

LITERARY LECTURE IN-PERSON SERIES

2025-26



THE HELICONIAN CLUB

since 1909



Interwoven Stories by Rosemary Tannock

All our Literary Lectures feature talented Canadian writers talking about their books, including:

Carol Off *Gemini Award winner, Gabriel Award for Journalism*

Tanya Talaga *RBC Prize winner, Massey Lecturer*

Claire Messud *Booker Prize nominee*

Maria Reva *Writer's Trust Fiction Prize finalist*

Paul McLaughlin *Toronto Book Award finalist*

Eric Chacour *2024 Giller Prize shortlisted*

Emma Donoghue *Dublin Literary Award and Giller nominee*

Corinna Chong *2024 Giller Prize nominee*

Conor Kerr *2024 Giller Prize nominee*

Ayelet Tsabari *National Jewish Book Award winner*

Ernie Louttit *Saskatchewan Book Award and Reveal Indigenous Arts Award winner*

All books for the Literary Lecture Series are available at Ben McNally Books.
shop.benmcnallybooks.com

TUESDAY SERIES

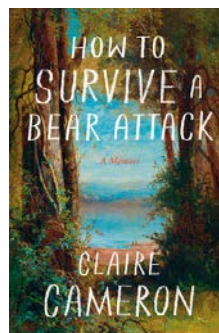
SEP 23



Emma Donoghue
THE PARIS EXPRESS

The novel reimagines the 1895 French railway disaster and takes place over a single day.

OCT 07



Claire Cameron
HOW TO SURVIVE A BEAR ATTACK

Claire confronts the rare genetic mutation that gave her cancer by investigating an equally rare and terrifying event—a predatory bear attack.

NOV 04



Tanya Talaga
THE KNOWING

A riveting exploration of Tanya Talaga's family's story beginning with the life of her great-great grandmother, Annie Carpenter, and her family.

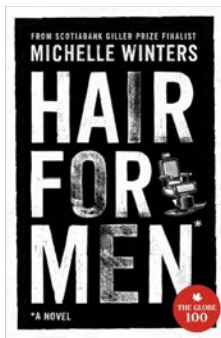
JAN 06



Kristen Den Hartog
THE ROOSTING BOX

An exquisitely written history of the early years of the Christie Street Hospital and how war reshaped Canadian society.

FEB 10

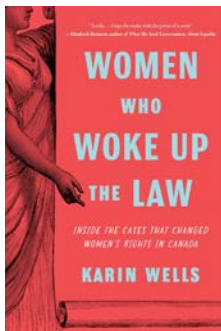


Michelle Winters

HAIR FOR MEN

Spurred by adolescent trauma, Louise adopts a life of hardcore punk violence until she stumbles into a job at a mysterious men's hair salon.

MAR 10

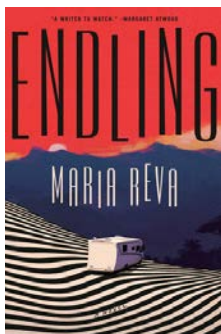


Karin Wells

WOMEN WHO WOKE UP THE LAW

Karin Wells pulls us into the lives and the legal trials of a group of women integral to the advancement of women's rights in Canada.

APR 07

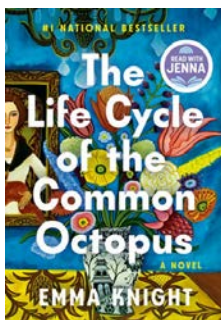


Maria Reva

ENDLING

An unforgettable debut novel about the journey of three women and one extremely endangered snail through contemporary Ukraine before and during Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

MAY 26



Emma Knight

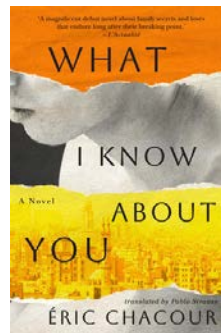
THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE COMMON OCTOPUS

A witty, warm and brilliantly told debut that is at once a love story, a story of female friendship and motherhood.

TUESDAY SERIES

THURSDAY SERIES

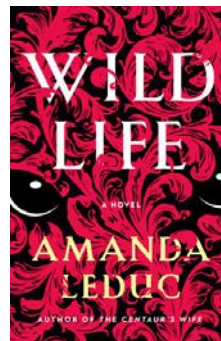
SEP 18

Suanne Kelman interviews
Eric Chacour

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT YOU

A heartbreaking tale of a family and an impossible love, torn apart by secrets and traditions in late-twentieth-century Cairo.

OCT 16



Amanda Leduc

WILD LIFE

Two walking, talking hyenas interact with humans over decades blurring the line between human and animal. These strange messengers reveal what is possible when the cages that contain us are broken.

NOV 20

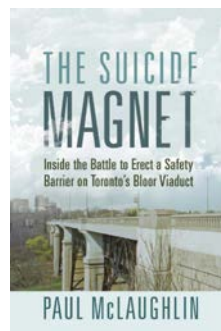


Claire Messud

THIS STRANGE EVENTFUL HISTORY

From 1940 to 2010, the Cassars are separated in the chaos of World War II, escape their colonial homeland, and, after Algerian independence, have no homeland at all.

JAN 15

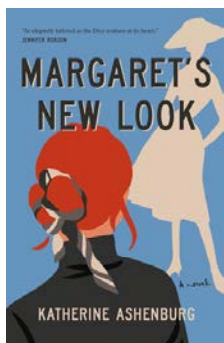


Paul McLaughlin

THE SUICIDE MAGNET

The inside story of the grassroots fight to have a suicide barrier erected on Toronto's "bridge of death".

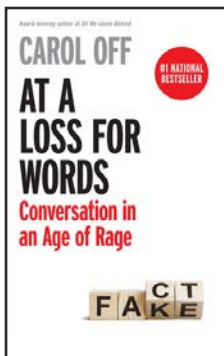
FEB 19



Katherine Ashenburg
**MARGARET'S
NEW LOOK**

Fashion, mystery, and politics combine in this novel set in a big-city museum where Margaret is launching a controversial exhibition of Christian Dior's "New Look."

MAR 19



Carol Off
**AT A LOSS
FOR WORDS**

Carol Off digs deep into six words whose meanings have been distorted and weaponized; democracy, freedom, truth, woke, choice and taxes—and asks whether we can reclaim their value.

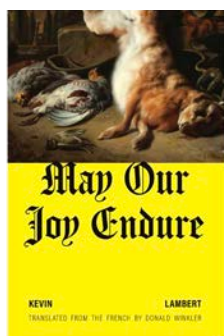
APR 23



Waubgeshig Rice
**MOON OF THE
TURNING LEAVES**

After a world-ending blackout, a scouting party of hunters ventures into dangerous territory to find a new home for their slowly starving Northern Ontario Indigenous community.

MAY 14



Suanne Kelman lectures about
Kevin Lambert

**MAY OUR JOY
ENDURE**

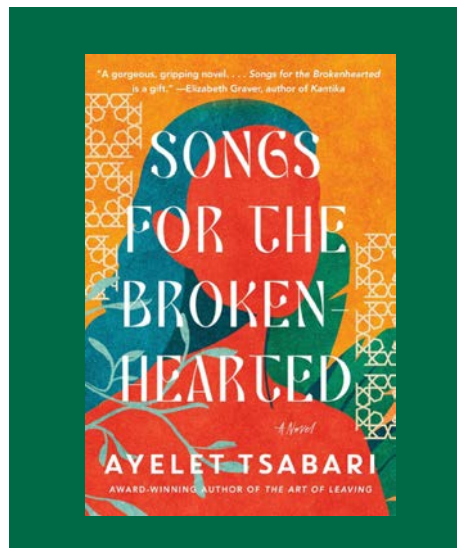
Céline Wachowski, a renowned international architect, unveils plans for her first major project in Montreal and is met with fierce criticism which threatens her elite status in her hometown.

THURSDAY SERIES

ADD-ON: VIRTUAL SERIES

SEP 10

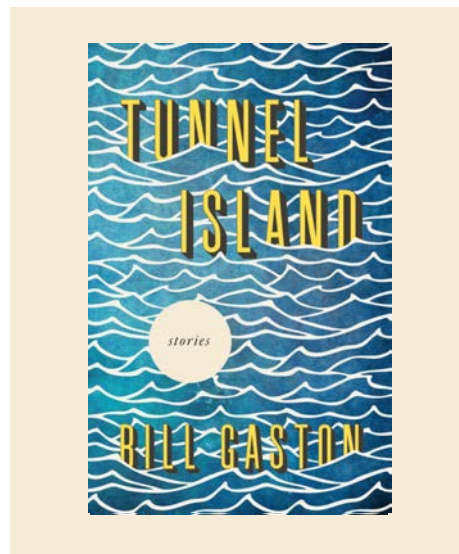
WEDNESDAY SERIES



Ayelet Tsabari
**SONGS OF THE
BROKEN HEARTED**

1950. Thousands of Yemeni Jews immigrate to the newly founded Israel in search of a better life. In an overcrowded immigrant camp, Yaqub, a shy young man, happens upon Saida, a beautiful girl singing by the river. They fall in love. But a married woman has no place befriending another man.

1995. Zohara, Saida's daughter, lives in New York City. She hasn't looked back since leaving home, and is rarely in touch with her mother. When her mother dies, Zohara gets on a plane to Israel and finds herself on a path that leads to shocking truths about her family.

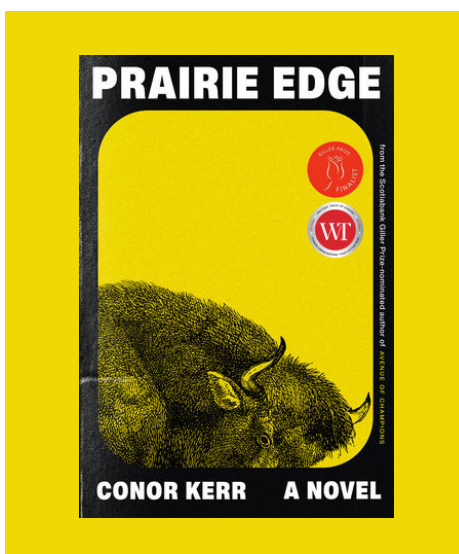


Bill Gaston

TUNNEL ISLAND

Set on an island in BC's Salish Sea, a collection of linked stories that feature a cast of characters striving to overcome pasts that often include a catastrophic error. On Tunnel Island, moral misjudgments, semi-legal schemes, and antisocial gaffes abound as characters seek a remedy for what ails them: loneliness, heartbreak, grief.

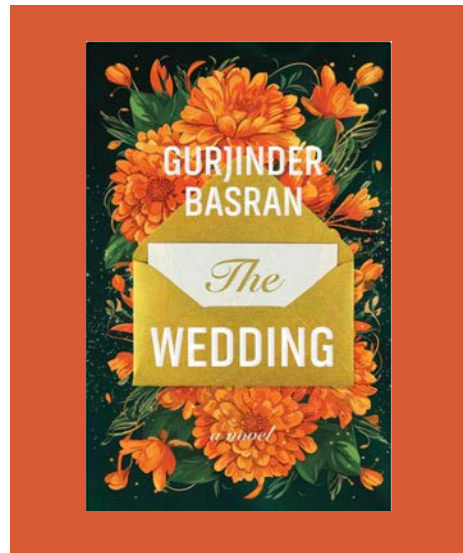
Bill Gaston's bighearted vision of life on a heavily forested island immerses readers in a world rendered tender and tolerable by human folly and our stumbling attempts at redemption.



Conor Kerr

PRAIRIE EDGE

Meet Isidore "Ezzy" Desjarlais and Grey Ginther: two distant Métis cousins making the most of Grey's uncle's old trailer, passing their days playing endless games of cribbage and cracking cans of cheap beer. Grey, once a passionate advocate for change, has been hardened and cynical about the activist culture she thinks has turned performative and lazy. One night, she has a revelation, and enlists Ezzy for a bold yet dangerous political mission: capture a herd of bison from a national park and set them free in downtown Edmonton, disrupting the churn of settler routine. But as Grey becomes increasingly single-minded in her newfound calling, their act of protest puts the pair and those close to them in peril, with devastating and sometimes fatal consequences.

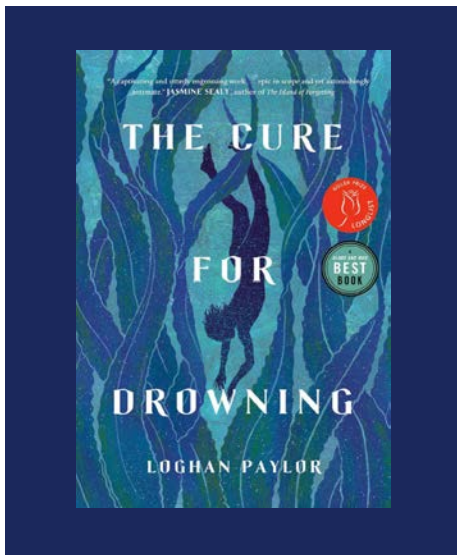


Gurjinder Basran

THE WEDDING

You're invited to the wedding of two South Asian families, and the secrets, resentments, and unspoken truths boiling just beneath the surface.

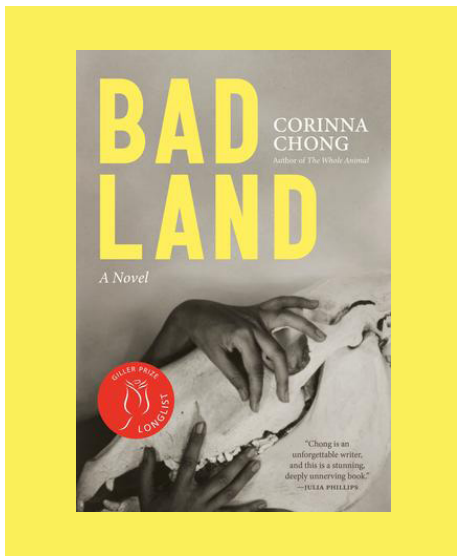
Interweaving themes of identity, culture clashes, and the immigrant experience, the novel is a delightful and intimate portrait of the vibrant, complex Sikh community of Vancouver and Surrey. It is rife with family drama, steeped in tradition and an ode to love in all its forms. With humour, nuance and honesty, *The Wedding* spills the chai—exploring desire and expectation, suffering and judgment, class and race—all in search of a happy enough ever after.



Loghan Paylor

THE CURE FOR DROWNING

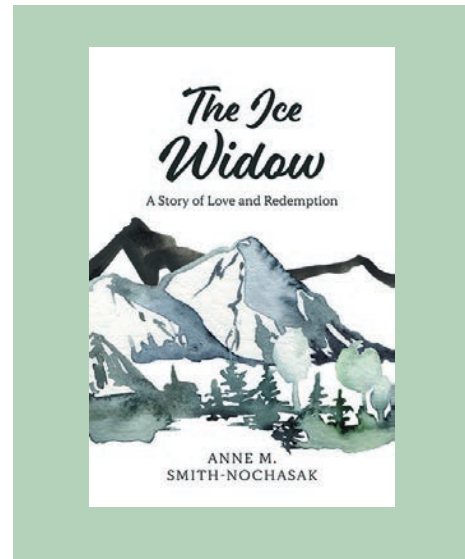
Born Kathleen to an immigrant Irish farming family in southern Ontario, Kit McNair has been a troublesome changeling since, at ten, they fell through the river ice and drowned—only to be nursed back to life by their mother's Celtic magic. A daredevil in boy's clothes, Kit chafes at every aspect of a farm girl's life, driving that same mother to distraction with worry about where Kit will ever fit in. When Rebekah Kromer, an elegant German-Canadian doctor's daughter, moves to town with her parents in April 1939, Rebekah has no doubt as to who 19-year-old Kit is. Soon she and Kit, and Kit's older brother, Landon, are drawn tight in a love triangle that will tear them and their families apart, and send each of them off on a separate path to war.



Corinna Chong

BAD LAND

Regina is a socially awkward loner who is content to live a life withdrawn from everyone except her cherished pet bunny. But after seven years of silence, Regina's younger brother, Ricky, shows up unannounced on her doorstep, along with his daughter, Jez - a peculiar six-year-old with an unnerving vicious streak - upending Regina's quiet life. It's clear to Regina that something terrible has happened, though the truth won't come to the surface easily. After all, Regina and Ricky lived a childhood fraught with secrets buried as deep as the fossils in the desolate landscape of the Badlands around them.

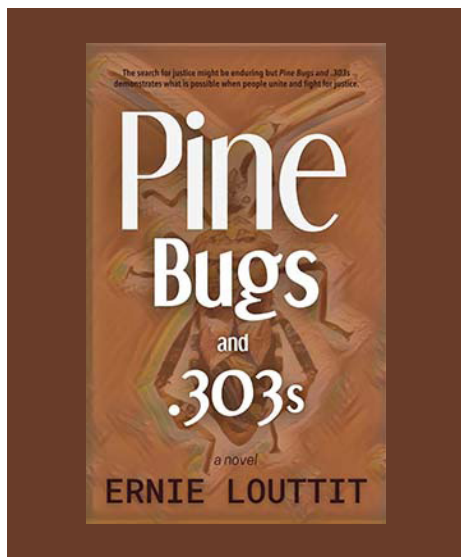


Anne M. Smith-Nochasak

THE ICE WIDOW

During her first teaching year in an Inuit community on the far northern coast of Labrador, Anna Caine falls deeply in love with the raw beauty of the land, the warmth and acceptance of its people, and with Joshua Kalluk, engaged to another. Anna leaves Endor when her lover stays true to his betrothed even though she is carrying his child.

Anna and Joshua share parenting responsibilities for their son but little else. Anna finds herself adrift and struggling to come to terms with her choices. When she retires, amidst a terrifying global pandemic, she is called upon to support Joshua during his cancer treatments, and eventually to accompany him on his final journey home.



Ernie Louttit

PINE BUGS AND .303S

After World War II has ended, two soldiers, united by the conflict, return to their small northern Ontario town to try and restart their lives. But for Elmer Wabason, a Cree man, and Gilbert Bertrand, a white man, this won't be so easy. Maintaining their friendships and families forces a familiar challenge but also brings new obstacles they never anticipated. A fast-paced story about deep bonds and deeper desperation, Elmer, Gilbert, and their families will have to endure disaster, deceit, racism, crime, and corruption to overcome the odds and secure the future of their families, and their town. The search for justice is not easy but *Pine Bugs and .303s* demonstrates the possibilities when people unite and fight to right wrongs.

THE HELICONIAN CLUB

The Toronto Heliconian Club is a non-profit organization run by women actively engaged in the arts, founded in 1909.

The Club also owns and operates Heliconian Hall, a National Heritage Site located in Toronto's historic Yorkville district. The Hall is available for concert rentals, book launches, and other arts events at subsidized rates.

HELICONIANCLUB.ORG

*Our visiting writers stay at the
Yorkville Royal Sonesta Hotel,
220 Bloor Street West, Toronto*

SUBSCRIPTION PRICING

in-person:

TUE only	\$250	\$200 for Toronto Heliconian Club members
THU only	\$250	\$200 for Toronto Heliconian Club members
TUE & THU	\$425	\$350 for Toronto Heliconian Club members

In-person subscribers receive a video of each lecture 1 week later.

add on:

WED virtual	add \$125	\$100 for Toronto Heliconian Club members
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All video lectures available to 31Aug/26.

Click here to register:

TorontoHeliconianClub.WildApricot.org/LLS

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Claire Cameron	Karin Wells
Tanya Talaga	Maria Reva
Kirsten den Hertog	Emma Knight

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Claire Messud	Waubgeshig Rice
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