

MAY 28–31
2025

TRICITIES
WRITERS
FESTIVAL



Featuring:

Bill Arnott,
Gurjinder Basran,
Shashi Bhat, A.J. Devlin,
Erik D'Souza, Andrea Fritz,
Catherine Hernandez,
Joseph Kakwinokanasum,
Claire Lawrence, Jen Sookfong Lee,
Hannah Mary McKinnon,
Sherry McMillan, Ryan Murphy,
Christina Myers, Danny Ramadan,
Jennifer Sommersby,
Kathy Wagner, Yilin Wang



www.coqlibrary.ca/writers-festival

Coquitlam Public Library—City Centre Branch
1169 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam

Transit

Plan your route by visiting TransLink’s Trip Planner. The closest Skytrain is Lincoln Station on the Millennium Line.

Accessibility

- Elevator from parking level to the Library
- Accessible washrooms with barrier free entry
- Power operated entrance doors
- Designated accessible parking stalls

Parking

Park in the lot directly above the library branch for up to four hours free. You can extend your time for an additional four hours by requesting a parking pass from the branch Help Desk. Electric vehicle charging stations are available in the library parking lot.

Parking in the Henderson mall parkade while using the Library may result in a ticket by Diamond Parking Service. The Library is not responsible for any parking ticket disputes.

Evergreen Cultural Centre
1205 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam

Transit

Plan your route by visiting TransLink’s Trip Planner. The closest Skytrain is Lafarge Lake–Douglas Station on the Millennium Line.

Accessibility

- Designated accessible parking
- Ramps from parking lot to entrance
- Accessible washrooms
- Power operated doors

Parking

Parking lots are available at the front and back of our building. Enter the parking lots by travelling north on Pinetree Way, and entering on the right after the intersection at Guildford Way.

Paid parking is in effect Monday–Saturday, 8:00 am–6:00 pm. The fee is \$1.00/hour. Parking is free on Sundays and statutory holidays.



Inlet Theatre
100 Newport Drive, Port Moody

Transit

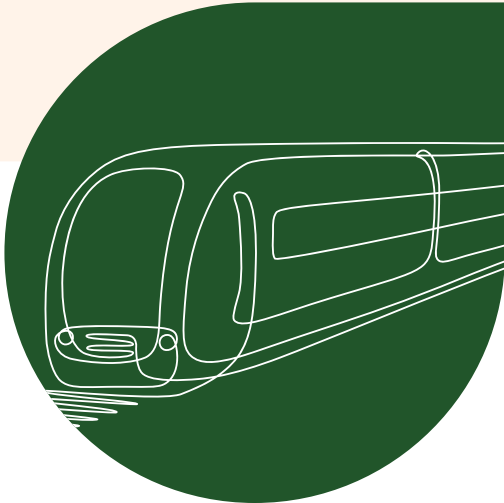
Plan your route by visiting TransLink’s Trip Planner. The closest Skytrain is Inlet Centre Station on the Millennium Line.

Accessibility

- Designated accessible parking in the front and the back of the Library
- Low service counters at the Information Desk
- Accessible washrooms
- Power operated doors

Parking

Free underground and outside parking is available. Electric vehicle charging stations are available in the underground and outside parking lots.



Michael Wright Art Gallery
#200–2253 Leigh Square, Port Coquitlam

Transit

Plan your route by visiting TransLink’s Trip Planner.

Accessibility

- Designated accessible parking on Donald Street, near Wilson Avenue
- Power operated doors
- Elevator from first to second floor gallery spaces
- Accessible washrooms, including push button electronic doors and lowered hooks in washroom stalls

Parking

Free, three-hour street parking.



Welcome

On behalf of everyone at Coquitlam Public Library, Port Moody Public Library, and Terry Fox Library, we are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to all readers and writers to the second Tri-Cities Writers Festival!

We are excited to bring you a fantastic line-up of authors who will share their experiences, ideas, and creativity over four days across multiple venues.

Whether you're a reader, writer, or simply someone who loves to attend great community events, we invite you to explore the sessions, make new connections, and most of all, enjoy interacting with our festival guests!

A special shout-out to our generous sponsors for supporting this event.

We hope you have an unforgettable time!

Anthea Goffe
Executive Director, Coquitlam Public Library

The Tri-Cities boasts a wealth of local writing talent and passionate readers of all ages. We are elated to be part of a festival that will showcase esteemed and award-winning authors, bringing their literary brilliance directly to our libraries.

Within the pages of their extraordinary books, you won't just discover tales; you'll unlock portals to realms of imagination, empathy, and profound understanding. Whether you are a devoted bibliophile or an aspiring wordsmith, our festival is designed to ignite inspiration, foster discovery, and celebrate the joy of storytelling.

Be sure to mark your calendars, unleash your literary curiosity, and join us at the Tri-Cities Writers Festival. Together, let's revel in the enchanting magic of words!

Warmest regards,
Marc Saunders (he/him)
Director of Library Services | Port Moody Public Library.

The core of libraries consists of books and the minds behind them, and Terry Fox Library is thrilled to work with Coquitlam Public Library and Port Moody Public Library to welcome amazing authors whose writings have touched so many hearts. We have in-person and online events that will be highly entertaining and inspiring. Whether you are looking to give wings to your imagination, deepen your passion for reading, or meet your favourite authors, please be a part of these events and enjoy the rich wisdom of renowned authors.

Kind regards!
Dr. Sarwan Singh Randhawa
Library Manager, Terry Fox Library

Event Schedule

All events are for adults and teens, unless otherwise noted.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28 7:00–8:30 pm		FREE
Editing Workshop with Jennifer Sommersby <i>Sponsored by Tri-Cities Wordsmiths</i> Registration: Drop-in Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916609		City Centre Branch
THURSDAY, MAY 29 11:15 am–12:15 pm		FREE
Author Talk with Andrea Fritz For all ages Registration: Drop-in Access live-stream at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916616		Virtual event
THURSDAY, MAY 29 1:30–2:30 pm		FREE
Author Talk with Hannah Mary McKinnon Registration: Drop-in Access live-stream at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916643		Virtual event and Live-streamed at City Centre Branch
THURSDAY, MAY 29 3:00–4:00 pm		FREE
Author Talk with Catherine Hernandez Registration: Drop-in Access live-stream at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12902200		Virtual event and Live-streamed at City Centre Branch
THURSDAY, MAY 29 5:00–7:00 pm		\$20 / TICKET
Cocktails and Conversations For ages 16+ To purchase alcoholic drinks, attendees must be 19+ and present valid government-issued photo ID. Registration: Ticket required Buy your ticket(s) at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12943079		Evergreen Theatre <div>Details p. 8</div>

Event Schedule

THURSDAY, MAY 29 | 7:00–8:30 pm

FREE

Panel Discussion with Bill Arnott, Gurjinder Basran, and Jen Sookfong Lee

Hosted by Ryan Murphy

Registration: Required

Register at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12943079



Evergreen Theatre



FRIDAY, MAY 30 | 1:00–2:00 pm

FREE

Author Talk with Yilin Wang

Registration: Required

Register at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12907161



City Centre Branch

FRIDAY, MAY 30 | 2:30–3:30 pm

FREE

Author Talk with A.J. Devlin

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12913007



City Centre Branch

FRIDAY, MAY 30 | 4:00–5:00 pm

FREE

Author Talk with Shashi Bhat

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12913013



City Centre Branch

FRIDAY, MAY 30 | 7:00–8:00 pm

FREE

Keynote Speaker—Danny Ramadan

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916666



Inlet Theatre

Event Schedule

SATURDAY, MAY 31 | 10:30 am–12:00 pm

FREE

Workshop with Bill Arnott

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916670



City Centre Branch

SATURDAY, MAY 31 | 12:30–2:00 pm

FREE

Panel for Publishing with Claire Lawrence, Kathy Wagner, and Sherry McMillan

Hosted by Erik D’Souza

Sponsored by Tri-Cities Wordsmiths

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916722



City Centre Branch

SATURDAY, MAY 31 | 2:30–3:30 pm

FREE

Indigenous Storyteller Joseph Kakwinokanasum

Registration: Drop-in

Access live-stream at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916711



Virtual event and
Live-streamed in the
Michael Wright
Art Gallery

SATURDAY, MAY 31 | 3:45–4:45 pm

FREE

Author Talk with Christina Myers

Registration: Drop-in

Information: coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12916717



Michael Wright
Art Gallery

Cocktails and Conversations

THURSDAY, MAY 29 | 5:00–7:00 pm

\$20 / TICKET

For ages 16+ Evergreen Cultural Centre

Join fellow book lovers, authors, and readers for a fun-filled celebration of stories, community, and connection at the Tri-Cities Writers Festival Cocktail event. Bring a friend and enjoy tasty food, a refreshing drink, and the chance to meet new people who share your passion for books!

Tickets are \$20 per person and include entry, food, and one drink of your choice. Additional drink tickets will be available for purchase.

All proceeds support Coquitlam Public Library's programs and services.

This event is for ages 16 and up. Guests wishing to purchase alcoholic beverages must be 19+ and present valid government-issued photo ID.

We can't wait to celebrate with you!

For more information about this event, email ask@coqlibrary.ca

Buy your ticket online at
coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12943079



Panel Discussion

THURSDAY, MAY 29 | 7:00–8:30 pm

FREE

For adults and teens Evergreen Cultural Centre

Devoted readers and aspiring authors alike will be inspired by this Writers Round Table.

Local comedian and author Ryan Murphy will moderate a panel discussion featuring authors Bill Arnott, Gurjinder Basran, and Jen Sookfong Lee. The conversation will be followed by a question and answer period.

This event is free, but registration is required.

Save your spot at coquitlam.libnet.info/event/12943079



Author Biographies



Bill Arnott has written for Canadian Geographic, the Vancouver Sun and Province, The Writers Union of Canada, and magazines and trade journals in the US, UK, Europe, Asia and Australia. He continues to create bestselling travelogues, including *Gone Viking*, the *Season* memoirs, and *A Perfect Day*.



Gurjinder Basran is the award-winning author of four novels: *Everything Was Good-bye*, *Someone You Love is Gone*, *Help! I'm Alive* and *The Wedding*. Her groundbreaking debut novel, *Everything Was Good-bye*, was the winner of the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize and her most recent novel, *The Wedding* was featured as a favourite on many best book lists in 2024. Gurjinder lives in Delta, British Columbia.



Shashi Bhat is the editor of EVENT and teaches creative writing at Douglas College. She has written three books of fiction, including a novel-in-stories, *The Most Precious Substance on Earth*, which was a finalist for the 2022 Governor General's Award for fiction. Her most recent work, *Death by a Thousand Cuts*, is a breathtaking story collection about the everyday trials and impossible expectations that come with being a woman. Poignant, unflinching, and sharply funny, these stories wrestle with rage, longing, illness, and bodily autonomy, and their inescapable impacts on a woman's relationships with others and with herself.



A.J. Devlin is the award-winning writer of the "Hammerhead" Jed Mystery-Comedy Series. He grew up in Greater Vancouver before moving to Southern California, where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Screenwriting from Chapman University and a Master of Fine Arts in Screenwriting from The American Film Institute Conservatory. After working as a screenwriter in Hollywood, he moved back to Port Moody, BC, where he now lives with his children.

Learn more at ajdevlin.com or visit A.J.'s Instagram @ajdevlinauthor

Author Biographies



Andrea Fritz is a Coast Salish artist and storyteller from the Lyackson First Nation of the Hul'q'umi'num'-speaking Peoples on the West Coast of Canada. Andrea strives to express her People's history and all our futures using her art. She has had numerous gallery shows and participates in community-based art pieces. Andrea lives in Victoria, British Columbia.



Catherine Hernandez is an award-winning author and screenwriter. She is a proud queer woman who is of Filipino, Spanish, Chinese and Indian descent and married into the Navajo Nation. Her first novel, *Scarborough*, won the Jim Wong-Chu Award for the unpublished manuscript and was a finalist for several awards including Canada Reads 2022. She wrote the screenplay for the film adaptation of *Scarborough*, which was nominated for 11 Canadian Screen Awards and won 8, including Best Picture and Best Adapted Screenplay. Her novel *Behind You* was optioned by Conquering Lion Pictures to become a feature film, with Catherine writing the screenplay.



Joseph Kakwinokanasum is a writer, storyteller, and member of the James Smith Cree Nation. A finalist for CBC's 2020 Nonfiction Prize and selected by Darrel J. McLeod as a Writers Trust of Canada's 2022 Rising Star, his debut novel, *My Indian Summer*, won the 2023-2024 First Nations Communities READ Award, and was shortlisted for the 2023 ReLit Fiction Award.

Visit starblanketstoryteller.com for more about Joseph.



Claire Lawrence is a multi-genre storyteller and visual artist based in British Columbia. Claire's stories have appeared on BBC radio and in numerous publications worldwide, including Geist, Pulp Literature, Litro, and Brilliant Flash Fiction. Claire has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize for her poetry and short stories. She has won many contests for flash, fiction, nonfiction and poetry, and was a finalist for the Jesmyn Ward Fiction Prize, Michigan Quarterly Review. Her artwork has appeared many magazines. In 2023, her artwork was nominated for Best on the Net. Claire's goal is to publish in all genres, and not inhale too many fumes.

Author Biographies



Jen Sookfong Lee was born and raised in Vancouver's East Side and now lives with her son in North Burnaby. Her books include *Superfan*, named a Best Book of 2023 by The Globe and Mail and Apple Books; *The Conjoined*, nominated for International Dublin Literary Award and a finalist for the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize; *The Better Mother*, a finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Award; *The End of East*, *The Shadow List*, and *Finding Home*. Her forthcoming literary horror novel, *The Hunger We Pass Down*, will be published in September 2026. Jen acquires and edits for ECW Press and co-hosts the literary podcast Can't Lit. (photo: Kyrani Kanayaros)



Hannah Mary McKinnon was born in the UK, grew up in Switzerland, and moved to Canada in 2010. Her seven suspense novels include *Never Coming Home*, *The Revenge List*, and *Only One Survives*, and her work has been optioned for the screen. She also writes holiday romantic comedies as Holly Cassidy. Hannah Mary lives in Oakville, Ontario with her husband and three sons.

Visit www.hannahmarymckinnon.com for more, and find her on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Threads as @hannahmarymckinnon



Sherry McMillan's work is celebrated for its lyrical storytelling, deep connection to nature, and a genuine respect for children's perspectives. One of Sherry's notable works, *My S's Are Messes*, draws from her personal experiences with speech sound disorders. The book was recognized as a title of exceptional calibre in the Canadian Children's Book Centre Best Books for Kids and Teens, Spring 2024, and is also a finalist in the Canadian Book Club Awards—the largest national reader's choice book award.

Visit her Instagram @sherry_mcmillan_writes



Christina Myers is an editor, former journalist, and the author of *Halfway Home: Thoughts from Midlife*, and *The List of Last Chances*. Her books have been finalists in the SCWES book prize, the Leacock Medal for Humour, and the Fred Kerner Book Prize. She was a silver-medal winner in the IPPY awards, and won the 2023 Canadian Book Club Award in fiction. She teaches fiction and non-fiction through SFU's continuing studies department and hosts an ongoing reading series called Words in the Burbs. She is a member of Da'naxda'xw First Nation and lives in Surrey, British Columbia, with her family and four cats.

Author Biographies



Jennifer Sommersby is the author of thirteen novels (young adult, romantic comedy, women's fiction, and romantic suspense) under several pen names. She's worked as a freelance editor since 2005 and is a committed bibliophile and Superman freak. Her publishing umbrella, SGA Books, serves as a resource portal for writers and authors. Cats rule.

Find her online at www.sgabooks.com and www.plumfieldediting.com



Kathy Wagner is a writer and the mother of three grown children, including her son Tristan who died from fentanyl poisoning in August 2017. Her essays have appeared in The New York Times, The Globe and Mail, and The Sun Magazine. Her book, *Here With You: A Memoir of Love, Family, and Addiction* was published by Douglas & McIntyre in 2023. Kathy funds her writing habit by working as a content strategist, helping large organizations improve their customer experience by improving their words.

Learn more at www.kwagnerwrites.com
Facebook and Instagram @kwagnerwrites



Yilin Wang (she/they) is a Chinese diaspora writer, poet, and Chinese-English translator. Her debut book *The Lantern and the Night Moths* is the first book of translations from any Asian language to win the John Glassco Translation Prize in the 40 year history of the prize. Her writing and translations have appeared in *Clarkesworld*, *Fantasy Magazine*, *Room*, *Canthus*, *Arc Poetry Magazine*, *Words Without Borders*, *The Tye*, the anthology *The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories*, and elsewhere. She has won the Foster Poetry Prize, the Dwarf Stars Award, and the ALTA Travel Fellowship.

Find them online at yilinwang.com

Discover books by these inspiring authors
at your local library. Find copies in print,
eBook, or eAudiobook.

Keynote Speaker



DANNY RAMADAN

Danny Ramadan is a Syrian-Canadian author and LGBTQ-refugees advocate. His memoir, *Crooked Teeth*, came out in May 2024 to raving reviews, and is nominated to a Governor General Award for best non-fiction. His latest novel, *The Foghorn Echoes*, won the Lambda Award for Gay Fiction, and was nominated for the BC & Yukon Book awards, and the city of Vancouver Book Award. *The Clothesline Swing* won the Independent Publisher Book Award, longlisted for Canada Reads, and is translated to multiple languages. His award-winning children’s books *The Salma Series* received the Nautilus Book Award, The Publishing Triangle Award, the Middle East Book Award, amongst dozens of other nominations and honours.

Since his arrival to Canada, Ramadan has raised over \$300,000 for LGBTQ+ identifying refugees ensuring safe passage to more than two dozen queer and trans refugees. Ramadan graduated with an MFA in Creative Writing from UBC, and received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Adler University. He lives in Vancouver with his husband and two dogs. When he is not writing, he is probably playing video games.

Visit Danny online at www.dannyramadan.com

Hosts



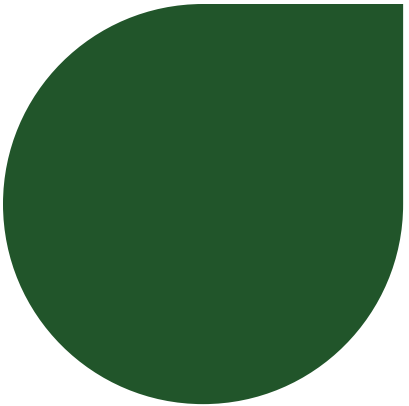
Ryan Murphy is an award-winning writer who has spun up creative content for some of the largest and most trusted brands in the world including Walt Disney, HBO, FOX, the Kentucky Derby, and many more.

His critically acclaimed short stories and columns have been published in 22 books and have been featured on more than 170 radio stations and 60 newspapers across North America. His latest book, *My Life’s a Joke*, is a laugh-out-loud account of the awkward encounters and spectacular failures led to a successful 15-year career as a stand-up comedian.

Visit his website at www.ryanmurphywrites.com



Erik D’Souza is an author and publisher based in Port Moody, BC. Among his works, *Death in Halfmoon Bay* stands out as the first book in the Suzanne Rickson Mystery Series. He is the Marketing and Communications Manager for Crime Writers of Canada. He is the president of the Tri-City Wordsmiths and hosts the popular reading series, Writers in our Midst, at the Port Moody Public Library.



Thank you for attending the Tri-Cities Writers Festival. Please scan the QR code and share your thoughts.



Thank you

We acknowledge we are on the unceded traditional territory of the Kwikwetlem First Nation, which lies within the shared territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Katzie, Musqueam, Qayqayt, Squamish, and Sto':lo Nations.

HOSTS



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www.tri-citywordsmiths.ca

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