships between mothers, daughters and friends. (Fiction, Anansi, Mar. 2010)

Adam Lewis Schroeder (CAN), *In the Fabled East*

Bridging history from 1890s Aix-en-Provence to American involvement in 1950s Vietnam, *In the Fabled East* is a rich and sensual depiction of Southeast Asia, charting the loss of innocence of both individuals and the world at large. (Fiction, Douglas & McIntyre, Mar. 2010)

Kamila Shamsie (PK/UK), *Burnt Shadows*

The panoramic tale of two families tangled together in some of the most devastating conflicts of modern history. (Fiction, Random House, Apr. 2009)

Ali Smith (UK), *The First Person and Other Stories*

Distinguished by Smith's trademark ability to unearth flashes of truth and depth in the everyday, *The First Person and Other Stories* sparkles with warmth and humanity. (Fiction, Penguin, May 2009)

Chevy Stevens (CAN), *Still Missing*

Still Missing is the story of realtor Annie in the aftermath of her year in captivity, told through the interwoven narratives of her sessions with a psychiatrist and her recounts of the events following her escape. (Fiction, H.B. Fenn & Company, Jul. 2010)

Migel Syjuco (CAN/PHI), *Ilustrado*

After his death, Crispin Salvador's young student, Miguel, sets out to investigate the author's fatal departure and the suspicious disappearance of an unfinished manuscript that would expose the corruption behind rich families who have ruled the Philippines for generations. (Fiction, Penguin, May 2010)

Drew Hayden Taylor (CAN), *Motorcycles and Sweetgrass*

Otter Lake is a sleepy Anishnawbe community where little happens. Until the day a handsome stranger pulls up astride a 1953 Indian Chief motorcycle and turns Otter Lake completely upside down. (Fiction, Random House, Mar. 2010)

Joan Thomas (CAN), *Curiosity*

Set in nineteenth-century Lyme Regis, England, *Curiosity* is the story of Mary Anning, the most important paleontologist of her day. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Mar. 2010)

Wells Tower (US), *Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned*

In his first collection of stories, Wells Tower's version of America is touched with the seamy splendor of the dropout, the misfit, failed inventors, boozy dreamers, hapless fathers and wayward sons. (Fiction, Penguin, Feb. 2010)

Jane Urquhart (CAN), *Sanctuary Line*

Set in the present day on a farm at the shores of Lake Erie, *Sanctuary Line* weaves elements from the nineteenth-century past, in Ireland and Ontario, into a gradually unfolding contemporary story of events in the lives of one family. (Fiction, McClelland & Stewart, Aug. 2010)

VIWF Reading List 2010

Russell Wangersky (CAN), *The Glass Harmonica*

When retiree Keith O'Reilly witnesses the murder of his neighbor, by a pizza delivery man one night during a snowstorm, a unique series of stories begins to unfold. (Fiction, Thomas Allen & Son, Apr. 2010)

Robert Wiersema (CAN), *Bedtime Story*

When his son, David, is left in a state of unconsciousness after an inexplicable seizure, novelist Christopher Knox becomes convinced the secret of David's collapse exists within the pages of an obscure fantasy novel. (Fiction, Random House, Nov. 2010)

Kathleen Winter (CAN), *Annabel*

In 1968, into the beautiful, spare environment of remote coastal Labrador, a mysterious child is born: a baby who appears to be neither fully boy nor girl, but both at once. (Fiction, Anansi, Jun. 2010)

Michael Winter (CAN), *The Death of Donna Whalen*

In this mesmerizing work of documentary fiction, based on the controversial real life case of Donna Whalen, Michael Winter pieces together the transcripts and court testimonies of Sheldon Troke's murder trial. (Fiction, Penguin, Aug. 2010)

Rachel Wyatt (CAN), *Letters to Omar*

Three women with time on their hands tackle a charitable cause in this novel about the difficulties involved in trying to make the world a better place. (Fiction, Coteau, Sept. 2010)

Terence Young (CAN), *The End of the Ice Age*

The End of the Ice Age brings together twelve tales of hardscrabble characters in their lonely orbits through stories of unfulfilled expectations, of infidelities and of the small, though ultimately meaningful, victories that allow us to withstand those greater losses. (Fiction, Biblioasis, May 2010)

SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Caroline Adderson (CAN), *Film Studies*

In *Film Studies*, fifteen-year-old Cass struggles for an identity and navigates feelings of abandonment and instability caused by a mother with ever-changing boyfriends and a father long-absent from her life. (Fiction, Annick Press, Gr.10+, Aug. 2010)

Martha Brooks (CAN), *Queen of Hearts*

Two years into the Second World War, fifteen-year-old Marie-Claire Côté begins a war of her own as she, her brother and sister, all stricken with tuberculosis, are taken to the Pembina Hills Sanatorium in rural Manitoba. (Fiction, Groundwood Books Gr. 9+, Fall 2010)

Shauntay Grant (CAN), *The City Speaks in Drums*

Two boys start their day in the North End Halifax neighborhood, and then explore the downtown of the city, taking in all of the sights and sounds Halifax has to offer. (Fiction, Nimbus, Gr. K-3, May 2010 & Spoken Word)

Rebecca James (AU), *Beautiful Malice*

Following the brutal murder of her little sister, Katherine Patterson's family is left shattered. After moving to a new city, Katherine finds a friend in Alice Parrie. At first, Alice's joie de vivre is transformative, but Katherine soon discovers a darker side to her friend. (Fiction, Penguin, Gr.8+, July 2010)

Alice Kuipers (CAN), *The Worst Thing She Ever Did*

All Sophie wants is to forget what happened last summer; but it's only so long before she must confront the tragedy of her past so she can face the future. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Gr.9+, May 2010)

Sasha Langford (CAN), *Spoken Word (Gr. 10+)*

VIWF Reading List 2010

Billie Livingston (CAN), *The Trouble with Marlene*

The Trouble with Marlene tells of the fraught relationship between Samantha and her mother, Marlene, and the suicidal thoughts they both share. (Fiction, Annick Press, Gr. 10+, Aug. 2010)

Ian McAllister (CAN), *The Sea Wolves*

The Sea Wolves sets out to disprove the notion of "the Big Bad Wolf," especially as it is applied to coastal wolves—a unique strain of wolf that lives in the rainforest along the Pacific coast of Canada. (Non-fiction, Orca Books, Gr.3+, Fall 2010)

Sharon McKay (CAN), *Thunder over Khandahar*

Two girls, best friends, are left with no choice but to escape from their Afghan village, despite the overwhelming dangers that lie ahead (Fiction, Gr.7+, Aug. 2010)

Katie Smith Milway (US), *The Good Garden*

Based on the real story of farm transformation underway in Honduras and many other countries, this book offers children ways they can be part of the movement to grow "good gardens" and foster food security. (Fiction, Kids Can Press, Gr.2+, Sept. 2010)

Susie Morgenstern (FR), *La Joie de Lire*

Richard Newsome (AU), *The Billionaire's Curse*

After a Great Aunt he's never met leaves him twenty billion pounds, Gerald is given a letter and told not to open it until after the funeral. Now he's got a mystery to solve. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Gr.3-7, Jun. 2010)

Kenneth Oppel (CAN), *Half Brother*

When Ben Tomlin's mother first brings home his new baby brother, Zan, an eight-day-old chimpanzee, Ben is far from thrilled; but when Project Zan unexpectedly loses its funding, Ben must risk everything he knows and loves in order to save his baby brother. (Fiction, HarperCollins, Gr.7+, Aug. 2010)

Jacques Pasquet (CAN), *La Joie de Lire*

Pierre Pratt (FR), *La Joie de Lire*

Richard Scrimger (CAN), *Me and Death: An Afterlife Adventure*

After stealing a piece of fruit and taunting the grocer, Jim, a fourteen-year-old wannabe gangster, is run over by a car. What follows is a hilarious, bleak and ultimately hopeful visit to the afterworld. (Fiction, Tundra Books, Gr.5-7, Apr. 2010)

Kathryn Shoemaker & Irene Watts (CAN), *No Pets Allowed*

Matthew's new apartment building does not allow dogs, but he manages to smuggle his dog, Lucky, into the building. When Lucky scares off a burglar in the building, all the tenants argue that he should be allowed to stay. (Fiction, Tradewind, Gr.3-5, Fall 2010)

Ashley Spires (CAN), *Binky to the Rescue*

While in hot pursuit of an alien invader, Binky accidentally falls out of the space station porthole and finds himself in outer space for the first time; but just as he begins to explore, Binky discovers that his copilot, Ted, is trapped beneath an enemy warship. (Fiction, Kids Can Press, Gr.2-5, Sept.2010)

Kevin Sylvester (CAN), *Neil Flambe and the Aztec Abduction*

Neil Flambe, a fourteen-year-old wunderchef, heads to Mexico City to take part in the Azteca Cocina- a two-week battle of the chefs. But things start to go wrong at the very first battle and only proceed to get worse. (Fiction, Key Porter, Gr.5-9, Feb. 2010)

Jennifer Tremblay (CAN), *La Joie de Lire*

R.C. Weslowski (CAN), *Spoken Word* (Gr. 10+)