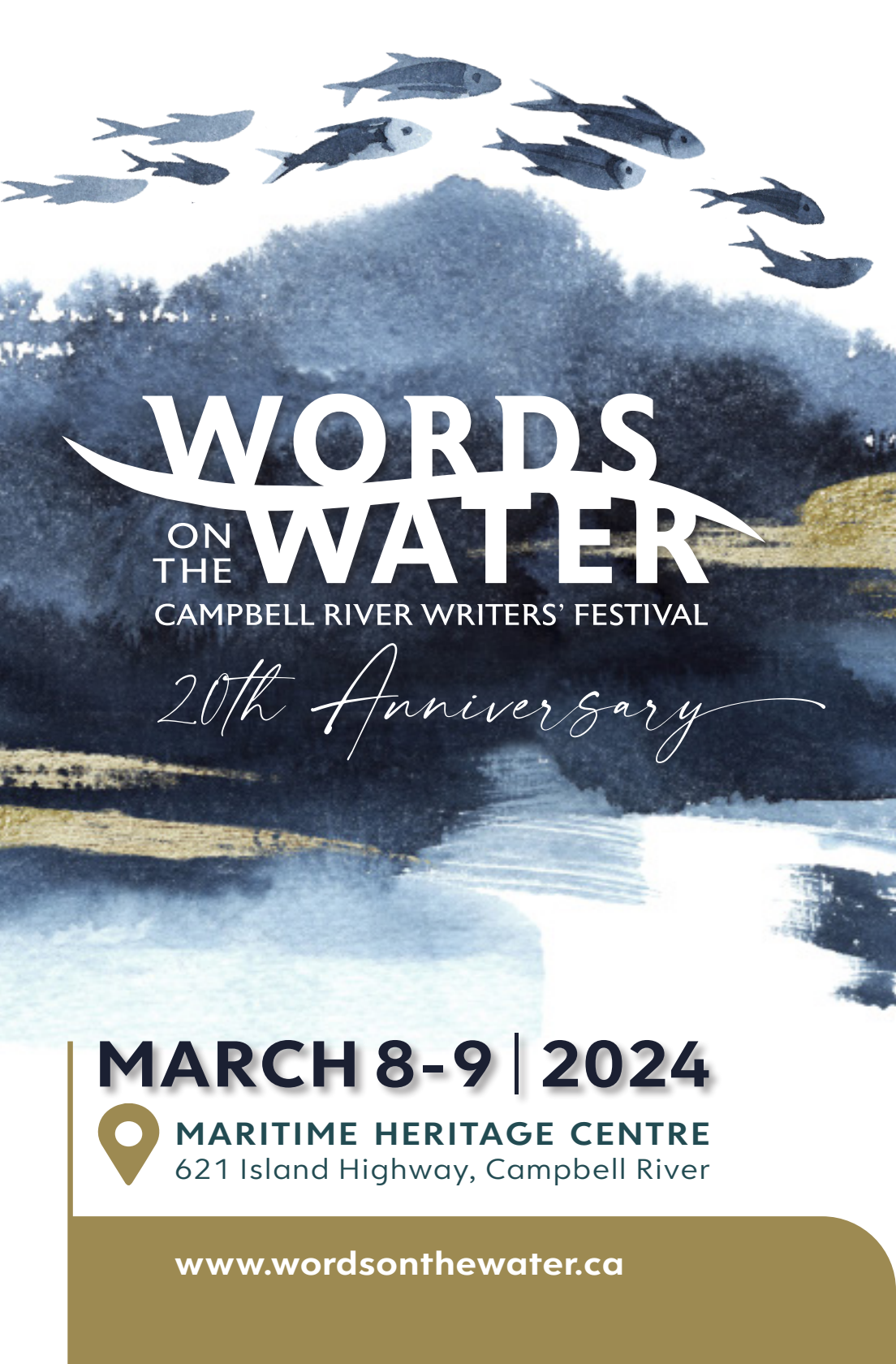




WORDS ON THE WATER

CAMPBELL RIVER WRITERS' FESTIVAL

20th Anniversary

MARCH 8-9 | 2024



MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE
621 Island Highway, Campbell River

www.wordsonthewater.ca

WELCOME

Words on the Water
Writers' Festival marks its

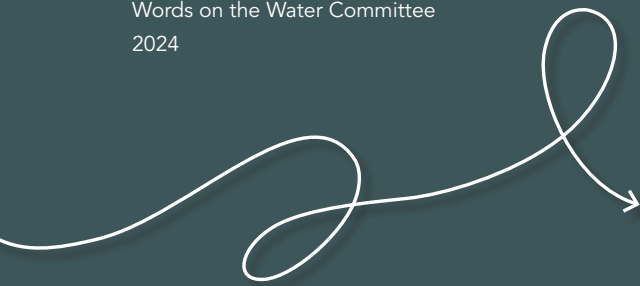
20TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR

once again bringing eight of Canada's top writers to Campbell River for readings and great conversations in front of an audience of local readers.

We are honoured to welcome our distinguished guest writers who have come to share their work, and our dedicated readers who have come to listen. We sincerely hope you enjoy the beautiful setting, music and food, and the stimulating readings, dialogue and conversations.

We invite you to escape into the richness of words.

Words on the Water Committee
2024



Grab a Anniversary Celebration mug
at the Coho Books table for \$30!
Created by local potter Cheryl Couture



Words on the Water respectfully acknowledges the Liḡw'íłdaḡw' First Nation, on whose traditional lands we host this festival. The Liḡw'íłdaḡw' First Nation is comprised of the We Wai Kai, Wei Wai K'um and Kwiakah First Nations.

Our closest neighbors are the Coast Salish Xwemalkwu, Klahoose and K'ómoks First Nations.

These nations have close connections to the land where Campbell River is located today.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MARCH 8TH

Writers in Conversation

This evening serves as an introduction to all of our guest writers. The writers will address questions about the craft of writing and the art of storytelling. This conversation will begin the festival. The opening also features local musical talent and a no-host bar charcuterie.

Festival Poem

by Billy-Ray Belcourt

7:30pm

Billy-Ray Belcourt and Karolyn Smardz Frost

8:00pm

Tsering Yangzom Lama and Yann Martel

Intermission

9:00pm

Lenore Newman and Harrison Mooney

9:30pm

Zarqa Nawaz and Kevin Chong

SATURDAY, MARCH 9TH

Saturday is organized into four 90 minute sessions and each author will have up to 45 minutes for a reading. Many writers leave time at the end for audience questions.

Session 1

9:00am - Karolyn Smardz Frost

9:45am - Tsering Yangzom Lama

Break

Session 2

10:45am - Kevin Chong

11:30am - Lenore Newman

Lunch

Session 3

1:00pm - Yann Martel

1:45pm - Harrison Mooney

Break

Session 4

2:45pm - Billy-Ray Belcourt

3:30pm - Zarqa Nawaz

SATURDAY EVENING LITERARY CABARET:

Doors open at 7:00pm, 7:30pm start

A final celebration of our authors and a time for stories.

Includes local musical talent.

Master of Ceremonies
John Elson

WATER SONNET

I haven't remembered enough about
the past. I remember someone else's
emotions, shapes, a rugged shoreline.
As a boy, I tried every week to not want
a different life. Language wasn't a burden
per se, but I was wet with it, I was shivering.
In a small way I had been insatiable. I had
too much hope. I didn't yet know that a native
person could be a poet, so I often went
to the water, its long edge something of
a line breaking (unbeknownst to me)
at my feet. From some dark place inside me,
some vacant chamber of future thinking,
a voice said, Leap. So I leapt. I left.

Billy-Ray Belcourt
2024

GUEST AUTHORS

Each year, the festival brings eight of Canada's best authors to our city for a weekend of readings, conversation and connection with the local audience.



BILLY-RAY BELCOURT



Author of multiple #1 National Bestsellers, writer and academic, Billy-Ray Belcourt will be joining our panel from the Driftpile Cree Nation in Alberta. Billy-Ray is an Assistant Professor in the School of Creative Writing at the University of British Columbia.

Belcourt was awarded a 2019 Indspire Award, the 2018 Griffin Poetry Prize, the Kroetsch City of Edmonton Book Prize, the Stephan G. Stephansson Award for Poetry and a finalist for the 2018 Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry.

KEVIN CHONG



Kevin was born in Hong Kong in 1975, and moved to Canada in 1977. He studied creative writing at the University of British Columbia and Columbia University, where he got his MFA.

Kevin has written seven books, including the forthcoming novel, *The Double Life of Benson Yu*. Though he used to work full time as a freelance writer, his main focus now is teaching at UBCO in Kelowna, and previously at UBC Creative Writing and The Writer's Studio at Simon Fraser University.

He lives in Vancouver with his wife and kids.

KAROLYN SMARDZ FROST



An award-winning author, Karolyn Smardz Frost is the only archaeologist in Canada holding a PhD in Race, Slavery, & Imperialism. She is an adjunct professor at both Acadia and Dalhousie Universities in Nova Scotia, where she lives with her husband.

Ms. Smardz Frost has been honoured with a long list of awards and acknowledgments, including the Michigan Book Prize, the Speakers Award, and the Mathieu Da Costa Award for her lifetime contributions to

researching, teaching, and publishing in the field of African Canadian History, just to name a few! Her biography, *I've Got a Home in Glory Land: A Lost Tale of the Underground Railroad* (2007), won the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction.

Karolyn is the 2023/24 Haig-Brown House Writer in Residence.

TSERING YANGZOM LAMA



Tsering is a Tibetan writer who was born in Nepal and has lived in the United States and Canada. Tsering's debut novel, *We Measure The Earth With Our Bodies*, has won countless awards and has been nominated for The Giller Prize.

Tsering holds an MFA in Writing from Columbia University and a BA in Creative Writing & International Relations from the University of British Columbia.

She is also a co-founder of *Lhakar Diaries*, a leading English-language blog among Tibetan youth in exile.

YANN MARTEL



International bestselling author Yann Martel uses the power of fiction to explore the larger truths of the universe. "I write to understand issues that are important to me, to express my creative energies and to pass the time in a meaningful way."

Yann obtained a degree in Philosophy from Trent University, then worked at a variety of odd jobs before taking up writing full-time from the age of 27.

In 2002, Yann Martel came to public attention when he won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction for his second novel, *Life of Pi* (2002). This book has been published in over forty countries and territories, representing well over thirty languages, and a film of the book, adapted by Ang Lee, was released in 2012.

Yann Martel lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with his partner and their four children.

HARRISON MOONEY



Harrison Mooney is a best-selling memoirist and award-winning journalist. His debut memoir, *Invisible Boy*, has been shortlisted for two BC and Yukon Book Prizes, the prestigious Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, and was the winner of the 2023 Rakuten Kobo Emerging Writer Prize for nonfiction. Harrison's work has also appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Vancouver Sun*, the *Guardian*, *Yahoo* and *Maclean's*.

He lives in East Vancouver with his family and family dog, Bootsy.

ZARQA NAWAZ



Zarqa is a Canadian producer for film & television, a published author, public speaker, journalist, and former broadcaster.

In 2007, Ms. Nawaz created the internationally renowned CBC comedy series, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*. This show went on to win a Gemini as well as being nominated for Best Television Series.

Zarqa went on to successfully sell comedy pilots to ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox Studios and made her mark in the publishing world.

Her 2014 comedic memoir, *Laughing All the Way to the Mosque*, appeared on the bestseller list of *The Globe And Mail*, and was shortlisted for several awards.

Zarqa's debut fiction novel, *Jameela Green Ruins Everything* (2022), further illustrates her comedic genius and brilliant use of satire. Zarqa lives in Regina with her loving but long-suffering family and is the proud mother of four children.

LENORE NEWMAN



Lenore Newman is an Associate Professor of Geography and the Environment at UFV where she also serves as Director of the Food and Agriculture Institute. Lenore's academic career as a culinary geographer has included fieldwork around the globe in the study of public markets, regional cuisines, farmland preservation, global food security, and the ecology of the world's food system.

Lenore's first book, *Speaking in Cod Tongues: A Canadian Culinary Journey*, was published by University of Regina Press in 2017 and won a Saskatchewan book prize.

MUSICIANS



FRIDAY NIGHT **NADIA LOGIST**

Nadia Logist's passion for violin has taken her all over the world. In 1995, Nadia obtained the Golden Medal Eugene Ysaÿe in Violin Interpretation. Nadia's passion for music extends beyond performance, as she dedicates herself to nurturing the next generation of musicians. She teaches violin to students of all ages and levels, imparting a deep appreciation for music's transformative power beyond technical skill.



SATURDAY NIGHT **KIRSTIN LISKE & ALEC JAMES**

Alec James and Kirstin Liske are a musical duo from Campbell River, BC. They perform together on Vancouver Island together and also with their event band, Sound Factory. Alec and Kirstin enjoy arranging songs to complement their voices and choose songs that provide opportunities for harmonies and duets. Both also write original music with pop, folk, and indie influences.

Check out their website: www.soundfactoryband.ca for more information!

MASTER OF CEREMONIES



JOHN ELSON

John Elson has lived in Campbell River for half a century, teaching in SD 72 for most of that time. His association with Words on the Water goes back to 2002 when he served on the founding committee. Now he savours every kind of human-powered movement in this beautiful corner of the world and beyond - and dreams of a city where anyone can ride their bicycle to the Library without fear of motor vehicles.

SPECIAL THANKS

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Rebecca Berry | Jane Hirst | Emily Sayward |
| Tylere Couture | Leah Jesse | Sandra Seib |
| Darlene Garat | Angel Murphy | |
| Dennis Hawkins-Bogle | Paul Murphy | |

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the many volunteers who help make Words on the Water function smoothly. You have been steadfast and perennial in your support, and your expertise in running the weekend is invaluable and deeply appreciated.

WOW STUDENT OUTREACH PROGRAM

An important commitment of Words on the Water is to foster an appreciation of literature in the youth in our community. Thanks to the joint sponsorship of WOW and School District #72, Zarqa Nawaz will offer readings in the schools and a writing workshop to Campbell River students.

WOW OFFICIAL BOOK SELLER

Coho Books is located in the heart of downtown Campbell River. They carry a large selection of new and used books catering to a wide range of interests. Their goal is to provide a warm and inviting environment that readers of all ages will enjoy.

ANN & RODERICK HAIG-BROWN

From its inception, Words on the Water has taken inspiration from the lives and works of Ann and Roderick Haig-Brown. The Haig-Browns were philosophers and conservationists who carefully considered their place in the world. Roderick's writing and Ann's humanitarian work continue to influence this community. Words on the Water aspires to contribute to keeping their memory alive and to honour their legacy.

This incredible event is made possible by the generous support of these businesses and organizations!



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An agency of the Province of British Columbia



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