



# SUMMER 2011

The newsletter of the Vancouver International Writers Festival

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A Dram Come True | Member Profile

Check out the newest information at [www.writersfest.bc.ca](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca)

# festival preview

The continued strength and growth of Canadian literature has been recognized here and abroad for years now. If any further evidence were required, the Canadian contingent at the 24th annual VIWF would provide it. Prominent past prize-winners **Elizabeth Hay, Guy Vanderhaeghe, Miriam Toews, David Adams Richards, David Gilmour** and **Peter Behrens** are all returning to the Festival. British Columbia is well represented by **Zsuzsi Gartner, Timothy Taylor, Kevin Chong, Angie Abdou, Gayla Reid, Michael V. Smith** and many others.

From our international contingent you will recognize a number of well known writers like Scottish crime master **Ian Rankin**, American **Russell Banks, Lloyd Jones** from New Zealand and **Linda Grant** from the UK, both shortlisted for the Booker Prize. You can expect some interesting perspectives on Africa with Commonwealth Prize winner **Aminatta Forna** being joined by being joined by **Helen Oyeyemi** (Nigeria) and **Alexandra Fuller** (Zimbabwe).



Top left: Lloyd Jones, Charlotte Gill  
Bottom: Peter Behrens

Clockwise from top left: David Gilmour, Zsuzsi Gartner, Timothy Taylor, Miriam Toews

Sometimes funny things happen on the way to building a program. As we looked over this year's list of available writers, it became clear that there are a lot of compelling and provocative non-fiction titles coming out this year. Award-winning journalist **Andrew Nikiforuk** has examined how the humble pine beetle has had a profound impact on the environment and economy of BC and Western Canada. It is possibly the largest forest insect blight ever seen in North America. Flip the coin and **Charlotte Gill**, who has planted more than one million trees over a twenty year career, tells the story of our attempts to make whole again what we have torn apart.



Top: Andrew Westoll, Sharon Thesen  
Bottom: Linda Grant, Ian Rankin

And speaking of making whole again, **Andrew Westoll** tells the inside story of a sanctuary for chimpanzees who were rescued from a research lab and are on an uncertain road to recovery. Just one more: investigative journalist **Misha Glenny's** new book is on global cybercrime and he centres his exploration around interviews with eight of the world's top cyber criminals and their stories. So be prepared for a focus on stellar non-fiction at this year's Festival.

This is also the year for fans of poetry. Vancouver's poet laureate **Brad Cran** is hosting a conference on the new generation of Canadian poets to celebrate Vancouver's 125th birthday. We'll present some of those exciting new voices including **Jeremy Dodds** and **Jordan Scott** in two events at the Festival. The Poetry Bash has a great line-up featuring Griffin-nominated **John Glenday** from Scotland, **Fanny Howe** and **Martin Espada** from the U.S., and Governor-General award winning Canadians **Jan Zwicky** and **John Pass** and three time GG nominee **Sharon Thesen**.

Amazing things happen when great writers get together and exchange ideas and we hope you'll come down to Granville Island and be part of the action.

Hal Wake  
Artistic Director

**PS** For your summer reading pleasure you can download the 2011 Festival reading list at [www.writersfest.bc.ca/get-involved/membership](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca/get-involved/membership).

# VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL WRITERS & READERS FESTIVAL

## October 18 – 23, 2011

Tickets on sale to VIWF members August 31, general public September 7 and school groups on September 12. Check the Festival program guide or our website in late August for complete program details.

[www.writersfest.bc.ca](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca)

## Don't Miss Out!

Renew your membership before the fall Festival, and encourage friends and family to join, and enjoy these great benefits year round, for only \$35 (annual membership fee):

- early bird ticket purchasing privileges;
- a discount on Festival tickets;
- personalized membership card;
- an invitation to a members' reception and the 2011 Reading List
- discounts at supporting bookstores (Banyen Books, Blackberry Books, 32 Books, People's Co-op Bookstore);
- a subscription to Book News, our weekly e-newsletter and INK
- voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting



Please visit [www.writersfest.bc.ca/get-involved/membership](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca/get-involved/membership) or call us at 604-681-6330



## Volunteers Needed

Join our team of fantastic volunteers for the Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival. If you have some spare time and would like to immerse yourself in the literary world for a week or two this fall, please contact us at [kfowler@writersfest.bc.ca](mailto:kfowler@writersfest.bc.ca) or call the office at 604-681-6330.

Volunteer Manager Kathryn Fowler will be on staff in August and will be happy to speak with you about our volunteer opportunities.

# spreading the word



Writer in Residence Maggie de Vries

## SPRING 2011 WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

We all know that Maggie de Vries knows a thing or two about writing books. Parents, teachers, and especially kids, enjoy her young adult novels and picture books. And many adults have read her grippingly honest book, *Missing Sarah*; both homage to her creative sister and lament to the conditions of the downtown eastside, and the women we all miss. But Maggie is also an accomplished writing teacher and was recently chosen to participate in the Vancouver Writers Festival's sponsored Writer in Residence program on the Sunshine Coast.

Fresh from her Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize win at the BC Book prizes this year, Maggie worked with a grade 6/7 split class at Gibson Elementary School.

**CW:** How did you help them get into their writing process?

**MdV:** My main theme was to help them centre their work. I loved *Lord of the Rings* growing up, and fantasy in general, but kids tend to go for the stratosphere first in their writing, without realizing that it is sometimes more interesting to use their own lives and the world around them.

**CW:** Easy to think in this day and age of vampires and werewolves!

**MdV:** Exactly, I mean, that is what they are reading, and some great books are out about the supernatural. But I wanted to ground them in their own lives so that they could see that their life material is interesting too.

**CW:** Were they receptive to the workshop format?

**MdV:** Their teacher had done a bit of work with them that way, and it was great how quickly they jumped into it—you could see the writers. I helped them to create a life map, and they could draw as well as write: memories, life events, anything they could think of to get the thoughts and memories down. I like to keep things hands-on and I'd shown them my research journals as well.

**CW:** The journals on Almelo?

**MdV:** Yes, for *Hunger Journeys* — I showed them the calendar where I'd tracked the phases of the moon during the 1944-45 setting in Holland.

**CW:** And about your bike trip around Holland?

**MdV:** Yes, I laid out the maps from the trip and all my scribbles. Many of them haven't studied WWII yet, so that's what I love about teaching writing—within the context of a story, students can learn about the time—and see the process of writing about a character. In the case of *Hunger Journeys*, Lena is not much older than they are.



Grace Telfer, 12, was delighted to be chosen as Maggie's mentee in the program. "It's really in-depth. When we write stories in school, we write them, edit them in terms of grammar, then do a good copy. This is revising and editing on a one-on-one level. I've never worked on a story for this long and it's improved my writing in little ways. I'm learning little tricks and things that help my writing."

Maggie says, "I like to show the kids that with research and a little stamina, we are all writers. Writing for me continues to be personal. When I was guiding the kids in workshop to access their memories and to layer in emotions for their characters' inner and outer lives, I was showing them that Lena (*Hunger Journeys*) also came to me from my family, and their struggles in Holland during the War. Though I had grown up hearing stories about the war from my father, I not only recalled his stories, but also travelled to Holland and rode through the towns featured in the book. I think the kids could see that while I was facilitating their hands-on process in workshop, I was also showing them the exact process I'd gone through. And as working writers, what we all go through to complete a story. In this way, I think this program is invaluable to school children, as it humanizes that sometimes distant author, and turns her into a working writer. And they become working writers, too."

*Cathleen With is a Vancouver writer.*

*cathleenwith.com*

*The Writer In Residence program is sponsored by Amazon.com*



Grace Telfer

## DONATE YOUR AEROPLAN MILES

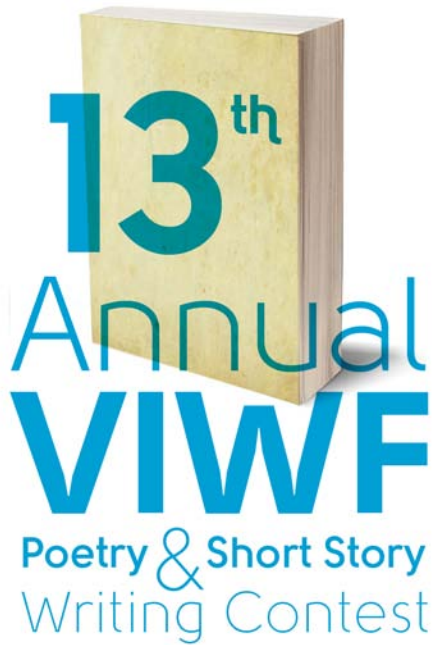
It's that time of year again. Purge those pesky air miles from your account and donate them to the Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival!

The VIWF is once again partnered with Aeroplan's Miles Without Borders, a program that enables local organizations to pool donated Aeroplan points in a charitable account. As always, the Festival is responsible for covering travel costs for a handful of writers. Your donation of Aeroplan miles will help us with this expense. We will accept donations of any amount because they all add up.

Thanks to donors who contributed Aeroplan miles in 2010, we were able to bring esteemed Canadian poet **John Steffler** (the 2006-2008 Poet Laureate of Canada) to the Festival for the first time. Aeroplan miles also funded the travel of storyteller **Richard Van Camp**.

You can download the donation form from our website  
[www.writersfest.bc.ca/supportus/aeroplan](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca/supportus/aeroplan)

aeroplan



**13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Annual**  
**VIWF**  
**Poetry & Short Story**  
**Writing Contest**

Submit your finest prose and poetry to the thirteenth annual Writers Festival Poetry & Short Story Contest, presented by the Vancouver International Writers Festival. Prizes will be awarded to the top two entries in both the poetry and creative short fiction categories.

**1st PRIZE \$500**

**2nd PRIZE \$350**

The contest deadline is **5 pm, October 23**, the last day of the 2011 Vancouver International Writers & Readers Festival. Entries may be dropped off at Book Warehouse locations, or delivered by hand or mail to the Writers Festival office. Entries will be judged by professionals in the writing and publishing industries. Winners will be announced by **January 15, 2012**. There is a \$15 entry fee per piece.

Check our website for complete contest submission details:  
[www.writersfest.bc.ca](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca)

# spreading the word

“

My grade 8 English class enjoyed the presentation very much and were so inspired that one student composed and performed a spoken word piece that was a finalist selection in CBC Radio's annual Mother's Day Poetry Contest.

”

- David J. Smith, Teacher

## READING WITH WRITERS

Reading with Writers reaches K-12 students at inner city schools and ignites a passion for reading and writing. This spring authors **Dan Bar-el, Rachelle Delaney, Dennis Foon, Kallie George, Billie Livingston, Carrie Mac, Michel Noël, David Smith** and **Word Play spoken word poets** visited classrooms in Lower Mainland communities to engage students in lively discussions about the craft of writing and the power of books.



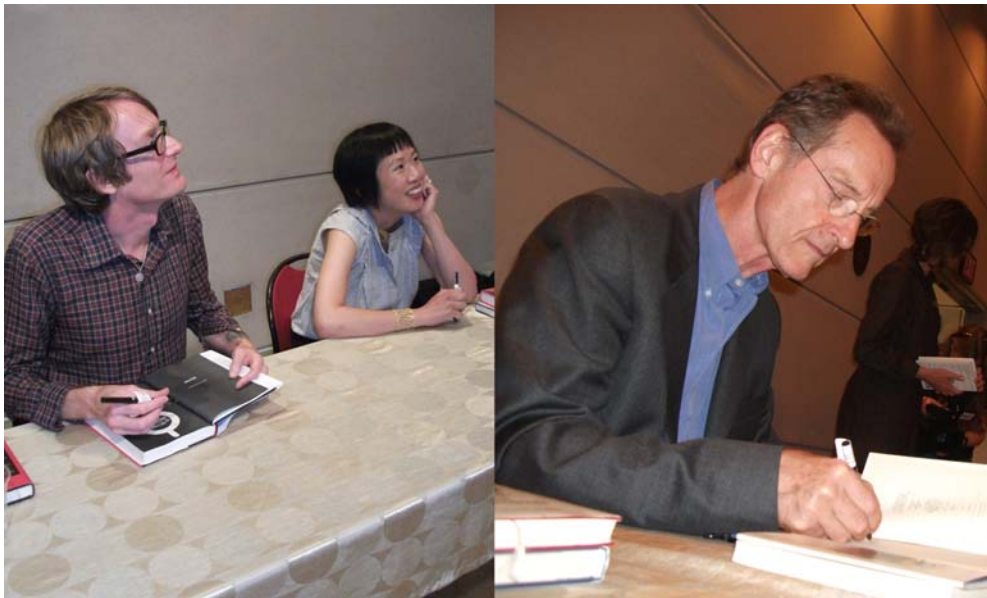
“

Dan was one of the most requested authors of this spring's lineup and after seeing him today, I can understand why. He spoke to grade 3 and 4 students at Thunderbird Elementary and kept them all hanging on his every word. He spoke about definitions of laughter: satire, slapstick etc. Then about the brothers Grimm, and how fairy tales of old are now commercials on TV, the kids and teachers ate it up. I am grateful that the VIWF was able to provide Thunderbird Elementary the opportunity to experience an author classroom visit. Thunderbird Elementary is definitely a school in need, they don't have a PAC and they haven't bought new books for the library in 2 years.

”

- Ilona Beiks  
 VIWF Education Coordinator

*Reading with Writers is sponsored by HSBC Bank Canada.*



Top: Joyce Carol Oates at *Incite*. Credit: Nancy Lee  
Bottom: Patrick deWitt & Jen Sookfong Lee, Bernhard Schlink

The first seasonal installment of *Incite*, our free reading series at the central branch of the Vancouver Public Library, was a great success! Events featuring a wide range of Canadian and international authors were enjoyed by many locals with a passion for literature. *Incite* events took a variety of formats, including readings, panel discussions and on-stage interviews, and always included thoughtful questions from the audience that resulted in engaging conversation. Artistic Director Hal Wake brought international literary stars **Joyce Carol Oates** and **Bernhard Schlink** to Vancouver audiences, along with local favourites **Timothy Taylor** and **Zsuzsi Gartner**. From back east, audiences were treated to readings from **Alexander MacLeod**, **Madeleine Thien** and **Johanna Skibsrud**, and got to know up-and-coming authors **Gurjinder Basran**, **Theodora Armstrong** and **Patrick deWitt**.

*Incite* will be back for the fall on September 14, 2011. Please visit our website for event details: [www.writersfest.bc.ca/events/incite](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca/events/incite)



JULY 7-17  
SFU-Woodwards



Indian Summer is an international festival of arts and ideas that showcases top talents from India in conversation with Canadian counterparts. The events feature a variety of talents across several themes, including music, dance, literature film, cuisine, wellness and yoga. Some highlights include:

- **Yann Martel in conversation with Bollywood actress Tabu, who stars in the film adaptation of his Booker Award-winning novel, *Life of Pi***
- **2010 Festival author Anosh Irani in conversation with Hari Kunzru**
- **VIWF's Artistic Director Hal Wake hosts an event with historian and biographer Shrabani Basu**
- **Beloved Vancouver restaurateur Vikram Vij takes guests on a culinary journey in his event, *The Art of Indian Cuisine***

[indiansummerfestival.ca](http://indiansummerfestival.ca)



Top right: Barry Auger and VIWF Founder Alma Lee  
Bottom: The Bearded Lady and VIWF Development & Marketing Manager Ann McDonell

A Dram Come True, the VIWF's annual single malt scotch whisky tasting fundraiser, was a great success again this year. Thanks to the scotch committee, the tasting experts from **West Coast Whisky Society, Legacy Liquor Store, Edgemont Fine Wines, Spirits & Ales, Purple Valley Imports, and VonAlbrecht & Associates**, the many generous donations we received and our hardworking volunteers, we were able to raise over \$19,000 (net) for the Writers Festival.

Guests enjoyed sampling twenty delectable drams at five tasting bars and browsing the fabulous silent auction. They were entertained by Milton the bagpiper, a trio of Rogue Folk musicians and the always enchanting Bearded Lady. A Dram Come True was an evening of great fun and good spirits!

### A DRAM COME TRUE DONORS

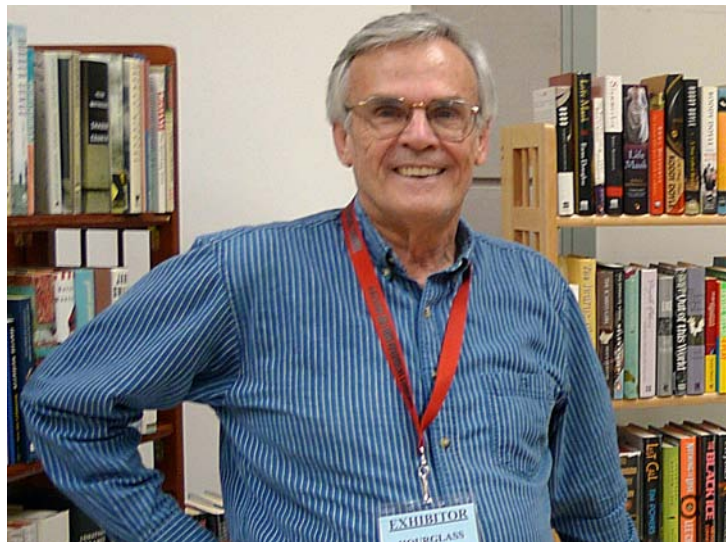
888 Caffe Express  
Anne Giardini  
Anne MacKenna  
Bill Acorn  
Cheryl Berge  
Burrows, Luongo & Associates  
Chevron Canada Limited  
City Cigar Company  
Colin & Helen Harris  
Daisy's Landscaping  
Daniel Le Chocolat Belge  
Dave Lewis  
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Moksha Yoga  
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Paul Whitney  
Paula Third  
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Phil Knapp  
PMA Canada

Provence Restaurants  
Purple Valley Imports  
Richard & Virginia Angus  
Sally Harding  
Sandy Jakab & Bob Lesperance  
Tart Boutique  
Terri-Lynn Brown  
The Georgia Straight  
The Kirkwood Group  
The Listel Hotel & O'Doul's  
The Province & The Vancouver Sun  
The Vancouver International Jazz Festival  
Tinhorn Creek Wines  
Von Albrecht & Associates  
West Coast Liquor Company  
Xoxolat

# VIWF Member Profile:

## Richard Hopkins



Richard Hopkins

VIWF Member Richard Hopkins is known, above all, for his passion for the printed book. He received his Ph.D in Library Science and worked at UBC's School of Library, Archival and Information Studies as both an Assistant Professor and the SLAIS Admissions Coordinator. Dr. Hopkins currently serves on the board of The Alcuin Society and is the editor of their quarterly journal *Amphora*. As an avid collector of modern first editions, he can often be found at VIWF events having his books signed and surprising Festival authors with first editions or anthologies they haven't seen in years!

### **How long have you been attending the Writers Festival?**

I think I started attending the festival in about 2003. I am not sure why I wasn't aware of it even earlier, perhaps because I was just too busy teaching. At any rate I wish I had been present from the very beginning!

### **What do you like about the Festival?**

Like everyone else I love to hear my favourite authors read. However, a huge added attraction is meeting and speaking with the authors in person before or after events. For example, last year I had long chats with **David Mitchell** and **Kathleen Winter** and a short but entirely delightful meeting with **Ali Smith**. It doesn't get any better!

### **Why did you become a member, and why is it important to you?**

As a professional bookseller I believe that every part of the book world needs to support every other part. That includes writers, publishers, booksellers, libraries and readers. We all need to stick together! If I receive a great deal of enjoyment from festival activities then I should darn well support the festival with a membership and if possible with volunteer work.

### **What do you do when you're not reading?**

I spend a lot of time as a bookseller selling books for other people. These are usually people who are downsizing their living quarters and/or charitable organizations raising money through book sales. I also exercise twice a week so that I am able to continue to lift heavy boxes of books!

### **What were your highlights of the spring Special Events and Incite events?**

To me the highlight was seeing and hearing **Joyce Carol Oates**, a deserved legend in her own time. I knew that she was a great writer but didn't expect her to be a terrific speaker as well. She was an absolutely riveting speaker and I loved her mordant wit, her jokes about George Bush, and the positive things she had to say about Canada as a place to live.

### **What's currently on your reading list/bedside table?**

Right now I am reading a history of American publishing entitled *The Time of Their Lives* by **Al Silverman** about the "golden age of American publishing" from about 1945 to the early 80s. This in turn alerted me to a history of Canadian publishing by **Roy MacSkimming** entitled *The Peris Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers*. Also on the go are **Zsuzsi Gartner's** *Better Living Through Plastic Explosives* and **Madeleine Thien's** *Dogs at the Perimeter*, both *Incite* influenced choices. Finally I am reading **Francine Prose's** *Reading Like a Writer* (highly recommended for young writers) and in the future I am looking forward to reading **Julie Booker's** *Up, Up, Up* a highly touted new collection of short stories from Anansi.

### **Your book collection includes some very rare editions and anthologies, have you ever surprised a Festival author with a book they had never seen before?**

Often when I ask authors to sign their earlier books or anthology or journal contributions the reply is "Wow, I don't even have a copy of this!" One of my favourite examples of this involved American novelist **Amanda Boyden** who is not only brilliant but stunningly beautiful. Imagine my pleasure when I asked her to sign her chapter in a fairly obscure anthology of short prose pieces. Her response was "But this only exists in electronic form!" Well I replied I think my paper copy clearly proves that it was eventually published in paper as well. With a big smile she quickly signed her chapter, but then somewhat dumbstruck with puppy love I immediately asked her to accept my copy of the anthology as a gift. She very gladly accepted and at a later meeting I received a most welcome kiss on the cheek for the modest contribution I had made to a writer's personal library. Who says that book collecting and author signings are dull?



AN EVENING WITH

# Anthony Bourdain

Anthony Bourdain has been dubbed “the bad boy of cuisine” for his rock star look and blunt observations about the world of restaurants, chefs and cooking. With the release of his much anticipated book, *Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook*, Bourdain has many new stories to share!

**8:00 pm, Saturday, October 29**

The Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts  
777 Homer Street

Tickets go on sale in mid-July at [ticketmaster.ca](http://ticketmaster.ca)  
or call 1-855-985-5000

Ticket prices: \$47.50, \$55.00, \$62.50 VIP package: \$152.50

Save \$5 and support the Writers Festival: use the code “writers” when purchasing your ticket, a portion of the ticket proceeds will go to the VIWF and you will receive a \$5 discount\*

\*(Discount does not apply to VIP package)



AN EVENING WITH

# David Sedaris

With sardonic wit and incisive social critiques, David Sedaris has become one of America’s pre-eminent humor writers. He will visit Vancouver for one night only, featuring all-new readings of his work and a book signing.

**8:00 pm, Saturday, November 5**

The Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts  
777 Homer Street

Tickets go on sale in mid-July at [ticketmaster.ca](http://ticketmaster.ca)  
or call 1-855-985-5000

Ticket prices: \$45.00, \$50.00, \$57.50

Save \$5 and support the Writers Festival: use the code “writers” when purchasing your ticket, a portion of the ticket proceeds will go to the VIWF and you will receive a \$5 discount

The Vancouver International Writers Festival  
presents

# Literati

THE VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL WRITERS FESTIVAL'S

## Annual Gala Dinner

Join us for an unforgettable evening of festivity, food and literary laughs.  
Hosted by Bill Richardson, with performances by  
the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration Society.

TICKETS  
**\$175**

MONDAY  
OCTOBER 17, 2011

DRESS  
Cocktail or  
Bollywood Glam

FAIRMONT WATERFRONT

Tickets will be available for purchase on August 2  
For tickets, please call 604-681-6330  
[www.writersfest.bc.ca/events/literatigala](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca/events/literatigala)



AN EVENING WITH

# Michael Ondaatje

Beloved Canadian author and winner of the Booker prize,  
Michael Ondaatje discusses his upcoming book, *The Cat's Table*.

Wednesday, Sept. 21  
7:30 PM

St. Andrew's Wesley United Church

Tickets \$21 general/ \$19 students & seniors (plus service charges)

**Members will receive an early bird discount  
of \$2 off until August 1, with the code LION**  
[www.vancouveritx.com](http://www.vancouveritx.com)  
or by phone at 604-629-8849



Photo: Chris Cameron

## MAKE A NOVEL INVESTMENT

Help us to bring the best Canadian & International  
authors to BC audiences.

Your gift allows us to nurture new literary talent by  
presenting emerging writers together with established  
writers from around the world.

**Support our education program and encourage  
literacy and a love of reading & writing.**

Spreading the Word, the education program of the  
Vancouver International Writers Festival offers grades  
K-12 students the opportunity to engage with writers at  
the Festival and in the classroom. We provide outreach  
programs for BC students and affordable Festival  
school event tickets, made possible through the  
generosity of our individual and corporate donors.

You can contribute to the VIWF and Spreading the  
Word by making a gift today. Help us encourage  
reading, writing and a love of literature by presenting  
high quality education programs and great events  
with writers for Vancouver audiences.

Donate online using our secure  
donation form: [www.writersfest.bc.ca](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca)  
To make a donation by phone, please  
call (604) 681-6330.

By mail: Vancouver International Writers Festival,  
Suite 202, 1398 Cartwright Street,  
Vancouver, BC V6H 3R8

Please include your name, telephone number and complete mailing address.

Great news! CanadaHelps now accepts gifts of securities online, on behalf of  
the VIWF. With the elimination of capital gains on donations of publically  
traded securities, gifts of securities are now the most tax efficient way to  
make a charitable donation...and a great way for donors to make a greater  
impact with their gift. To find out more about how it works, visit  
[www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org).

[www.writersfest.bc.ca](http://www.writersfest.bc.ca)



The Vancouver International Writers Festival strives to encourage an appreciation of the written word and to promote literature, books and ideas by providing a forum where readers and writers can meet. We produce special events and an annual Festival featuring Canadian and international writers for readers of all ages.

## VIWF STAFF

### Founder and Lifetime Member:

Alma Lee

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Development & Marketing Manager: Ann McDonell

Administrator: Sandra Millard

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Development & Marketing Assistant: Tavia Audia

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Programmer, La Joie de Lire: Brenda Berck

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Website Design:

Robin Puga/ Digiloom Web Design and Deployment

Ink Design: Troy Bailly/ Prototype Design

All photos by Chris Cameron unless otherwise noted

## PRIVACY POLICY

The Vancouver International Writers Festival is committed to protecting the privacy of our members and patrons. We will not trade or sell your contact information to other businesses or organizations.

## The Middle of August

Longer shadows across the road, tree boughs  
huff in the breeze, Oyama pink pale  
and preserve.

The last of the hummingbirds air-raids  
a syrupy red feeder now busy with a row of ants.

The news issues from the radio & an  
element's on medium-high

for one of my burned and briny dinners. According  
to the pundits of cosmos the Perseid Showers

are announcing a major event in Ursa Minor  
and I'm holding peices of a minor animal in tongs-

its sides and middle, its wings and thighs, once  
so cute and peeping in the incubator  
at Buckerfield's in the spring.

Life was tranquil.

Effort discouraged. Patients gazed at the everlasting hills,  
where cattle dispersed & returned.

Doctors, nurses, coroners, visitors  
with lilac branches and gloves on, fear  
of death palpable in the heat of the day,  
the perfect climate: better than Egypt brayed  
the local boosters.

From the collection Oyama Pink Shale. © 2011 Sharon Thesen.  
Reprinted with permission of House of Anansi Press. [www.anansi.ca](http://www.anansi.ca).

## congratulations!

On behalf of the board, I would like to congratulate two of the Festival's key staff members for ten years' service to the VIWF. Ann McDonell, our Development & Marketing Manager, joined the Festival in February 2001, and Sandra Millard, our Administrator, joined the team in September 2001.

Sandra and Ann have each made lasting contributions to the success of the Festival in their (first) decade of employment with us. Thanks to both Ann and Sandra for your hard work and dedication to the Festival.

Anne Giardini,  
Board Chair

