



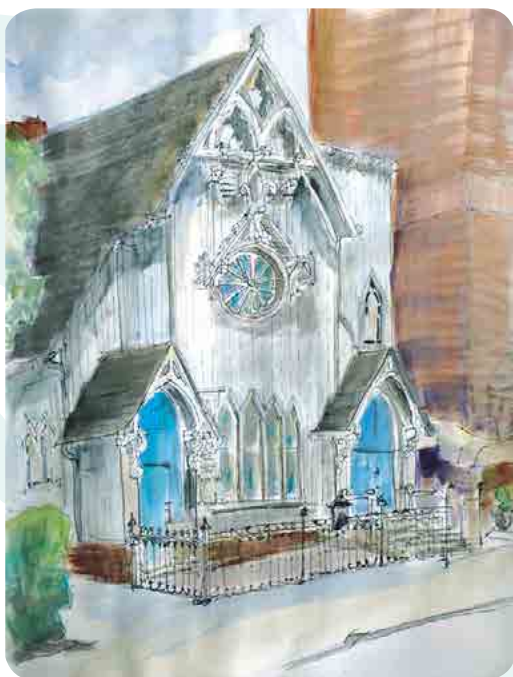
THE HELICONIAN CLUB

since 1909

presents

LITERARY LECTURE SERIES 2024-25

For busy people who like to read



Three Series: Eight sessions each,
including a lecture, a question period and
a book signing by the author.

Refreshments included. Cash Bar

IT'S OUR 28TH SEASON

Talented Canadian writers talk about their latest book at the Heliconian Club, a charming venue with its large rose window and vaulted ceilings in the heart of Yorkville. Artworks by Club members adorn its walls and exhibits change monthly.

Enjoy a glass of wine and French cheese on a cracker, or a cup of tea and a slice of lemon loaf before the presentation. Take part in a Question and Answer Session and have your book signed by the author.

There is a Tuesday and a Thursday Series comprised of 8 lectures. (These lectures will be recorded and the link sent out a week after the in-house lecture.)

Doors open at 6:45 pm for refreshments and conversation; the talk begins at 7:30 pm.

VIRTUAL SERIES

For those of you who prefer to attend virtually, we offer an online-only Wednesday series as well as the online versions of the Tuesday and Thursday series. It focusses on 8 talented Canadian writers from coast to coast.

The links to all the lectures will be accessible from their launch date until August 31st, 2025.

Cover sketch of Heliconian Hall by Dougal M.Haggart

TUESDAY LITERARY LECTURE SERIES

Doors Open: 6:45 pm

Lecture: 7:30 pm

Refreshments Included Cash Bar

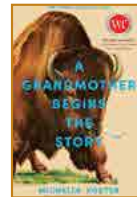


ERUM SHAZIA HASAN

We Meant Well

**September 10 /
September 17 online**

The novel grapples with timely questions about what it means to be charitable, who deserves what, and who gets the power to decide. Maya, an aid worker, must decide who to believe when her coworker, Marc, at the orphanage in Likanni, is accused of assaulting her former protégé, Lele.

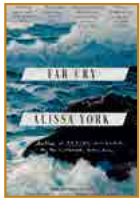


MICHELLE PORTER

A Grandmother Begins The Story

**October 8 /
October 15 online**

The novel follows five generations of Métis women through this life and the next as they navigate the challenges facing them. Their story is told alongside the bison who used to roam freely and the land itself.



ALISSA YORK

Far Cry

**November 5 /
November 12 online**

The novel takes place in 1922 on a river inlet on the northwest coast of British Columbia. Shelagh Rogers describes the setting as a “beautiful, harsh world where people hold their secrets close as they cling to the edge of the continent.”

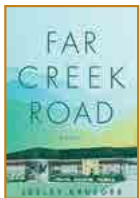


REEMA PATEL

Such Big Dreams

**January 7 /
January 14 online**

A savvy former street child working at a law office in Mumbai fights for redemption and a chance to live life on her own terms in this fresh, propulsive debut novel about fortune and survival.

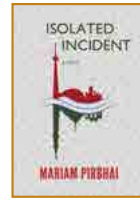


LESLEY KRUEGER

Far Creek Road

**February 11 /
February 18 online**

It's 1961, and Mary Alice (Tink) Parker is nine years old and lives with her family in a suburb of Vancouver. The story is told by Tink, an eccentric child, who is funny, observant, and impossibly nosy, with a tendency to blurt whatever's on her mind. Bucolic at first, the story darkens as McCarthy-era paranoia infects the adults and spills over into the lives of the children.

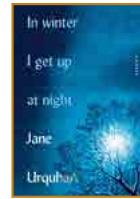


MARIAM PIRBHA

Isolated Incident

**March 11 /
March 18 online**

When a rock, a threatening letter, and a burning Quran are thrown into a mosque on the outskirts of Toronto, religious leaders and the police shrug it off as an isolated incident. Nevertheless, the Islamic Cultural Centre is attacked on the festive Eid night, and friendships, family, and faith are tested.



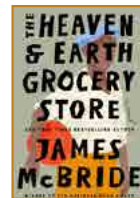
Sandra Martin interviews

JANE URQUHART

about *In Winter I Get Up at Night*

April 8 / April 15 online

In 1935, at the age of 11, the narrator, Emir, is terribly injured in a powerful prairie storm—the “great wind” that changes the trajectory of her life. Separated from her family, she recuperates in a children’s ward. Her fellow patients are a child performer, the daughter of a Dukhobor and the son of a Jewish socialist living on a collective farm..



Suanne Kelman will lecture on

The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store

by **JAMES MCBRIDE**

May 6 / May 13 online

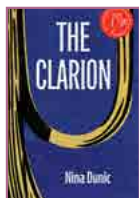
In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows.

THURSDAY LITERARY LECTURE SERIES

Doors Open: 6:45 pm

Lecture: 7:30 pm

Refreshments Included Cash Bar



NINA DUNIC

The Clarion

September 19 /
September 26 online

Peter plays the trumpet and works in a kitchen; Stasi tries to climb the corporate ladder and lands in therapy. These sensitive siblings struggle to find their place in the world, seeking intimacy and belonging—or trying to escape it. The novel captures the vague if hopeful melancholy of any generation that believes it was never “called” to something great.



MARINA ENDICOTT

The Observer

October 17 /
October 24 online

The novel pulls heavily from Marina’s personal experience working in a small-town Alberta newspaper, when her husband, an RCMP officer, was posted to a small community north of Edmonton. In the novel, the couple’s new life together is an adventure, but as in all the best stories, time darkens and deepens it.



Suanne Kelman interviews

ANNE MICHAELS

about *Held*

November 21 /
November 28 online

Held is a haunting meditation on our need to find meaning, to rediscover hope after deep loss, to rationalize the past and shape the future. Against a backdrop of the development of photography, Marie Curie’s discoveries, the struggle for women’s suffrage, Darwin’s radical ideas, different characters play out their individual lives from the early 1900’s to the present.

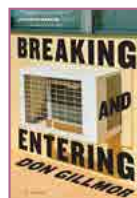


SARAH HENSTRA

The Lost Tarot

January 16 /
January 23 online

Theresa Bateman, a junior art historian in Toronto, receives a single tarot card in the mail. The image is unmistakably the work of celebrated avant-garde artist, Lark Ringold, of the 1930’s. Its discovery would mean a breakthrough in Theresa’s career, but the legendary Ringold paintings were lost in a fire that claimed Lark’s life in the final, horrific implosion of a notorious cult called the Shown.

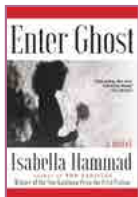


DON GILLMOR

Breaking and Entering

February 20 /
February 27 online

At 49, Beatrice Billings is rudderless. Her marriage is stale, her relationship with her son Thomas is limited to text messages and she is the primary caregiver for her mother, who is in the early stages of dementia. When she finds that she has both a talent and a passion for picking locks, the sense of anticipation that had been missing from her life returns.



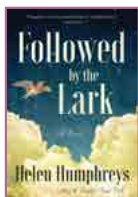
Suanne Kelman lectures on

Enter Ghost

by **ISABELLA HAMMAD**

March 20 / March 27 online

The novel follows actress Sonia as she returns to Palestine and takes a role in a West Bank production of *Hamlet*. As opening night draws closer it becomes clear just how many obstacles stand before a troupe of Palestinian actors. A stunning rendering of present-day Palestine.



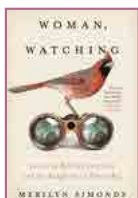
HELEN HUMPHREYS

Followed by the Lark

April 17 /

April 24 online

Inspired by the journals and writing of Henry David Thoreau, this moving novel inhabits the life and mind of this renowned nineteenth-century naturalist, poet and abolitionist, and reveals the deep connections between his time and our own.



MERILYN SIMONDS

*Woman, Watching:
Louise de Kiriline Lawrence and
the Songbirds of Pimisi Bay*

May 15 / May 22 online

A remarkable biography of an extraordinary woman — a Swedish aristocrat who survived the Russian Revolution to become an internationally renowned naturalist, one of the first to track the mid-century decline of songbirds. A Canadian Rachel Carson, Louise de Kiriline Lawrence lived and worked in an isolated log cabin near North Bay.

WEDNESDAY VIRTUAL LECTURE SERIES

View anytime from launch
until August 31, 2025



AMANDA PETERS

*Waiting for the Long Night Moon:
Stories*

September 11 online

The stories describe the dignity of the traditional way of life, the humiliations of systemic racism and the resilient power to endure. A young man returns from residential school only to realize he can no longer communicate with his own parents. A young woman finds purpose and healing on the front lines as a water protector.

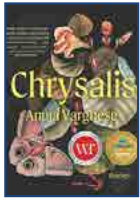


GENEVIEVE SCOTT

The Damages

October 9 online

The novel takes place at a fictional version of Queen's University in the winter of 1998 during the devastating ice storm. Classes are cancelled and the students party. In the midst of it all, the narrator, Ros, is blamed for the disappearance of her roommate. Years later, her former husband is accused of sexually assaulting the missing girl the night she disappeared.

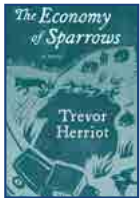


ANUJA VARGHESE

Chrysalis

November 6 online

The stories delve fearlessly into the complex intersections of family, community, sexuality, and cultural expectations. Anuja takes aim at the ways in which racialized women are robbed of power and describes the strange and dangerous journeys they undertake to reclaim it.

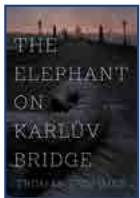


TREVOR HERRIOT

The Economy of Sparrows

January 8 online

Nell Rowan has inherited her family's prairie farmstead and returns there to live after many decades working in Ottawa as a custodian at the Museum of Natural History. She is obsessed with a 19th-century bird collector, who accidentally killed her great grandfather, and is haunted by memories of the disappearance of her mother when she was eleven.



THOMAS TROFIMUK

The Elephant on Karlův Bridge

February 12 online

Set in Prague and narrated by the 600-year-old Charles Bridge, this novel begins when an elephant named Sál escapes the Prague Zoo. As Sál moves through the city, the lives of the men and women she meets are altered by the encounter. Each is at a crossroads, and wrestles with questions of how to live, love and heal.

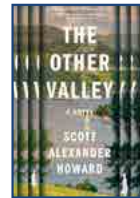


KAI THOMAS

In the Upper Country

March 12 online

The fates of two unforgettable women—one just beginning a journey of reckoning and self-discovery and the other completing her life's last vital act—intertwine in this sweeping, deeply researched debut set in the Black communities of Ontario that were the last stop on the Underground Railroad.

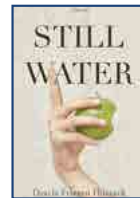


SCOTT ALEXANDER HOWARD

The Other Valley

April 9 online

A novel about an isolated town. To the east and to the west exists the same town. To the east, the town is twenty years ahead in time; to the west, it is twenty years behind. The narrator, sixteen-year-old Odile, is vying for a coveted seat on the Conseil. If she earns the position, she'll decide who may cross her town's heavily guarded borders.



DARCIE FRIESEN HOSSACK

Stillwater

May 7 online

Sixteen-year-old Lizzy is trapped, caught between her passion for science and the teachings of her Seventh-day Adventist father, Daniel, and her Mennonite mother, Marie. Her father, in a bid to regain his social standing and self-esteem, moves the family to an Adventist commune in BC's Okanagan Valley.

 Heliconian Hall
35 Hazelton Ave., Toronto

Cumberland exit of Bay subway station

Subscriptions to the series may be purchased online at www.heliconianclub.org.

SECURE YOUR SEATS NOW

Purchase your subscriptions online. An in-person subscription is \$235, including HST and \$15 for the Club's Capital Improvement Fund. Save \$60 when you bundle the Tuesday and Thursday In-Person subscriptions; \$410 for both, with the option to add Wednesday for an additional \$70 (limited number of bundles available). Online subscriptions can be added on at check out.

A subscription for one online 8-lecture series is \$140. Two online series costs \$210, and it is only \$240 if you sign up for all three.

The books are available from Ben McNally Books.

ABOUT THE CLUB

The Toronto Heliconian Club is a non-profit organization open to women actively engaged in the arts or those with long term interest in/ support for the arts. Annual memberships range from \$192 to \$397, including HST. For information about becoming a member contact membership@heliconianclub.org. For information on rental and availability of the Hall, contact 416-922-3618 or rentals@heliconianclub.org.



THE HELICONIAN CLUB
WOMEN LIVING IN THE ARTS