



Words

on the Water

Brian Brett

ABOVE TIDE (Living Is A Festival)

Cold runs the river;
warm, the heart.
The children are playing
among the flood of memories –
rummaging in the boulders,
casting their lines
at the enormous salmon
beyond the shallows –
losing their toys,
racing and cartwheeling,
taking sides and not
taking sides.

Like old veterans we stand
in clusters,
remembering and thrilling
at the community
we've built with our bones,
our muscles, our desire.

A notion, almost a hope,
captured us,
the dream of standing
in and above the tide, the view
over the orchard of our history.

This family, all the families,
we go to the river, celebrating,
and we will meet you there.

WELCOME TO WORDS ON THE WATER 2008

Welcome to WOW, the seventh edition. We are pleased and extremely fortunate to present this year's distinguished writers who will share a broad spectrum of Canadian writing in a beautiful, intimate setting. We invite you to listen, to question, to discuss and most of all to enjoy yourselves.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, April 4 7:30 PM



Master of Ceremonies John Elson



Words on the Water 2008 commissioned poem Brian Brett



Eden Robinson, Anosh Irani, Harold Rhenisch *"The Near and the Far"*



David Chariandy, Ruth Ozeki *"Place and Time"*



IvanCoyote, Theresa Kishkan, Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas

"Book, No Book: A Discussion on Form"



Music: Rodrigo

Saturday, April 5

Morning

9:00 Eden Robinson

9:45 Ruth Ozeki

10:30 Break

10:45 Anosh Irani

11:30 Harold Rhenisch

12:15 Lunch Break

Afternoon

1:00 Theresa Kishkan

1:45 David Chariandy

2:30 Break

2:45 Ivan Coyote

3:30 Michael Nicoll
Yahgulanaas

Evening

7:30 Literary Cabaret
Featuring:

Our Guest Writers
Music: Amy Lelliott
Jim Vining

No Host Bar

Food provided by
Save On Foods



DAVID CHARIANDY lives in Vancouver and teaches in the Department of English at Simon Fraser University. His debut novel, *Soucouyant*, takes its title from the word for an evil spirit in Caribbean folklore. Praised for its luminous prose, the novel was both long-listed for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and short-listed for the Governor General's fiction prize this fall.

Soucouyant tells us of enormous loss and beautiful memory. A son rediscovers the heritage he has rejected, as his aging mother's mind disintegrates. The re-creation of the mother's Caribbean past within the circle of her son's growing love enfolds the reader in a magnificent story.

Chariandy says that "...dementia also became for me a way to explore the fragility of cultural memory, and how difficult it can be for us to know the past. The main themes and style of my novel reflect all of this".

Soucouyant is a current finalist for the 2008 Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize which will be announced on April 26. The novel is already in its third printing.



IVAN COYOTE was born and raised in Whitehorse, Yukon. She is the author of three collections of short stories, and a novel, *Bow Grip*, which was published in 2006. Her work has appeared in the National Post, the Georgia Straight, Geist, SharedVision, Nerve, and Curve magazines. Coyote's first and truest love is live storytelling, and over the last ten years she has become an audience favorite at music, poetry, spoken word and writers' festivals from Anchorage to

New York City. Coyote is a founding member of the storytelling troupe 'Taste This' that penned the 1998 collection *Boys Like Her*. She also has two solo collections of short stories, *Close To Spiderman* and *One Man's Trash*. She writes a monthly column for Xtra West (collected and published in *Loose End*) and contributes regularly to The Georgia Straight and The Vancouver Sun. She is a member of 'One Trick Rodeo', a spoken word and music collision where her tales meet the musical stylings of guitarist Richard Spencer, flute player Luna Roth and dancer Shelley Frankenstein. Coyote is currently living in Ottawa and is the Carleton University writer-in-residence.



ANOSH IRANI was born and brought up in Bombay, India and moved to Vancouver in 1998. He is the author of the acclaimed novels *The Cripple and His Talismans* and *The Song of Kahunsha*, which was nominated for the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and was selected for the 2007 edition of Canada Reads. His second play, *Bombay Black*, won four Dora Mavor Moore Awards including Outstanding New Play of 2006. Most recently, Irani was nominated for a 2007 Governor General's Literary Award for Drama for his anthology *THE BOMBAY PLAYS: The Matka King* and *Bombay Black*. *The Matka King* was mounted in Vancouver at the Arts Club Theatre in October 2003. Irani was featured in the March 2002 issue of Quill and Quire as one of a handful of Canadian writers to watch. Yann Martel, author of *Life of Pi*, calls Irani's *The Cripple and His Talismans* "a highly imaginative novel, full of humour, poetry and insights, written in a beautiful, spare style". Martel goes on to say, "Throughout the narrative looms a great city, Bombay, crazily reflected in the life of one of its inhabitants who, by means baffling, heinous, desperate and often very funny, seeks to embrace the divine with both arms".



THERESA KISHKAN was born in Victoria, B.C. and has lived on both coasts of Canada as well as in Greece, Ireland, and England. She was educated at the Universities of Victoria and British Columbia. In August, 1985, she was part of a collaborative effort staged at the Vancouver Museum which featured Judy Chicago's *Birth Project* and the writing of women poets and novelists concerned with the issue of childbirth. Kishkan has taught writing classes, ranging from workshops for young children to writing courses for adults at the college level. She also gives public readings and participates in literary festivals. Kishkan has published 10 books including several award winners. *Innishbream*, based on a year spent on a bleak island off the west coast of Ireland in the 1970's, explores the relationships between land and sea, islanders and mainlanders. *A Man in a Distant Field* tells of Declan O'Malley who comes to the coast of B.C. to escape memories of his family's death at the hands of the Black and Tans in Ireland. While working on a perfect translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, he's drawn back into his own Irish troubles. Her most recent publication, *Phantom Limb*, is a finalist for the Hubert Evans non-fiction prize that will be announced in April.



RUTH OZEKI is an award-winning filmmaker and novelist. Her first novel, *My Year of Meats*, has garnered widespread glowing reviews, awards, and a still-growing readership. A sexy, poignant, funny tale about global meat and media production, *My Year of Meats* tells the story of two women on opposite sides of the planet whose lives are connected by a TV cooking show. *My Year of Meats* was translated into eleven languages and published in fourteen countries. It won the Kiriya Pacific Rim Award, the Imus/Barnes

and Noble American Book Award, and a Special Jury Prize of the World Cookbook Awards in Versailles. Ozeki's second novel, *All Over Creation*, shifts the focus from meat to potatoes in a story of a family farmer, his prodigal daughter, an itinerant gang of environmental activists, and a New Age corporate spin doctor, whose lives and interests collide in Liberty Falls, Idaho. Ozeki, a frequent speaker on college and university campuses, currently divides her time between New York City, where she serves on the board of Women Make Movies, and Cortes Island, British Columbia, where she writes, knits socks, and raises exotic Chinese chickens with her husband, artist Oliver Kellhammer.



Harold Rhenisch has published twenty-one books, including fiction, creative nonfiction, translation, essays, and 14 collections of poetry. His *Return to Open Water: Selected and New Poems 1978-1997* and his *Living Will* — a translation of Shakespeare's sonnets into contemporary English — were honed during over 300 readings of his work. His creative nonfiction includes the George Ryga Award-winning *The Wolves at Evelyn* and Cross-Country

Checkup Book of the Year *Tom Thomson's Shack*. He is the English translator of the German playwright Stefan Schuetz and the editor of Robin Skelton's new selected poems, *In This Poem I Am*. He has won the ARC Poem of the Year Prize and Critic's Desk Award, The Malahat Review Long Poem Prize (2005 and 2007), and a 2008 CBC Literary Prize in Poetry. A year's work as editor and cowriter on Chris Harris's photographic book about the earth's last pristine grasslands, *Spirit in the Grass: the Lost Landscape of the Cariboo-Chilcotin*, has earned two B.C. Book Prize nominations this spring. He has Creative Writing degrees from UVic and UBC, and is an active editor, reviewer, and mentor. He has taught three times at the Victoria School of Writing. He lives in Campbell River, after 15 years on the Cariboo Plateau.



EDEN ROBINSON was born in 1968 on the Haisla Nation Kitimaat Reserve, and grew up in Kitimaat, a Haisla village near the community of Kitimat, B.C. Robinson obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Victoria in 1992. In 1996 her collection of short stories, *Traplines*, catapulted her to instant fame as winner of the New York Times Editors' Choice and Notable Book of the Year awards, and won the Winifred Holtby Prize for best regional fiction. Her second book, *Monkey Beach*, which weaves comedy and the dark underside of life together in a spellbinding, vividly poignant and often hilarious story about childhood and the pain of growing older, was nominated for the 2000 Giller Prize, Canada's largest literary award, and for the Governor General's Award. Recently, she accepted the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize at the B.C. Books Prizes award ceremony. She was named the 2001 writer-in-residence in the University of Calgary's Markin-Flanagan Distinguished Writers Program.



MICHAEL NICOLL YAHGULANAAS challenges native stereotypes through illustrative story telling. The stories of the trickster Raven, as told by Yahgulanaas, are what most people would call comics, and they are fun, humorous and sometimes rude. Yahgulanaas takes traditional Haida stories and turns them into manga (Japanese-style comics). He has dropped the traditional rectangular boxes and voice balloons associated with the North American comics; instead, he has developed a flowing style that uses a bold line stretched almost to the breaking point - a motif strongly associated with Haida art - to link the images in the narrative. Yahgulanaas began creating pop-graphic narratives, riffing on traditional Haida stories and painting techniques, and quickly developed the distinctive art form for which he is most widely known. "I started off trying to do comic books because comic books are about accessibility". Yahgulanaas's books include *A Tale of Two Shamans*, *The Last Voyage of the Black Ship*, and *Hachidori*, a best seller in Japan. For the past two decades, besides developing his unique visual style, Yahgulanaas has spent most of his time working with other Haida people to prevent their homeland, Haida Gwaii, from being logged.

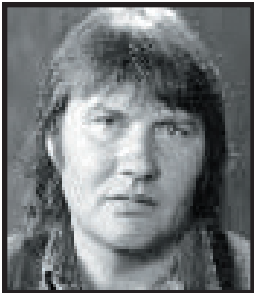
WRITERS' WORKSHOP



SUSAN STENSON's poetry has appeared in most Canadian literary journals, on CBC radio and in the anthology *Threshold: six women six poets*. She published her first book, *Could Love a Man* in the spring of 2001. Her work rides the buses throughout British Columbia in the Poetry in Transit program. *A Little Less Swing/A Little More Sway* is her most recent publication. She currently lives in Victoria and teaches English and Creative Writing to high school students.

Poetry helps us find a language for loss. Sunday's writing seminar is designed for the novice or the experienced writer wanting to explore the elegiac form. Arrive willing to spend a day writing about everyday things beneath the umbrella of grief. Using prompts, pictures, exercises and models, the writing will come easily. Bring your favorite pen and notebook.

HAIG-BROWN WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE



BRIAN BRETT, current writer-in-residence at the Haig-Brown house, was commissioned to write the Words On The Water poem for 2008 which he will present to the festival crowd on Friday. Brett has published several acclaimed books of poetry, including *Fossil Ground at Phantom Creek* and *The Colour of Bones in a Stream*, two novels, *The Fungus Garden* and *Coyote*, a collection of short stories, *Tanganyika*, and recently, a memoir in prose and poetry -- *Uproar's Your Only Music*. Brian has been honoured with many national and provincial literary awards. He lives on Salt Spring Island where he writes, farms, creates ceramic forms, and teaches online. He has graciously agreed to facilitate our writers in conversation on Friday night.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



JOHN ELSON is Campbell River's favorite MC. A founding member of the Words on the Water Festival Committee, John has been the perennial choice to guide and entertain us through the weekend's events. Back from a two year secondment to Simon Fraser University, John is the Professional Development Coordinator for School District #72.

RODERICK AND ANN HAIG-BROWN 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

2008 marks a century since the birth of Roderick Haig-Brown and Ann Elmore, two humanitarians who left their indelible mark on Campbell River and whose memory inspires this festival. Brian Brett, current Haig-Brown writer-in-residence, will speak on Saturday evening about the legacy of this dynamic couple and about the plans this community has put in place to celebrate their centenary.



WOW STUDENT OUTREACH PROGRAM

Thanks to the joint sponsorship of WOW and School District #72, Eden Robinson will offer readings and a writing workshop to Campbell River students on Friday, April 4.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the many volunteers who make Words on the Water function smoothly. You have been steadfast and perennial in your support and you add much to the ease of the weekend, as do the staff of Save on Foods who host the delicious and varied gourmet interludes. To Nickie Polson, who has managed our communications lists behind the scenes since the inception of Words on the Water seven years ago, a special thank you.

WORDS ON THE WATER ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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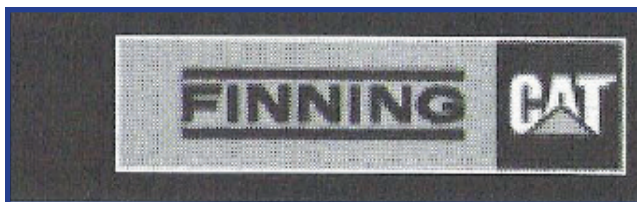
WOW Dates for
2009:
March 27, 28, 29



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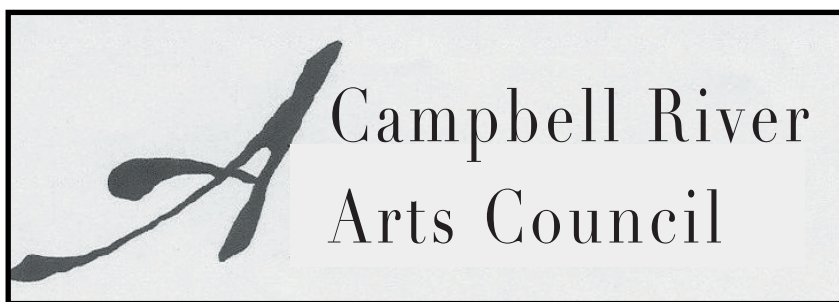
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