Kim Spencer, graduate of The Writer’s Studio at SFU, is from the Ts’msyen Nation and lives in Vancouver.


See page 6

MAUREEN BROWNLEE
Small town hope and despair. 9

MUGGINS
Victoria dog raised quarter-million for WWI vets. 16

ADRIANA BARTON
Self-esteem, bad relationships & music. 12
You have books about sharks for different age groups coming this fall—Big Sharks, Small World for babies and Sharks Forever for middle graders. In your research for these books, is there something you learned that you were surprised by, or that you think everyone just has to know?

I can't stress this enough—sharks are so much less likely to bite you than humans. More people are killed by camels, cows or kangaroos than are killed by sharks. Sharks almost never bite humans—but every time they do, the media covers the story like it's a nuclear level threat or a Royal wedding.

What are a couple of ways that people can help sharks on a daily basis?

Sharks are threatened by pollution and climate change—just like we are. And we know what we have to do about these threats. But also make sure the cat food and cosmetics you buy don't contain shark.

If you were a shark which one would you be and why?

Working on the book I fell in love with whale sharks—one of the most beautiful animals on earth—but we know that lemon sharks have friends. So, I'd want to be a lemon shark.

Why Humans Build Up is a nonfiction title for middle grade readers all about buildings and why we build them so high. What made you want to explore this topic?

I wrote this book after answering countless questions about skyscrapers from my three sons. Eventually, my youngest son asked me why the Burj Khalifa was so tall. I thought that was a great question.

What's one cool and unexpected fact that you learned while researching this book?

Biomimicry! I was surprised by how much the natural world has influenced architects and engineers in their designs. For instance, the Eastgate Centre Building in Harare, Zimbabwe uses a natural cooling design that's based on giant termite mounds, which uses only 10-percent of the electricity of similar buildings.

If you were a building, which one would you be and why?

The CIS Tower in Manchester, England. To be honest, the 25-story tower isn't much to look at. What is remarkable, however, is how the CIS Tower has adapted with the times, and I'd like to think that I'm trying to do the same thing, especially when it comes to leading a more environmentally-sustainable lifestyle.
Phillip & April Vannini
With Autumn Menual
In the Name of Wild: One Family, Five Years, Ten Countries, and a New Vision of Wildness (UBC Press $24.95)

Colleen MacDonald
Let’s Go Biking: Vancouver Island, Gulf Islands, Sunshine Coast (Sandhill Book Marketing $22.95)

Kim Spencer
Weird Rules to Follow (Civica $12.95)

Alison Tedford
Stay White, Not Broke: Protect Your Brand in Today’s Business Climate (Self-Counsel Press $29.95)

Marie Amharto Baker
Miskwagoode (New Star $16)

Phillip & April Vannini
With Autumn Menual
In the Name of Wild: One Family, Five Years, Ten Countries, and a New Vision of Wildness (UBC Press $24.95)

Christian Guy-Félin
Falling Shadows (Talonbooks $19.95)

Nancy Dyson & Dan Rubenstein
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Invasive Flora of the West and the Pacific Northwest with Cattle Feuds, Murder and School: Lament & Legacy (Heritage House $24.95)

Robert Favis
Gardeners: Essentials for Growing Better Plants (New Society $22.99)

Michael Blouin
I Am Billy the Kid (Avril Press $24)

Chad Reimer
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Grant Lawrence
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UPCOMING FALL READS

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25 Years and Going Strong!
Jean Barman at the end of another long day of work logging, circa 1960.

Paradise in a logging Camp

Vancouver-raised Kathryn Willcock grew up in the 1960s spending summers in remote logging camps on BC’s coast where her father lived and worked nine months of the year.

When asked where she went every summer, Willcock’s usual reply was “Up the coast.” The catch-all name never elicited further questions, she says, “because, for most people, ‘up the coast’ was a vague place somewhere north of Vancouver, with endless forests, a rugged coastline, and not much else.”

But it was magic to Kathryn and her sisters as they were set loose to play in the wilderness despite their mother keeping a rifle next to the wood stove and their logger father risking his life every day. Willcock describes it all in her memoir, Up the Coast: One Family’s Wild Life in the Forests of British Columbia (NeWest $24.95). “There was no point in trying to explain that my father’s logging camp was situated on the shores of one of the most spectacular fjords in the world. I loved going there for the freedom and the beauty, and sitting around the kitchen table at night with my family, telling stories by the light of a kerosene lamp.”

BECOMING

There were several times in the 1800s when what is now known as British Columbia could easily have slipped into the control of the United States. BC would have become a state and not a province. With the availability of newly accessible private correspondence exchanged with the Colonial Office in London, the indefatigable historian, Jean Barman provides new insights into these precarious times in British Columbia in the Balance: 1846-1871 (Harbour $36.95) and describes the area’s transformation from a largely indigenious territory into a province of the recently formed Canada Confederation.

Several major events kept the land within Britain’s administration: the 1846 treaty that established the 49th parallel boundary between the US and Britain, the formalization of the Colony of British Columbia in 1858 (Vancouver Island was its own colony as of 1849) when 30,000 American gold seekers threatened to own colony as of 1849) when 30,000 American gold seekers threatened to take over the mainland territory; and, in the mid-1860s, when the gold rush petered out, leaving the two colonies burdened with such massive public debts that they merged into one colony under the name of British Columbia with Victoria as its capital.

After much political wrangling, and agreements to assume the Colony of BC’s debts and build a transportation connection to the eastern parts of Canada, BC became the sixth Canadian province on July 20, 1871.

Don’t say colonization is abstract

Living performed at festivals—such as the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word and the Talking Stick Festival—and at over 50 venues from Victoria to Toronto, been published in more than a dozen journals and magazines and in an anthology, and self-published three chapbooks, Tawahum Bige has finally released their debut collection of poetry, Cut to Fortress (Nightwood $19.95). These poems course with anguish and rage as Bige confronts colonialism and family relationships disrupted by trauma. When a writing professor says the use of ‘colonization’ in a poem is too abstract, Bige replies: “Colonization is a two-man saw: a signed-in-blood, written-in-English/contract atop a forest cut to stumps/. . . Colonization is our burned anthologies/silenced oral histories over millennia/replaced with intergenerational trauma/. . . he was in foster care from fifteen—/a groan/ and from three stories up/Life-Tree creaks and . . .”

Based in Vancouver, Bige is Lutsel’k’e Dene and Plains Cree, holds a BA in creative writing from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and self-describes as a “two-spirit, non-binary sadboy on occupied Turtle Island.”

Villains & Victims

In Joseph Kakwinokanasum’s debut novel, My Indian Summer (Tidewater $22.95), it’s 1979 in the little town of Red Rock, twelve miles out of Dawson Creek, and twelve-year-old Hunter Frank is struggling to stay clear of his violent, alcoholic mother, Margareta and older brother, Noah. His sister Deb, who protected him, has run away to Vancouver.

“Keep clear of mom and Noah,” Deb tells Hunter before she boards the Greyhound bus. “Do your chores. Save as much money as you can, and make a plan to leave, like I did. Okay?”

Hunter returns bottles and hunts small game to sell to three elders for cash. Then he finds an abandoned bag stuffed with cash and illegal marijuana. Will Hunter escape the dangerous drug dealer who is looking for him with a loaded gun? And will he forgive his mother who is a residential school survivor?

Joseph Kakwinokanasum is of Cree and Austrian descent and grew up in BC’s Peace region, one of seven children raised by a single mother. In 2022, he was selected by Governor General winner Darrel J. McLeod as one of the Writers’ Trust of Canada’s “Rising Stars.” Kakwinokanasum lives in Metro Vancouver.

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### Weird Rules to Follow is an anec-

dotal history of life for young Indig-

eous girls in a very specific time and

place. But the book’s themes of glaring

discriminations and injustices, in an effective,

personal way that will impact some of

the lasting, multi-generational impacts

and continued realities and injustices.

Spencer explains that, in addition to

using outdated terminology and names

that were common at the time (such

as Native and Indian), her framing of

residential schools reflects the fact that

such atrocities “were not openly talked

about or widely discussed back then.”

The novel is a series of scenes from

Mia’s childhood, presented as episodic

chapters told through Mia’s first-per-

son perspective. Spencer’s writing style

captures an authentic youthful voice

while tackling challenging themes and
topics—emphasizing not only how well

kids understand prejudice and inequal-

ity but also how related anxieties, shame,

and belittling experiences can control a

kid’s life and influence the construction of their identity.

In one scene, a Coast Salish dance
group performs during a large assem-

bly at Mia’s school. When one of the
dancers addresses the audience and

asks the Indigenous students to iden-
tify themselves, Mia doesn’t raise her

hand. “I’m too embarrassed to raise my

hand,” Spencer writes. “I ad-

mire the Native students who put their

hands up. They seem so comfortable

with themselves. I can’t imagine feel-

ing that way. The speaker continues,

‘It’s race to see so many of you in the

audience. Always be proud of who you

are, be proud of being Native Indian.’

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New books from
Douglas & McIntyre

CHASING RIVERS
A Whitewater Life
A raw and honest work from a talented new voice in adventure writing, Tamar Godejohn’s memoir about being a whitewater guide is a page-turner, transporting readers through wild rapids and breathtaking canyons, navigating eddies and currents, as she learns from the river that finding self-forgiveness might be the most hard-to-reach destination of all.

NAVIGATING THE MESSY MIDDLE
A Fearlessly Honest and Wildly Encouraging Guide for Midlife Women
Roughly 66 million North American women currently grapple with the challenges of midlife, faced with a culture that tells them their “best-before date” has long passed. Ann Douglas pushes back against this toxic narrative, providing a fierce and unapologetic book for and about midlife women.

MUSHROOMING
The Joy of the Quiet Hunt – An Illustrated Guide to the Fascinating, the Delicious, the Deadly and the Strange
Diane Bossett’s guide to appreciating mushrooms is filled with insights and anecdotes about more than 120 charismatic fungi. With gorgeous illustrations by Kelley Osid, it will appeal to everyone from beginning mushroomers to advanced mycologists.

KINAIYUT?
What’s Your Name? The Eskimo Disc System and a Daughter’s Search for Her Grandmother
Dr. Norma Dunning, winner of a 2021 Governor General’s Award for Literature, takes a revealing and personal look into an abscorbed piece of Canadian history: what was once called the Eskimo Identification Canada System.

SHOPOMANIA
Our Obsession with Possession
Sassy and satirical, here is an economic, environmental and social study by Paul Berton. This light-hearted, darkly skewed lexicon of coined words, or “shoponyms,” takes readers on a roller-coaster ride of extravagant antics and outrageous profligacy.

Available in bookstores across British Columbia

Have You Eaten Yet?
Stories from Chinese Restaurants Around the World
Unraveling a complex history of cultural migration and world politics, Chiu-Kwan Lee narrates a fascinating story of culture and place, ultimately revealing how an excellent meal always tells an even better story.

ICExWARM
Hockey Meets Cold War Politics at the 1972 Summit Series
Discover a diplomacy mission like no other in this behind-the-scenes story of the historic 1972 Summit Series. Amid the tension of the Cold War, young Canadian diplomat Gary J. Smith must navigate between two nations skaking a dangerous path.

DO TREES HAVE MOTHERS?
With whimsical art and gentle text, Charles Barber translates scientific knowledge about the kinship structures of the forest into a beautiful and affirming story about how trees nurture the young. Discover all the ways a mother tree protects and nourishes the forest undergrowth, and show children what it means to care for a community.

DEATH AT THE SAVOY
A Procilla Templett Mystery, Book 1
Here is the first book in an atmospheric, entertaining new mystery series by Rom Base and Prioduce Enyey that introduces a plucky Canadian heroine and her cat in the world’s most famous hotel. An intoxicating blend of mystery, suspense and humour.

NOONDAY DARK
A Doctor Annick Baudreau Mystery #2
Discover the clash and charia of a city embroiled in politics in Charles Demers’ second installment of the mystery series set in Vancouve that tackles mental health issues and features a feisty psychologist turned detective, Dr. Annick Baudreau.

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Gold, Grit, Guns
Alexander Globe

“Eureka. Alexander Globe has hit a literary jackpot . . . the diaries in Gold, Grit, Guns are foundational.”
— ALAN TWIGG, author of Out of Hiding

Only four extensive miners’ journals are known to have survived from 1858. Substantial quotes provide an engaging authenticity. The miners’ voices, personalities and experiences reveal their dreams of glory, hardships, and fortunes won and lost. Richly researched and packed with rarely seen illustrations of life on the Fraser in 1858.

978-1-55380-584-7 PRINT | 978-1-55380-585-4 EBOOK | $30 pp | $24.95
Maureen Brownlee

A third major character in Cambium Blue is Nash Malone, an eccentric old widower and junk collector who lived through the Great Depression either jobless and half-starving or working in relief camps near Vancouver for 20 cents a day. Surprisingly, he also fought in the Spanish Civil War — although unbeknownst to Beauty Creek folks, not for political reasons, rather because he was at a dead end with no job prospects. But the townspeople suspect him of being a “Commie,” a term most don’t fully understand, only believing that Nash is some kind of nut to be avoided. In fact, he is a writer and poet (mostly unpublished except for poems Maggie prints in the Chronicle), and he suffers from PTSD after witnessing the bloody mayhem of war in Spain, which Brownlee covers in flashbacks and Nash’s poetry.

It’s Nash who saves young Stevie from an assault in her front yard when she’s followed home one night from a Legion social event. The abuser is not taking no for an answer. Suddenly a voice comes out of the dark: “Sounds like the lady wants you to go,” says Nash, holding a gun. The abuser tries to get Nash to leave, but he stands firm. “It’s the abuser who backs down, not the lady,” says Nash. “She wants you to go,” says the abuser. “I assure you they are not,” Brownlee firmly states in her acknowledgements. She has, she says, “concocted a tale.”

Yet through the tribulations and resilience of Stevie, Maggie and Nash, against a large supporting cast of other small-towners, Brownlee has effectively portrayed the very real dynamics of an interior BC town on the verge of big change.

Beverly Champ, the publisher of BC BookWorld, grew up in Valemount enjoying views of Canoe Mountain and playing on the shores of the glacier-fed Swift Creek. Many of her neighbours worked at the now-defunct Canyon Creek Sawmill.

A battalion of Canadians who fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). By 1937, over 1,200 Canadians took part, including Maureen Brownlee’s fictional character, Noah Malone.
**Fortune Knox Once**  
More Humour From the Edge  
Jack Knox  
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**Fabulous Reads for Fall Days**

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A new fantasy series follows children with “ordinary” talents, groomed to use their forces for good. But who actually wrote this book?

in the Darkness

By Heidi Greco

WEN AN ESTABLISHED AUTHOR DECIDES TO PUBLISH WORK UNDER A PSEUDONYM, I ASK MYSELF WHAT THE REASONS MIGHT BE. IN THE CASE OF ORDINARY MONSTERS, IT CERTAINLY CAN’T BE THAT THEY’RE SEEKING TO HIDE THEMSELVES FROM REACTION TO THE BOOK, AS THE BOOK IS NOT ONLY AMAZING, BUT IS PROJECTED AS THE FIRST PART OF A SERIES CALLED THE TALENTS.

The word “Talents” in that title refers to a group of children with extraordinary powers, and we meet a number of them in this first volume of the series. Their talents are not the singing-and-dancing variety that usually comes to mind. These talents are almost otherworldly, ranging from invisibility to the beauty of his works, Miró took artistic risks that at times led him being subjected to ridicule. So perhaps this is the author’s way of saying that this book presents his taking a different kind of risk than in his previous work. And seeing as Miró suffered periods of debilitating depression, “J.M. Miro” could be a reference by the author behind the pen name—Victoria’s own Steven Price—to the kinds of issues that tend to plague creative souls. Price’s previous work, especially his book Lampedusa, considers love and art and the impermanence of our lives—the latter bringing a depressing topic to many.

The complexities in Price’s work have been evident all the way back to his first book, Anatomy of Keys. Based on the life of Harry Houdini, the poetry collection is arranged much like a tarot deck, with four sections of thirteen poems as well as a distinct section, “The Circus at the End of the World,” which could almost serve as precursor to some of the scenes in Ordinay Monsters. The structure in his first collection is subtle, but once spotted, hard to ignore, and aptly suited to a pseudo-biography of the famed magician.

As for where the next book in this series might go, it’s not easy to say, though there are a few small hints to be found, including the likely return of one of the main protagonists. I suspect the timeline will likely move ahead some, with perhaps a new generation of Talents. But I can only speculate, based on my reading (which chomped up nearly an entire packet of yellow sticky notes). There’s so much in these pages—clearly too much to share.

Apparenty when Daniel Handler gives a bookstore reading on behalf of his alter ego, Lemony Snicket, he explains Snicket’s absence as being due to some mysterious circumstance—a reason so wonderfully flippant excuse for Bachman’s demise. For as Benjamin, he chose to retire Richard Bachman, he offered “cancer of the pseudonym” as a flippant excuse for Bachman’s demise. I’m hoping Steven Price will own up on seeing him at the Vancouver Writers Fest and don’t want him to show up in some ZZ Top–style disguise like Joaquin Phoenix, because Ordinary Monsters is a work to be proud of—anything but ordinary. 9780771000027

Heidi Greco’s writing appears in a number of recent anthologies, including “Worth More Standing” — a book of tree-themed poetry from Caitlin. www.heidigreco.ca

Ordinary Monsters
by J. M. Miro (McClelland & Stewart $39.95)

Power in the Darkness

By Heidi Greco

11 BC BOOKWORLD • AUTUMN 2022
Adriana Barton’s *Wired for Music* dissects her slow and often painful climb from low self-esteem and dysfunctional relationships to a positive embrace of music.

The way that her search for music and its weakness: Barton skims over narrative is both the book’s strength and its weakness. Barton’s emphasis on rhythm and singing as the core of both music and community engagement is perhaps the biggest takeaway here. Anyone with a pulse can keep a beat, she argues, and anyone who can keep a beat can be a musician. And by positing that singing is as simple and necessary as breathing, she does a great service for those whose relationship with music has been warped by the Western conceptions of technical excellence over enjoyment and expression. Their number is legion, and they’ll be consoled and inspired by this text.

Aruna Anantaraman’s *Without Anantaraman* is a kind of bereavement music almost by accident—Barton’s 

Adriana Barton was left with a gnawing sense of emptiness, a void that neither professional nor personal success as a Globe and Mail health reporter nor marriage and motherhood could entirely fill. 

**Wired for Music** recounts the former cellist’s attempts to reconnect with music however she could; but in addition to being a memoir it’s a comprehensive survey of current research into music’s role in promoting psychic and physical health. This bifurcated narrative is both the book’s strength and its weakness: Barton skims over the science at a breakneck pace, and the way that her search for music takes her around the globe can also seem more like an all-inclusive Thomas Cook’s tour than a particularly profound examination of how sound can be a source of solace and connection.

Nonetheless, a lot of value can be extracted from these pages. On the science side, Barton introduces us to a who’s who of researchers into culture and cognition, from musician and biologist David Rothenberg to neurologist Oliver Sachs to anthropologist Wade Davis. Too often, though, their theories are reduced to a pithy quote, and then it’s on to the next topic and the next thinker, with little deeper exploration. Perhaps Barton’s aim, though, is simply to introduce us to their concepts, and if so, she succeeds. Personally, I’m looking forward to looking into 

*With Flotation* and 

**Rhythm & Blues**

Adriana Barton (left) and at right, age 5, playing cello (the latter an arty photo taken by Barton’s mother).
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Since 1995, BC BookWorld and the Vancouver Public Library have co-sponsored the Woodcock Award and the Writers Walk at 350 W. Georgia St. in Vancouver. This $5000 award is also sponsored by Dr. Yosef Wosk, The Writers Trust of Canada, and Pacific BookWorld News Society.

Tom Wayman (born August 13, 1945)—a poet, essayist and novelist—helped bring into being a new movement of “work poetry” in North America and was a co-founder of the Vancouver Industrial Writers’ Union, a work-writing circle that staged readings in the 1980s. He has written over twenty books of poetry, collaborated on six anthologies, and published four books of fiction and three books of essays. He has been honoured with the Canadian Authors Association medal for poetry, the A.J.M. Smith Prize for distinguished achievement in Canadian poetry, the Acorn-Plantos Award for Peoples Poetry, and first prize in the USA Bicentennial Poetry Awards competition, and he was shortlisted for a Governor General’s Literary Award for poetry.

Tom Wayman, Woodcock ceremony, Vancouver Public Library, 2022.
UNTIMELY DEATH

When a sister dies before their mother, Rita Moir struggles to re-find joy and “recompose the harmony of our days.”

Not of Reason: A Recipe for Outrunning Sadness by Rita Moir (Caitlin Press $22.95)

By Portia Priegert

Slocan Valley author Rita Moir found the impetus for her latest memoir, Not of Reason: A Recipe for Outrunning Sadness, in the deaths of her beloved older sister, Judy, and her Irish-born mother, Erin. Moir reflects on love, loss and grief overturning her life decades later. “This story is my attempt at triggers it as shingles decades later. Moir details days filled with the emotional labour of care-giving—sleepless nights, cycles of hope and despair. Ungent family enclaves and, eventually, the making of funeral arrangements and the dismantling of homes.

Her writing is most sure-footed, rich in detail and oozing love of place, when she is back home in the Slocan. But she is also coming to terms with the loss of her sister. “Each night, unless I am so exhausted from physical work that I fall straight to sleep, I relive her death, her last minutes struggling and letting go,” she writes. “And with it, I rip up my insides …” Moir won both the BC Book Prize and the VanCity Book Prize for her 1999 memoir, Buffalo Jump: A Woman’s Travels (Coteau), about her cross-country journey of recovery. She has worked as a journalist, stringing for both the CBC and The Globe and Mail, and has a reporter’s ability to zoom in on the telling details of poignant moments. Several times, I found myself weeping.

Given the book’s subtitle, I had hoped for helpful strategies for moving through grief. Instead, I found myself wondering whether sadness might be contagious and, if not literally spread from writer to reader, at least rekindled. I was reminded of a way chicken pox virus can linger latent in our bodies until stress triggers it as shingles decades later.

Moir sets out her path in the book’s prologue, saying she wants not only to tell the stories of her family, but to “recompose the harmony of our days.” She adds: “This story is my attempt at restoration.”

But knowing how the narrative would unfold left me restless as Moir paged forward, setting the stage and getting readers up to speed on the history of a family hardy and resilient, but not especially remarkable, except in the way that all families are worlds unto themselves—their idiosyncrasies entangled in the conjoined twins of story and memory, shared up by love, duty and camaraderie. Or not. Families can be complex, though Moir’s portrait is largely positive. She has no scores to settle, nor dirty laundry to air. She admires her sister for her strength, her leadership, her ability to organize. We often avoid uncomfortable discussions about death and many among us are ill-prepared for our parents’ final decline, typically a mid-life rite of passage. The transition can be profound, not only stirring up the past but also reminding us in sobering ways about our own mortality. While the death of a parent can offer the consolation of a life, if not impeccably well-lived, at least long, a particularly painful grief often arises when a child dies first. This affront to our sense of generational order is an underlying premise of this book, although, as Moir points out, such premature passings are not as rare as we would like to think. Many people, myself included, have sat with their parents as a sibling dies, and then, years later, watched their parents succumb.

Canada’s cultural mores make grief a largely private affair. People are expected to adjust and move on. “It’s almost unseemly to feel deeply and mourn at length. Eight months after Judy’s death, Moir wants to be happy and light footed, to outrun sadness. “I want to be magnificent, competent, ethereal. I want to rise above it all, but instead, I stumble.”

Her mother offers common-sense wisdom: “The bad days come at you unbidden and can take you over, but you have to choose joy and laughter. You simply have to opt for joy.”

Eventually, Moir outruns her grief. Her recipe is to give herself space for it, to let go, and to plunge into life. She cooks, spends time with friends and adopts a puppy, a golden retriever that she takes to agility training, while also finding solace in yoga classes and solitary walks in nature.

Not of Reason left me feeling fragile. Your experiences likely weigh the demands of life, more than mine, as your emotions and personality. Perhaps immersing yourself in this difficult trajectory will trigger challenging emotions. Or, perhaps, you will find a soothing salve in the kinship of story.

Victoria-based Portia Priegert is the editor for Galleries West and a former reporter for the Canadian Press.
A Victoria purebred Spitz raised the equivalent of a quarter-million dollars for veterans of World War I.

Muggins, the book of Toronto professor Dr. Sylvia Van Kirk
R. Graham Chandler is a freelance writer with a specialty in military and heritage stories. He holds a PhD in Archaeology.
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A TIME TO FORGIVE,
A TIME TO HEAL

Merging memoir and poetry, Jónína Kirton reveals the effects of colonization on her Métis family and her path to healing.

Standing in a River of Time
by Jónína Kirton
(Talonbooks $ 19.95)

By Beverly Cramp

BC BookWorld: You start your memoir as your mother is dying. Was that the most trying period in your life?

JK: I would not describe her dying as a trying time. It was more of an awakening. As the only girl, I was very close to my mother, a beautiful woman, that I jokingly referred to as the “church lady” due to her devotion to her faith. She was a kind woman, interested in community and always learning. The way she negotiated her final days, still thinking of others and caring for her family, made me realize how self- and self-centred I had become. Unhealed people can be very self-centred. They can’t help it. They walk around with open wounds, thin skin, that is easily hurt. It is hard to think of others when you are in that kind of pain, and yet my mother managed to do this. Seeing this and witnessing the miracle of her leaving her body sent me even deeper into my own healing.

BCBW: Your father’s troubled identity as a Métis man who is an alcoholic caused problems in your family. Later in life you learned that racism and colonialism were to blame for many of his destructive behaviours. Do you think he ever realized that?

JK: Despite a few attempts, one that included Alcoholics Anonymous, he was never able to stop drinking. Drunk he led to violence, to overspending and to things like drunk driving charges. So even though my father was a successful in his career and well respected by many, he lived his entire adult life in that downward spiral into alcoholism. Not one to talk about himself, most of what I know about my father came from my mother and other family members. I was a teenager when my cousin, an enumerator for Saskatch- ewan Métis, offered to confirm this. This after a lifetime of denying he was Indigenous. No matter what happened between us, I have always loved him.

He is my dad. Not only did he and my mother give me life, I also know he tried really hard to give us kids a good life. He deserves to be at peace.

BCBW: You also pay attention to your Icelandic heritage (on your mother’s side). How has this been a source of strength for you?

JK: I read the book with a quote from my Icelandic grandmother whose name I carry. I do this because I wanted to show that Icelanders also care for this earth, and show the pride I feel about being her grandmother and being Icelandic. Grandmother was a strong woman, the mother of seventeen children, all home births. She was a joyful woman and never complained, despite living in poverty. Having her name is an honour. My Icelandic aunts and uncles embody her strength, strength that I did not fully understand until I went to Iceland in 2017. While there I saw the beauty and yet harshness of those lands. I saw what it must have taken to live there in the early days. I saw their path of story and poetry and realized that I get my desire to tell stories from both sides.

BCBW: In your book’s foreword, Wanda John-Kehewin writes “Loss and love run through this work, which is about acceptance and healing through truth.” Was detailing the healing power of truth the major aim of this book? Or did writing your memoir bring out your story of healing?

JK: There has been something very healing about documenting some of the harm I have experienced. There can be no reconciliation without truth. Absusers rarely admit to what they have done and often use gaslighting to keep you questioning reality. Truth becomes muddy, and I like clarity. In fact, when referring to my second book, An Honest Woman, Betsy Warland said, “Kirton picks over what she was raised familiarly and culturally like a crime scene.” Her assessment was accurate, and I was tickled. Writing that book was in a way a mission to expose the world that young women and girls enter. When writing, Standing in a River of Time, I felt, in fairness, that I needed to soften my gaze and share hard truths about some of the things I had done.

The title, Standing in a River of Time, comes from a teaching I once heard about time being a river with the future at our back moving forward and the past in front of us flowing away. I used this title as I do believe that unless one has the gift of prophesy, we can’t see the future, but we can drink from the past and so can we make peace with things that have caused us pain. What I hoped to convey in the book was that our healing may never be done and that this is okay. The book was never intended to be a road map for healing but rather to show how messy healing can be and that accepting our imperfections could bring much needed change in the world.

Jónína Kirton will be a guest at the 2022 Vancouver Writers Festival, October 17-23.

Beverly Cramp is publisher of BC BookWorld.
he troubles for David Schaffer and his family began in 1939 when he’d barely started grade two. His teacher came to the Schaffer home to tell them that David, a prize-winning student, could not go back to school. As an ally of Nazi Germany, the Romanian government was expelling Jewish children from state-run classrooms.

Less than a year later, Schaffer’s family and great-grandmother were ordered to board a train by soldiers with bayonets. “Sick people, the soldiers said his great grandmother would be taken to a nearby asylum, Schaffer remembers years later. “The sad truth is that whoever stood up or actively resisted was immediately killed. Instead, many people resisted by transgressing the rules … we resisted because we wanted to survive … living through the horror was resistance.”

Eventually, Russian soldiers freed Romania from the German army. A relative gave the Schaffer family shelter until they found an empty house to stay in as it still wasn’t safe to return to the house they were forced to leave in 1940.

David Schaffer’s harrowing story, titled “A Kind of Resistance” and illustrated by Vancouver-based Miriam Libicki, is one of three graphic stories in But I Live. The other illustrated stories concern two Jewish boys, Rico and Rolf Kamp, who were hidden from German soldiers in thirteen different Amsterdam homes, titled “Thirteen Secrets” and illustrated by Gilad Seliktar of Israel; and Emmie Arbel, who survived in not one but two concentration camps in the title story, illustrated by Barbara Yelin, who lives in Munich, Germany.

The use of graphic narratives allows the survivors’ stories to seamlessly shift from an elder relating their story where it is plain to see how the Holocaust has impacted them all their life — to when they were a wide-eyed child faced with unspeakable terror, as reflected in Emmie Arbel’s story. At one point, illustrations show the artist, Yelin walking with Arbel to find a coffee shop where they could sit down and talk. Arbel’s favourite café is closed, and it’s hard to find another one she likes. As Arbel tells Yelin, “that’s too crowded for me. … I told you, I don’t like to be among many people… And I need to sit near the wall.”

The next panel depicts decades earlier as women and children are lined up at a concentration camp. “I remember us standing for hours,” says Arbel, now drawn as a little girl with shorn hair, “… and mother fainted.”

Arbel continues: “You know, even as a child, you learn quickly how to survive. I know I must stay standing. I should not do anything. Because I knew if I’d go to her they would shoot me. And I was afraid. I was so afraid she was dying.”

Here the art shifts back to Arbel as an older woman and at her desk, playing solitaire on her computer. But she is still remembering that horrible day. “So I stayed standing, she says to herself.”

The graphic narratives in But I Live are powerful and relate the Holocaust stories in profound and intense ways that words alone cannot. Created for middle readers, this book is suitable for adults too. The combination of child Holocaust survivor stories as told to illustrators and complete narratives was the brainchild of UVic professor Schallie. She noticed that her thirteen-year-old, resistant to reading, was taking an active interest in novels. And Schallie was also interested in telling survivor stories in new ways. “It felt we need to find approaches to testimony collections, telling the Holocaust in a richer, deeper way,” she says.

"It is very important for us that graphic novels just illustrators but are actively co-creating the history with the survivors. Visual storytelling in graphic narratives effective for life stories of survivors who were ch
“The wiser we can be as people, the more informed we can be as citizens and the more empathy we can have for each other. Graphic novels are not just a document in the archives, they’re something people will be drawn to reading.” —Miriam Libicki, artist
Fresh from the Forge

Thick Skin
Field Notes from a Sister in the Brotherhood
HILARY PEACH

For more than two decades, Hilary Peach worked as a transient welder — and one of the only women — in the Boilermakers Union. This is her story.

MEMOIR | 384 PAGES | $22 | SEPTEMBER

The Longest Suicide
The Authorized Biography of Art Bergmann
JASON SCHNEIDER
Introduction by Michael Turner

As Canada’s punk poet laureate, Art Bergmann has been tearing up stages, and terrifying the music industry, for half a century. Art’s story is one of rock and roll’s great tales untold. Until now.

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A glimpse westward from the ironworkers’ Memorial Second Narrows Crossing reveals massive orange cranes hoisting containers at the Port of Vancouver terminal, a fortress of glass towers that marks Canada’s highest density, and Stanley Park’s green forest rising above Burrard Inlet. Earliest European Vancouver was forged right in the centre of this view, at a small sawmill plunked atop pilings, surrounded by seemingly endless stands of timber.

In 1865 Captain Edward Stamp built his mill on 100 acres leased from the Colony of British Columbia (at 1 cent per acre). The Colony was all about expansion (at the expense of original inhabitants), and the mill’s cutting rights eventually extended up the coast. Water for its boilers splashed down a wooden flume from Trout Lake, often prone to freezing in winter. Sparing no expense, Stamp also commissioned a 146-foot steam tug to work the water. A store was added in 1868 to supply mill employees—from ham to horeseshoes and seawman’s biscuits. Separated by race and class, most lived on mill property, although Indigenous people weren’t permitted to live there. Some dwelled beside the mill at a seasonal encampment of the Squamish people called Kendumkuyum, meaning “Maple Trees.”

Stamp failed during a previous attempt at Port Alberni mill due to strong resistance from the Tsawatsht people. He brought along two cannonades to this new venture, just in case. His only competition came from Sewell Moody’s more efficient mill at Moodyville on the North Shore. However, Stamp ran his mill deep into debt, and the search began for new owners and a capable manager. (The mill later became known as Hastings Mill when nearby New Brighton changed its name to Hastings.)

Lisa Anne Smith’s finely researched Hastings Mill: The Historic Times of a Vancouver Community is bursting with characters set against Vancouver’s defining moments. Her interest was kindled by the late historian John Hunter’s summer is a journey out of Red Rock sooner than he hoped. Hunter Frank may be getting drug dealer/uni00A0./uni00A0./uni00A0. twelve-year-old

Three kokums, a man named Cow, two best friends and a drug dealer... twelve-year-old Hunter Frank may be getting drug dealer/uni00A0./uni00A0./uni00A0. twelve-year-old

The implications of Vancouver’s growth for Indigenous people are very much on the periphery of the Hastings Mill story—indeed, for most of BC’s pioneering history. Lisa Anne Smith recognizes this and concludes with an interpretation of what life may have been like at Kumkumlye, before a “cannibalistic” Captain Edward Stamp arrived. “Widely diverse cultures were about to collide full force and, for the original inhabitants of Kumkumlye and other Indigenous communities, life would be drastically altered.”

Book proceeds will benefit the Friends of the Old Hastings Mill Store’s efforts to maintain and further restore the museum.


Vancouver was born out of a “company town,” run by a colonial business, where bars and brothels flourished.

“Tell me that I was going to become involved—hook, line and sinker—with Vancouver’s oldest surviving building and its remarkable past,” she says. Smith is a member of the Native Daughters of B.C. (founded in 1919 and still active more than a hundred years later), the group that rescued the iconic Old Hastings Mill Store from demolition in 1930 and barged it to the foot of Alma Street, winched ashore and turned into a museum.

Hastings Mill’s story includes the Great Fire of 1886 that devoured nearby Granville in about 45 minutes. Survivors congregated at the Hastings Store, the only building left standing. A plea from the mayor was carried on horseback to the telegraph at New Westminster: “To Sir John A. Macdonald. Our city is in ashes, three thousand people homeless, can you send any government aid.” Hastings Mill manager Richard Alexander offered free wood for people to rebuild and merchandise from the store; his wife Emma spearheaded the Women’s Relief Committee. Within six weeks the styfy frontier town had been rebuilt, destined to eclipse New Westminster and Victoria.

Nearby Granville was highly profitable, shipping lumber to Chile, Australia, Shanghai and other international markets. A schoolhouse was built in 1872, and Granville post office opened at the store two years later. Countless sailors came ashore—many drawn to nearby saloons and brothels; by 1881 there was also a campaign underway to build an Anglican church. The townsite around the mill expanded; CPR expansion was looming, and land speculators weren’t far behind.

The mill burned down and was rebuilt. Innovation in mill technology and the transition from oxen to labour-saving steam donkeys are thoroughly detailed, as is the genesis of health care for coastal loggers when a hospital was built at the company’s lumber camp at Rock Bay, north of Campbell River. There are walk-on appearances by newspaperman and future premier John Robson, Joe Fortes, the CPR’s William Cornelius Van Horne, John Deighton, a.k.a. Gassy Jack (whose statue was recently toppled in Gastown), the city’s first mayor, Malcolm MacLean, and future lumber magnate H.R. MacMillan. Jericho Charlie delivered goods from the Hastings Store to logging camps aboard his giant Squamish freight canoe. The store manager Calvert Simson became fluent in the Chinook trade language and was invited to one of the last potlatches before they were banned.

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Lisa Anne Smith is author/co-author of four books and a former host of CBC Radio’s BC Almanac.

The Lumber Mill that Became a City

ISBN 978-1-990160-1 2-7

$22.95
2022 GEORGE RYGA AWARD FOR SOCIAL AWARENESS IN LITERATURE

Not On My Watch

How a Renegade Whale Biologist Took on Governments and Industry to Save Wild Salmon (Random House) by Alexandra Morton

Alexandra Morton’s story of her lifelong struggle to save wild salmon — and the ecosystem on the west coast — is a modern day “Joan of Arc” story, and her example of fighting for environmental, social, community and multicultural justice is a beacon for all activists.

FINALSISTS

• Peyakow: Reclaiming Cree Dignity (Douglas & McIntyre) by Darrel J. McLeod
• Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest (Vintage) by Suzanne Simard
• Solidarity: Canada’s Unknown Revolution of 1983 (Ronsdale Press) by David Spaner
• “Indian” in the Cabinet: Speaking Truth to Power (HarperCollins) by Jody Wilson-Raybould

Alexandra Morton received $2,500 for the award at a reception at the Vancouver Public Library.

Judges for the George Ryga Award were author and poet Trevor Carolan, VPL librarian Jane Curry and BC BookWorld publisher Beverly Cramp.

With the sponsorship of Yosef Wosk, VPL and Pacific BookWorld News Society, the annual George Ryga Award is given to a BC writer who has achieved an outstanding degree of social awareness in a new book published in the preceding calendar year.

BC BookWorld: When did you become interested in theatre?
Edwin Wong: During my teens, I discovered Friedrich Nietzsche. I was at Munro’s Bookstore [in Victoria], and quite randomly, I bought The Birth of Tragedy. Up to then, I had been reading Hardy Boys books and comics. The Birth of Tragedy—Nietzsche’s theory on how the dramatic art form of tragedy begins and ends—blew me away. I knew I had to dedicate my life to coming up with a theory of tragedy myself. Because Nietzsche was a classicist who specialized in ancient Greek and Latin, I did the same, enrolling at UVic and then going to Brown University. All this time I was reading and seeing plays, wondering how to create a modern theory of tragedy. I’m 47 now. It’s been a long time.

BCBW: Did you encounter backlash for your new ideas?
Edwin Wong: I would say that is the reason why I chose risk: it is fruitfully ambiguous. The second type of backlash to risk theatre is that it is not Aristotle’s Poetics. For many theatre practitioners, Aristotle’s theory of catharsis, his theory of tragedy based on the feelings of pity and fear, is the be-all and end-all. In the second book, I’ve extended an olive branch to the folks who want a theory based on emotion. I argue that the emotional impact of risk theatre is anticipation (for the unexpected) and apprehension (for the bad consequences that must follow).

The third type of backlash is that the idea of risk is just too vague. Risk can mean anything. That is true. But I would say that is the reason why I chose risk: it is fruitfully ambiguous. I argue that the emotional impact of risk theatre is anticipation (for the unexpected) and apprehension (for the bad consequences that must follow).

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BCBW: What will readers learn from your new book, When Life Gives You Risk, Make Risk Theatre?
Edwin Wong: That theatre is a dress rehearsal for life. You go to the theatre and see the effects of risk and chance so that you can do better in life. A lot of the time, we live life based on forecasts, predictions and projections. We don’t factor chance and blind luck into these calculations. We don’t plan for what they don’t see coming. The problem is, something unexpected always happens. When I read his book, I thought: “This is exactly what happens in tragedy, in the plays of Shakespeare and Sophocles, of Arthur Miller and Eugene O’Neill.” Tragedy can be looked at as the dramatization of risk events gone awry. It was at this point that I started writing the first book, The Risk Theatre Model of Tragedy. It was a lucky 13 years in the writing.

BCBW: Did you encounter backlash for your new ideas?
Edwin Wong: The first book was criticized for hardly discussing the established theories of tragedy (by Aristotle, Hegel, Nietzsche and others). That’s a fair point. The reason for this was that the first book came in at over three hundred pages, and I needed all of them to unfold how risk works in drama. I introduced a whole new dramatic vocabulary based on risk: the portia of chaos, the opportunity cost of choice, and so on. In the second book, I’ve started to compare and contrast risk theatre to Aristotle’s Poetics. And in the essays that I’m currently working on, I’m branching out to differentiate risk theatre from the literary theories of Nietzsche, Freud, Jung, Barthes and Foucault.

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Thought provoking books available on

Selected by BC BookWorld

Cold Case BC: The Stories Behind the Province’s Most Sensational Murder & Missing Persons Cases by Eve Lazarus
(Arsenal Pulp $22.95)

On the heels of her bestseller Cold Case Vancouver, Eve Lazarus turns to long-forgotten murder investigations further afield. She interviews law enforcement, forensic experts and family and friends of the victims to add new life to BC historical cases, some of which date back to World War 2. Lazarus includes recently solved mysteries using new science that brought closure for victims’ families.

E. J. Hughes: Canadian War Artist by Robert Amos
(Palimpsest $19.95)

Known for his quintessential BC landscapes, E.J. Hughes was also well-regarded as a Canadian war artist, work he began in 1941. In the third volume of his series about Hughes, Robert Amos showcases the artist’s work in England, Wales and remote camps in Alaska. Hughes turned out to be Canada’s first, last and sometimes sad, such as Bernard the German’s demise.

Intertidal: poems from the littoral zone by Zoe Dickinson

Zoe Dickinson has written breathtaking poems about the precious shoreline of the Pacific West Coast.

RAVEN CHAPBOOKS 2023 POETRY CONTEST

The Raven Chapbooks 2023 Poetry Contest is open to all emerging and established poets residing on Vancouver Island, the islands of the Salish Sea, the Sunshine Coast, the islands in Howe Sound, and the Lower Mainland and communities in the Fraser Valley.

Full description and contest guidelines are available at: www.ravenchapbooks.ca

We are pleased to announce the 2023 Contest judges, Daniela Etza and Brian Day

RAVEN CHAPBOOKS POETRY CONTEST 2022 WINNER:

Zoe Dickinson

Zoe Dickinson has written a stunning collection of breathtaking poems about the precious shoreline of the Pacific West Coast.

Intertidal: poems from the littoral zone

~Arleen Paré

Entries must be received by November 30, 2022. Manuscripts are blind judged—winner announced March 1 and published June 2023.

Raven Chapbooks is an imprint of RAINBOW Publishers.

Email inquiries to publisher@ravenchapbooks.ca

Full description and contest guidelines are available at: www.ravenchapbooks.ca

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POETRY CONTEST

RAVEN CHAPBOOKS

2023 POETRY CONTEST

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BC Ferries

Selected by BC BookWorld

Return to Solitude: More Desolation Sound Adventures with the Cougar Lady, Russell the Hermit, the Spaghetti Bandit and Others by Grant Lawrence
(Harbour Publishing $26.95)

It has been ten years since writer and CBC radio broadcaster, Grant Lawrence wrote about being a kid dragged to Desolation Sound by his parents. Now a parent himself, he continues to visit the area and all its eccentric characters as he describes in this follow-up memoir. The stories are humorous, jaw-dropping and sometimes sad, such as Bernard the German’s demise.

The concepts of colours are linked to Desolation Sound by his parents. Now a parent himself, Grant Lawrence wrote a follow-up memoir. The stories are humorous, jaw-dropping and sometimes sad, such as Bernard the German’s demise.

**RP 000000 / Err / Err**
**BEWITCHED WITH DEAD POETS**

Two poets pay homage to past literary stars.

*Addds, “The soundtrack to this ballad consisted of rumbling coal carts, screaming fishmongers and chestnut vendors, church bells, horse and donkeys, and pigs and dogs. It would be considered Romantic to suggest it was first presented at a tavern, in front of an ex-lover’s house, in court, or perhaps a bathhouse.

In poems like “Ballad for Friends,” “With Benefits,” “All Standard Language Shall Be Fitted,” and “Ballad of Counter-truths,” Farr repurposes Villon’s poetic tropes for twenty-first-century realities while managing to meld the disparate eras too. (Are 2022 and 1444 that different? The irreverent list of Counter-truths—which mocks “universal knowledge and the spooks of Truth, Law, and Fidelity”—mimics Villon’s style and outlook but is applicable right here, right now for readers to attach to local circumstances.)

In “Five Ballads in Jargon,” a feat of syllables and rhymes, Farr revisits poems “sometimes attributed to Villon” and thought to be composed in 1455 and adds, “The soundtrack to this ballad consisted of rumbling coal carts, screaming fishmongers and chestnut vendors, church bells, horse and donkeys, and pigs and dogs. It would be considered Romantic to suggest it was first presented at a tavern, in front of an ex-lover’s house, in court, or perhaps a bathhouse. (Are 2022 and 1444 that different?)”

In effect, she creates a dialogue—a dazzling exchange of heady ideas—between souls that never met in real life.”

Whether she addresses weather (rain that’s “insistent as pins”), wonderment (“the world is a staggering place”), the “freaky fragility” of the planet, social invisibility, the blessing of a long romantic partnership, or aging and death (“is there anything that does not lead in this dreamy direction”), Paré takes her observations to Adnan’s poetry. In effect, she creates a dialogue—a dazzling exchange of heady ideas—between souls that never met in real life but really ought to have.

Adnan, a record of “long-distance affection,” the “freaky fragility” of the planet, social invisibility, the blessing of a long romantic partnership, or aging and death (“is there anything that does not lead in this dreamy direction”), Paré takes her observations to Adnan’s poetry. In effect, she creates a dialogue—a dazzling exchange of heady ideas—between souls that never met in real life but really ought to have.

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A Boy Named Tommy Douglas by Beryl Young with art by Joan Steacey
(Midtown Press $19.95)

AGEs 5–8

How the dream of Medicare was born

Tommy Douglas and his fateful leg injury changed health care for all Canadians.

In her art, Joan Steacey captures the cinematic art by Victoria-based Beryl Young with art by Joan Steacey. The preeminent bone surgeon happened to have his leg amputated, a bone surgeon agreed to do a free operation. Art by Joan Steacey from A Boy Named Tommy Douglas.

T

he preacher-turned-politician Tommy Douglas (1904–1986), who is widely regarded as the father of Canada’s Medicare, was inspired by what happened to him as a boy when there was no universal health care. The young Tommy needed expensive surgery to prevent his leg from being amputated, but his parents couldn’t afford to pay for it.

A stroke of good fortune reverses this near tragedy, and Tommy never forgets what almost happened to him—nor about other unfortunate children with parents who couldn’t afford to pay surgeons. He felt it wasn’t fair, and as an adult, he set out to change this injustice—as told in the graphic novel A Boy Named Tommy Douglas, written by Beryl Young.

The cinematic art by Victoria-based Beryl Young reveals an energetic young Tommy (he was never called “Tom”), who pushes his leg to the bone after tripping and falling upon a sharp stone while running in a field. The sports-loving boy must stay indoors for months to let his leg heal. He can’t play hockey at school with his friends or build snow forts. Instead, Tommy turns to reciting poetry by Robbie Burns.

“His friends clapped and cheered when Tommy performed at school concerts,” writes Young, who traces the long period of illness that leads to hospital time where a doctor finally says the leg has to be amputated.

Young captures the tragic moment with simple but powerful words that show a child’s emotions: “Amputate! Tommy couldn’t get his breath. ‘You mean cut my leg off?’ The doctor nodded.”

A famous bone surgeon happens to encounter Tommy crying in the hospital time where a doctor finally says the leg has to be amputated. He felt it wasn’t fair, and as an adult, he set out to change this injustice—as told in the graphic novel A Boy Named Tommy Douglas, written by Beryl Young.

In her art, Joan Steacey captures the historical buildings and fixtures of early 20th-century Saskatchewan, including the ubiquitous grain towers with pointed roofs, woodburning stoves and coal oil lamps. While much of the book deals with Tommy Douglas’ early years, the last third covers the community-minded years of his life as a politician than as a church minister.

In her art, Joan Steacey captures the historical buildings and fixtures of early 20th-century Saskatchewan, including the ubiquitous grain towers with pointed roofs, woodburning stoves and coal oil lamps. While much of the book deals with Tommy Douglas' early years, the last third covers the community-minded years of his life as a politician than as a church minister, including the year 1968 when Medicare is finally available to all Canadians. As the story progresses, Steacey’s illustrations cleverly display 1960s artwork on walls, starburst clocks and boxy TV sets to reflect the changing times.

We learn of Tommy’s strong social conscience in his first career as a preacher in the 1930s. Young quotes him as saying, “This church won’t be just for worship. We will help people in the community.”

Soon it’s the Great Depression when most people are desperate, with many jobless and not having enough food to eat. While consoling a farmer one day after his daughter has died of a burst appendix, Tommy makes the fateful decision to enter politics because, as Young writes, “he could do more to help people as a politician than as a church minister” by working “to pass laws to help people.”

Tommy's years reciting poems as a boy made him a powerful speaker. He inspires crowds. “They believed in his dream of medical care for everyone,” writes Young. “Today every Canadian, young or old, rich or poor, whether they live in a town or in the country, in the south or in the north, has the medical care they need.”

More details about Tommy Douglas are provided at the end of the book. In 2004, in a CBC TV vote, he was named the greatest Canadian of all time by people across the country.

Just before Tommy Douglas was to have his leg amputated, a bone surgeon agreed to do a free operation. Art by Joan Steacey from A Boy Named Tommy Douglas.

A Boy Named Tommy Douglas by Beryl Young with art by Joan Steacey
(Midtown Press $19.95)
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www.tradewindbooks.com
elements in the story (such as in the chapter “Wave Model,” in which Emma describes her self-esteem as being “up and down, like light travelling in a wave”). And Seo encourages curiosity and exploration throughout the novel, as Emma tackles Poppy’s boy trouble by using the scientific method, summarizing her findings as pieces of advice in her fake book: “It’s true that guys like their space, but it’s important to make sure he sees you from time to time. … Make sure to stay in his visible spectrum.”

Seo also gently addresses many social issues that young teens face today, such as bullying, peer pressure, body image and social media. In one scene, Olive and Emma flip through magazines, searching for an example of misrepresentation in media for a class assignment; when Olive bemoans the fact that “[the magazine] bigger than a size two,” Emma realizes how infrequently they see ordinary girls in media: “We were bombarded with images of girls who were not only thin, they were also beautiful with perfect hair and perfect skin. How is any normal person able to compete with that?” As Emma navigates her first year of high school, it becomes increasingly apparent how these teen issues are affecting her and her peers. But in her efforts to fit in, Emma ends up learning a lot about friendship, belonging, and how teens can better understand and support each other in their struggles.

A genuine and fun-filled read, The Science of Boys captures many complexities in the lives of preteen girls today while encouraging curiosity and an interest in science—a subject that girls still often lack confidence in and are discouraged from pursuing.

Emily Seo (she/her) lives and works as a publishing assistant, copy editor, and graphic designer on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.
A IS FOR ANGELO

River conservationist and founder of both BC and World Rivers Day, Mark Angelo of Burnaby has published his first illustrated children’s book, The Little Creek That Could (PricenPress $16.99) demonstrating to readers how the power of one can bring change. The book is inspired by the true story of Angelo, who, as a young teacher, led the charge alongside students, teachers and community members to restore a small urban creek. “Serving as a tribute to all those who have dedicated their lives to cleaning up damaged rivers, the book aims to raise awareness among children—and those influencing them—about the value of our local waterways,” says Angelo. “Simply put, healthy rivers and streams make our communities better and safer places to live.” Illustrations are by Ros Webb.

B IS FOR BROWN

At the age of 38, Michelle Poirier Brown discovered her hidden Indigenous identity. Coming to terms with her newfound Métis heritage was compounded by having to deal with childhood trauma from an incestuous rape as well as nearly dying twice when she was exposed to extreme cold. She reveals her journey of pain, belonging, hope and resilience in her debut collection of poems, You Might Be Sorry You Read This (U of Alberta Press $19.99). The publisher says Brown’s confessional poems “are polished yet raw experiences of womanhood, mental illness, and queer selfhood, these narratives carry weight.” Brown concludes in one of her poems that “You need / only be the simple / expression of the divine / intent / that is your life.”

C IS FOR CURRY

Gwen Curry’s Converging Waters: The Beauty and Challenges of the Broughton Archipelago (RMB $40), with photography by Dan Hillert of Malcolm Island, explores the pebble beaches, foggy mornings, orcas, and eagles on the tree-covered islands of the northern coast of Vancouver Island at the edge of the Broughton Archipelago (including Queen Charlotte Strait, Broughton Strait, Cormorant Channel and Blackfish Sound). Converging Waters also takes a hard-hitting look at the environmental problems of the Broughton and beyond. Curry’s essays on the forest industry, the cruise ship industry, orcas and whales and the devastating practices of a fish farming industry that threaten the BC coastal ecosystem are unsettling.

D IS FOR DEVLIN

Port Moody–based A.J. Devlin has released the third installment in his “Hammerhead” mystery series, Five Moves of Doom (NeWest $22.95). Jed “Hammerhead” Ounstead, the ex-wrestling pro turned detective, is drawn into the mixed martial arts community when a UFC Championship belt goes missing and he’s hired to find it. He ventures into the tight-knit MMA community, where he begins asking unwanted questions and infuriates a secretive no-holds-barred fight club. Jed’s detective work also takes him inside the world of jewel thieves, bodybuilders and yoga enthusiasts. Jed, who has developed an unhealthy fondness for banana milkshakes, may be in for a fight that he is no longer fit to handle.

E IS FOR ERIKSSON

In her third non-fiction title for younger readers ages 12 and older, Urgent Message from a Hot Planet: Navigating the Climate Crisis (Orca $26.95), Ann Eriksson looks at the science behind global warming and its impact on the environment as well as sharing easy actions we can all take to ameliorate the damaging effects. “Do something NOW!” is her clear message. With photographs plus illustrations by Vancouver-based Belle Wuthrich, this book highlights young people who are ‘climate heroes’ and adult activists who are working to fix the problems of climate change. Eriksson is a director of the Thetis Island Nature Conservancy and has also written five adult novels.

F IS FOR FRAYNE

It’s 1995. Whitehorse, Yukon, and family counsellor Helen Cotillard is treating fifteen-year-old Gale for her anxiety attacks. In this northern town, seeing a therapist “meant you were failing in school, or you still wet the bed,” writes Jill Frayne in her novel, Why I’m Here (NeWest $21.95). Gale’s problems stem from being separated from the person she cares most about—her younger half-sister, Buddy, who lives with their violent mother and hapless stepfather in Ontario. When her stepfather makes Gale go live with her father and stepmother in Whitehorse for Gale’s safety, Buddy tells her, “Go, okay. And when I’m big, come back and get me.” Jill Frayne’s first book, the travel memoir Starting Out in the Afternoon (Vintage, 2003), was nominated for a Governor General’s Award.
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a local restaurant is hit by arson with prejudice as a possible motive. Lane must also contend with an investigation of her RCMP husband’s integrity. Questions of community and trust are at the heart of Iona Whishaw’s latest Lane Winslow Mystery, Framed in Fire (Touchwood $16.95).

“I was a child of an attempted genocide,” says Chief Robert Joseph—Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada and a recipient of an OC and an Indspire Lifetime Achievement Award—in his memoir, Namwayut: We Are All One: A Pathway to Reconciliation (Page Two $29.95). From his early years spent in the abusive St. Michael’s Residential School, to recovery from alcoholism and trauma, to coming into his own as a leader, Joseph lays out his journey and wisdom. “Let us remember that in spite of what we have done to ourselves, we belong and are loved,” he says. “Let us—every faith, every colour, every creed—recognize our common humanity. Let us accept the truth that we are all one.” His son, Bob Joseph, wrote the bestseller 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act (Indigenous Relations, 2018). 9781774580059

During his lifetime, R. Yorke Edwards (1924–2011) was recognized as the ‘father of nature interpretation’ in Canada. His pioneering work at BC Parks with nature-centre-based interpretation programs in the 1950s and early 1960s, as well as his writings based on his belief that people needed to spend time outdoors to experience nature firsthand and that the focus should be on the “real thing.” Now Richard Kool, a former director of public programs at the Royal BC Museum has co-edited with Robert Cannings a book of Edwards’ writings and speeches, The Object’s the Thing: The Writings of Yorke Edwards, A Pioneer of Heritage Interpretation in Canada (RBCM $24.95). Yorke Edward’s work still influences how we experience our heritage in parks and museums today. 9780772678515

Returning home to New Denver in 1948, Lane Winslow—a former British intelligence agent—uncovers human remains next to a friend’s garden, and 33 BC BOOKWORLD • AUTUMN 2022

WHO’S WHO BC

Stefanie Green

G IS FOR GREEN

In 2016, Canada passed federal legislation that allows eligible Canadian adults to request medical assistance in dying (MAiD). Now Dr. Stefanie Green has written a memoir, This Is Assisted Dying: A Doctor’s Story of Empowering Patients at the End of Life (Scribner $24.99), revealing the reasons a patient might seek an assisted death, how the process works, what the event itself can look like, the reactions of those involved and what it feels like to administer medications that hasten death. She co-founded the Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Providers, advises the BC Ministry of Health MAiD oversight committee and has hosted three national conferences on the topic. 9781668004784

The former Poet Laureate of New Westminster (2017–2020), Alan Hill has written his debut, full-length collection of poems, In the Blood (Caitlin $20). Depicting a lifetime of mental illness, both his own and his brother’s, Hill writes in verse of being in and out of institutions and the sibling bonds that are alternately broken and created through their shared experiences. His brother spends more of his life in institutions, which causes Hill to grapple with guilt, shame and loss. Weaving from the past to the present and back again, In the Blood looks for meaning and comfort in the confusion of childhood and the road into adulthood. 9781773860787

H IS FOR HILL

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I IS FOR IONA

Returning home to New Denver in 1948, Lane Winslow—a former British intelligence agent—uncovers human remains next to a friend’s garden, and
The Basil Stuart-Stubbs Prize was established in memory of Basil Stuart-Stubbs, a bibliophile, scholar and librarian who passed away in 2012. Stuart-Stubbs’ many accomplishments included serving as the University Librarian at UBC Library and as the Director of UBC’s School of Library, Archival and Information Studies. Stuart-Stubbs had a leadership role in many national and regional library and publishing activities. During his exceptional career, he took particular interest in the production and distribution of Canadian books and was associated with several initiatives beneficial to authors and their readers, and to Canadian publishing. Pacific BookWorld News Society co-sponsors this award with UBC Library.

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for Outstanding Scholarly Book on British Columbia

FINDING NOTHING
The VanGardes, 1959–1975
(University of Toronto Press)
by Gregory Betts

Gregory Betts’ wide-ranging summary of Vancouver’s cultural life between 1959 and 1975 focuses on the writing arts, which had become experimental and interdisciplinary during this period. Boundaries were pushed and new spaces created for intersecting arts and life. Betts argues that Vancouver was a key site then for the cultural transformations spreading across English Canada. Gregory Betts is a professor in the Faculty of Humanities at Brock University.

SHORTLISTED TITLES
Becoming Vancouver: A History (Harbour Publishing) by Daniel Francis
A Long Way to Paradise: A New History of British Columbia Politics (UBC Press) by Robert A.J. McDonald

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WHO’S WHO

L IS FOR LUNDY

Born in the 1960s and “led on feminism in the 70s and 80s,” Victoria-raised Susan Lundy intended to lead the life of a career woman. “Dress suits were in. I could motor out of the driveway in the morning, drive into engrossing and stimulating work (setting my own hours), bring home a fat cheque,” she writes in Home on the Strange: Chronicles of Motherhood, Mayhem, and Matters of the Heart (Heritage House $22.95). Then, in quick succession while on a summer co-op job in her fourth year at UVic, Lundy fell in love and married, and after a few years her daughters came along. Her career became a distant goal when she “looked into their eyes.” Her book is a collection of newspaper and magazine columns covering the journey from kids to Covid and being an empty-nester.

M IS FOR MCGRÉGOR

What is a good feminist and how is it learned? More particularly, how does one learn—through ideas, feelings and texts—of living in a good way? Hannah McGregor tackles these issues in A Sentimental Education (WLU Press $24.99). Known as the poet/teacher behind Secret Feminist Agenda and Witch, Please, McGregor writes that this book is “a meditation on what it means to care deeply—about justice, about revolution, about changing the world—and to know that caring is necessary and yet utterly insufficient. This work will never be perfected, and it will never be completed.”

N IS FOR NELLUTLA

Since his childhood days in India, Manu Nellutla, who now lives in Surrey, has been interested in poetry and travel. He led Nellutla to begin his Janya Bharata book series with Janya Bharata (River Grove Books $22.95), a collection of stories, the range of wildlife still living there and its four parks. There are still industrial operations such as Ocean Concrete (the “O”), one of the two industries left on the Island (the other is Mission Products, which has been manufacturing screws and drill bits since 1915). Kelly is best known as one of the writers and performers for the award-winning play Mom’s the World. Granville Island ABCs is illustrated by North Vancouver’s Linda Sharp.

P IS FOR PEACH

For more than two decades, Hilary Peach worked as a welder and was one of the few women in the Boilermakers Union. She kept journals of her experiences and has now published Thick Skin: Field Notes from a Sister in the Brotherhood (Arvil $22) about working in this industry with its coded language and obscure subculture. Her work took her from BC’s shipyards and pulp mills to Alberta’s oil sands, Ontario’s rust belt, and the northeastern US’s power generating stations. Peach went on to become a West Coast performance poet, with shows at the Vancouver International Writers Festival, and the Poetry Gauntlet Festival, which she founded. Her debut collection of poetry, Bolt (Arvil, 2018), referenced her time as a welder. Peach still works as a welder on Gabriola Island, where she maintains her art practice.

R IS FOR ROWNTREE

Lenore Rowntree’s third book of fiction, See You Later Maybe Never (Now Or Never $19.95) is a childless woman nearing sixty. Yet, Vanessa, concedes, fronts her past that includes an unceaseless love life and being forced out of her high-fashion career. Vanessa leaves Toronto for a retreat to a holistic campus. She recalls playing as a young girl while her parents’ marriage disintegrated, crushed she had at school and secretly falling for one of her students as a young teacher-in-training. Eventually, Vanessa connects with her 103-year-old Aunt Marion, an eldier who continues to find ways to make life more interesting. There’s disappointment—much to know that caring is necessary and yet utterly insufficient. This work will never be perfected, and it will never be completed.”

S IS FOR SPARKS

Sparks is a super hero dog that lives的秘密. Secretly, Sparks is really two cats, Charlie and August, that dress up in a mechanical dog suit to do their good work. Sparks is also the name of a series of graphic novels about the exploits of Charlie and August written by North Delta-raised Ian Boothby, a writer known for his work on The Simpsons comic books and in The New Yorker and M&D magazine. Boothby co-created the series with artist Nina Matsumoto. In the series’ third title, Sparks! Future Purrfect: A Graphic Novel (Scholastic: $19.99). Charlie and August go on a quest to an island that holds secrets. A crazy adventure ensues.

T IS FOR TOBIAS

As the child of Holocaust survivors in Chile, Eliana Tobias grew up hearing stories to shattered communities in Europe, losing family under a Chilean military dictatorship, and later, living in Peru during an intense civil war. She knows firsthand how people who survive devastating circumstances carry on. Her first historical novel, In the Right, fun, humor and intelligence in this look into what it means to be seen as “old.”

O IS FOR OCEAN CONCRETE

Employing 3,000 people serving 12 million visitors a year, Vancouver’s Granville Island is known today for its food market, eateries, artisanal shopping and entertainment venues. Yet, Granville Island was once named Industrial Island. Granville Island ABC: A Family Adventure (Heritage House $22.95), by Alison Kelly, describes Granville Island’s houseboat community, the range of wildlife still living there and its four parks. There are still industrial operations such as Ocean Concrete (the “O”), one of the two industries left on the Island (the other is Mission Products, which has been manufacturing screws and drill bits since 1915). Kelly is best known as one of the writers and performers for the award-winning play Mom’s the World. Granville Island ABCs is illustrated by North Vancouver’s Linda Sharp.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Hilary Peach

Susan Lundy

Manu Nellutla

Ian Boothby

Eliana Tobias

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U IS FOR URRIDAFOSsAR
Harold Rheinside continues his love affair with Iceland (and his ongoing ex- ploration of land and place) in his latest collection of poems, Urridafossar: Poems from Iceland (Burton House $20). Urridafossar, which means Trout Falls, is a popular horse-trekking destination in Iceland. It is here where, on a writer’s residence, that Rheinside composed “The Foal: Urridafossar,” a paean to the sexes of geology which is relative to the minute span of a person’s life: “where water once carried off the ice / that ground mountains into sand ... Am I / the you, I meet, the man who stepped into the sun, / or the mountain who walked back? / Fate plays these tricks with time / when time gets up on her / four feet legs / and plays these tricks with fate.”

V IS FOR VOLUME
It’s 2007, and Sandra Treming is released from prison, having served 25 years on a terrorism and murder conviction for her involvement in the “Berkman Brigade,” an early 1980s political activist group in Mark Vul- lingham’s debut novel, Through Thorns (Iguana Books $26.49). The aging revo- lutionary now finds herself in a strange place, “the spirit of struggle courses through the music.” — Bill Meyer, Magnet Magazine

W IS FOR WHITTINGHAM
One of the important “firsts” in a child’s life is their first camping trip, as detailed in Jane Whittingham’s new picture book, Wild About Camping (Nimbus $13.95). A brother and sister must navigate through abusive au- thorities, religious zealots, petty thieves and unscrupulous property developers before a chance encounter with the owner of a used book store opens the door to a new life.

X IS FOR REX
In 2019, atmospheric scientist Markus Rex captured the MOSAiC Expedition into the Arctic. The goal was to help hundreds of scientists from over eighty institutes around the world to research climate change year round; the method involved the icebreaker drifting through the Arctic Ocean, trapped in ice. The expedition proved to be dangerous, not least because the COVID-19 pandemic began near the same time. Scientists also faced storms, frostbite and crack- ing ice floes. There was fun, too, as sci- entists held a Christmas party on the ice and watched polar bears “play like puppies,” as related in Rex’s memoir, The Greatest Polar Expedition of All Time: The Arctic Mission to the Epicenter of Climate Change (Greenstone/ David Suzuki Institute $34.95). Recommended for those who enjoy adventure, suspense and cutting-edge climate research stories.

Y IS FOR YUSSUFF
Union leader, Hanan Yussuff, is one of the visionaries in Inspiring Canadi- ans: Forty Brilliant Canadians and Their Visions for the Nation (D&M $24.95) by Mark Bulgutch. Yussuff argues that unions are good for every- one, not just union members, because unions fight for all working people. He cites the nine-year battle for the expan- sion of the Canada Pension Plan, which cost the Canadian Labour Congress $20 million. “We didn’t do it for mem- bers, because pensions are usually part of our contracts,” says Yussuff. “We fight because everybody is entitled to a retirement with dignity and no senior should have to live in poverty.” Yussuff also points out that people with well-paying union jobs put more money back into the economy. “Take us out of the equation, and the economy will lose about $1 billion a week,” he says. Y71774162148

Z IS FOR ZHANG
After working as a practicing lawyer in China for 18 years, Hui Zhang relocated to Vancouver with her family in 2014. Two years later, she realized her dream of continuing her legal career in Canada when she became a licensed Immigra- tion Consultant. Her road map for navigating the labyrinth of Canadian immigration laws, Canadian Immigration Handbook: A Guide to Essential Immigration Knowledge (Self Counseled $49.95) is aimed at the immigration needs of prospective immigrants. Also useful for international students, foreign workers, refugee claimants, useful for international students, foreign workers, refugee claimants, Canadians wishing to sponsor family members, and others.
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Graphic Novel

Doctor of Letters
BC BookWorld founder and author, Alan Twiggs received an honorary doctorate from SFU on June 8. Asked to provide words of wisdom for graduating students in the audience, he quoted advice given to him by Holocaust survivor, Rudy Virba: “Whenever there’s a problem, stop and ask yourself: ‘Is this going to be a problem for me a year from now?’ You’ll find 90% of your problems will go away.” SFU conferred a Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, for his many contributions to the literary world in BC. Congratulations Dr. Twiggs!

Community

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Helen Potrebenko

One of Vancouver’s most un-
compromising feminist writers, Helen Potrebenko died after a battle with cancer on August 10, 2022. Born in Woking, Alberta, Potrebenko moved to Vancouver to attend university. She supported herself driving a taxi cab and wrote about the experience in her debut novel, Taxi! (New Star, 1975). From driving oil executives to the air-
port and the unemployed around Skid Row, the narrator learns about social and political issues from all corners of Canadian society. Written in a fast-paced style, the book also puts a spotlight on the sexism women were forced to endure: “It just never occurs to them we’re people and not zoo animals to be stored at,” the narrator writes, “and that we have feelings and don’t like being prodded and mauled by thirty different guys in one day.”

In 2010, a celebration of the 35th anniversary of the publication of Taxi was held at the Vancouver Public Library. Potrebenko’s third book, a collection of fiction and other writings, A Flight of Average Persons (New Star, 1979) expresses the author’s pride in the dig-

Beth Jankola

Beth Jankola, a poet and painter who frequently cited working-class environs in her books, died on April 11, 2022. Born in a small town in south-
ern Alberta, Jankola moved to the West Coast in the 1960s with her husband Joe. After vari-
ous jobs at The Vancouver Sun and The School for the Blind in Kitsilano, she obtained a teach-
ing degree (1984) from UBC. Later, Jankola taught at the New School in East Vancouver and it was during this period she became actively involved in the Vancouver poetry scene, pub-
lishing 14 books and chapbooks, giving readings and supporting fellow poets. She received the Bliss Carmen Award for Lyric Poetry in 1972. She also earned a BFA (1998) from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design.

One of her mentees, poet and publisher Mona Fertig remem-
bers Jankola’s impact. “She opened the door to my literary life. She would take me to all the Vancouver poetry readings in her Volkswagen bug when I was 17, showing me how to get into the Cecil Pub. I think I was the youngest poet there.”

Jankola lent Fertig a library book called Shakespeare and Company. “She told me, ‘You’ve got to read this.’ I was so in-
spired by it that I applied for funds and started The Liter-
ary Storefront (Canada’s first non-profit literary centre that operated in Gastown from 1978–
85).” Beth Jankola spent her last twenty years living in Sechelt.

Two Years on the Muckamuck Line
(Lazara, 1981) detailed Potrebenko’s time in a labour strike (1978 to 1983) at the Muckamuck Restaurant. The white own-
er of the first restaurant in Vancouver to exclusively serve Indigenous West Coast cuisine allegedly refused to negotiate. “The Muckamuck hired scab labour and tried to keep the restaurant open,” says Potrebenko. “Sometimes they were assisted by outside goons. When the Relations Board besmirred it-
self to order the Muckamuck to pay a token $10,000 be-
cause of its illegal acts.” she wrote. The restaurant reopened as the Quilicum Restaurant in 1985, with new Indigenous management.

One of her last books, Let-
ters to Maggie (Lazara, 1999) is a series of letters about work, aging, literature, culture and homelessness. They are ad-
dressed to Potrebenko’s long-time friend, social activist and feminist Maggie Ben-
ston, to tell her what’s been happening in the world since Benston’s death in 1991. As well as driving cab, Potrebenko made her living as a lab technician, office temp, legal secretary and bookkeeper.
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