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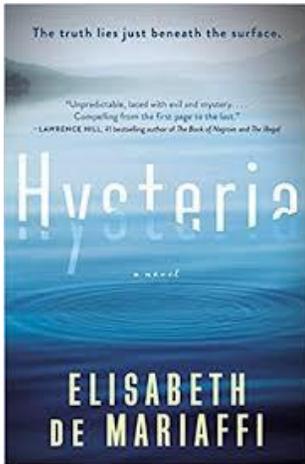
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HOTLIST TV/FILM 2020

Fiction

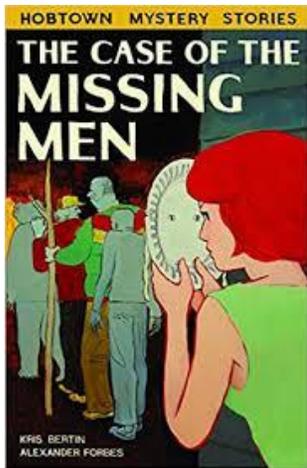
THRILLERS/SUSPENSE/CRIME

TRIGGER POINT by Elisabeth de Mariaffi (HarperCollins Canada 2021, ms ready) A feminist action thriller set against the climate changed backdrop of snowy mountains and avalanches. Think a contemporary, female driven version of “The Edge” or “The Revenant” with a dash of the remote hotel setting of “The Shining”. Desperate to put a past abusive marriage behind her and get her career back on track, a dancer leaves her children behind to pursue a two-week residency at a remote mountain arts colony, only to fall into an obsessive relationship with another artist—a relationship that turns deadly when a freak avalanche traps the residents at the retreat. Novelist and screenwriter, Elisabeth de Mariaffi, is the critically acclaimed author of two previous books, a Giller-nominated short story collection and a debut novel, the literary thriller *THE DEVIL YOU KNOW* (HarperCollins Canada, Simon & Schuster U.S., Titan U.K., 2015). Both a *Globe and Mail* Best Book and longlisted for the 2017 International DUBLIN Literary Award. de Mariaffi’s original horror feature film *FLY GIRLS* is in development with Rupert Harvey of Triton. Her latest novel *HYSTERIA* was published by Titan UK and HarperCollins Canada.



HYSTERIA by Elisabeth de Mariaffi (HarperCollins Canada; UK, Titan Publishing Group 2018. Books available) For fans of Hitchcock and *The Twilight Zone* and readers of Sarah Waters comes an atmospheric suspense that doubles as a ghost story. Heike Lerner walked away from the Dresden firestorm at the age of fourteen, crossing war-torn Germany and fleeing to Switzerland. Now married to an American psychiatrist working at the infamous Willard Asylum, she’s raising her young son in New York’s idyllic Finger Lakes region and learning to navigate 1950s high society when a hazy canoe ride to a local pond ends in the unthinkable: a strange little girl seems to appear from nowhere, befriending four-year old Daniel, then disappearing just as quickly below the surface of the water. Convinced she’s just witnessed a drowning, Heike dives below the water to rescue the child but she has vanished without a trace. Just as she begins to question the encounter and even the girl’s existence, Heike meets Leo Dolan. Caught between her controlling husband and the intense Dolan, Heike returns from a party to find Daniel, too, has disappeared—and her own husband was the last to see him. Elisabeth de Mariaffi is the critically acclaimed author of two previous books, a Giller-nominated short story collection and a debut novel, the literary thriller *THE DEVIL YOU KNOW* (HarperCollins Canada, Simon & Schuster U.S., Titan U.K., 2015). Both a *Globe and Mail* Best Book and longlisted for the 2017 International DUBLIN Literary Award. de Mariaffi’s original horror feature film *FLY GIRLS* is in development with Rupert Harvey of Triton. Her next novel is *TRIGGER POINT* 2021 HarperCollins Canada.

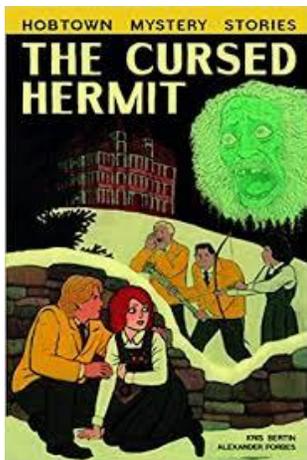
STRANGE LOOPS by Liz Harmer (Knopf Canada 2021, ms ready soon). STRANGE LOOPS opens with the beginnings of a sexual relationship between Francine, a married mother of two and, Alexander, her former student; she is thirty-four, and he has recently turned eighteen. Francine throws herself into a relationship with the student she feels she cannot resist, repeating a pattern from seventeen years earlier, when she fell in love with the youth pastor at her church. Neither she nor her twin brother Philip has ever been able to move past this trespass, and as a result they have been fighting for years. With a difficult, intelligent, and complicated woman at its helm, STRANGE LOOPS is a lean, sexy, and dark story in which several obsessions threaten to converge. Complete with tornadoes, twins, lovers, and an estate, and inspired by *Madame Bovary*, *Lolita*, and *Shirley Jackson*, STRANGE LOOPS is a haunted gothic romance translated into a realist twenty-first century world. Liz Harmer is the award-winning author of THE AMATEURS, a speculative novel of technological rapture, which was released with Knopf/Vintage in 2019. After receiving starred reviews with Publisher's Weekly and the Quill and Quire, THE AMATEURS was a finalist for the Amazon Canada First Novel Award.



THE CASE OF THE MISSING MEN written by Kris Bertin and illustrated by Alexander Forbes (Conundrum Press, North America 2017; Pow Wow and Coconino Italy, books available). THE CASE OF

THE MISSING MEN is the first part of an ongoing mystery thriller set in a strange and remote east-coast village called Hobtown. The story follows a gang of young teens who have made it their business to investigate each and every one of their town's bizarre occurrences as The Teen Detective Club (a registered afterschool program). Their small world of missing pets and shed-fires is turned upside down when real-life kid adventurer and globetrotter Sam Finch comes to town and enlists them in their first real case--the search for his missing father. In doing so, he and the teens stumble upon a terrifying world of rural secret societies, weird-but-true folk mythology, subterranean lairs,

and an occultist who can turn men into dogs. THE CASE OF THE MISSING MEN is at turns funny, intriguing, eerie and endearing, and is beautifully illustrated in a style reminiscent of children's pulp classics like Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys.



THE CURSED HERMIT written by Kris Bertin and illustrated by Alexander Forbes (Conundrum Press, North America 2019, books available). The highly anticipated follow-up to THE CASE OF THE MISSING

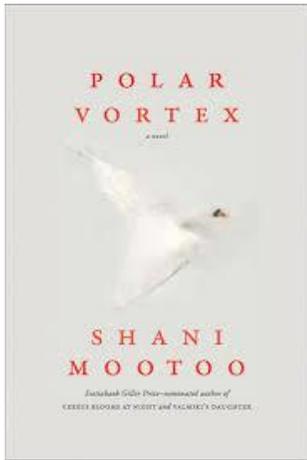
MEN follows the Teen Detectives as they untangle the mystery of Knotty Pines. Reeling from the strange and confusing discoveries of their last adventure, the Hobtown Junior Detective Club is looking forward to Christmas break when two of its Teen Detectives--Brennan and Pauline--are made to attend an extra-credit boarding school called Knotty Pines. After attending their first classes, however, they realize they may have stumbled on their weirdest case yet. It's not just that the Headmaster and the Headmistress are unusually strict, it's that they seem to be controlling the students,

transforming them into boneheads and bullies. Isolated from their fellow sleuths, our intrepid young

investigators need to rely on a cast of colorful characters to lift a curse that has plagued the good people of Hobtown for centuries. Bizarre, funny, frightening, and heartwarming, this latest installment of the Hobtown Mystery Stories brings our teens one step closer to uncovering the haunting truth of their funny little east-coast village.

CHINA WHITE, book one in the Styvie Savard Crime Series by Sarah Richards (Audible Original 2020, ms ready)

A smart, propulsive, female-driven crime thriller series set in the underbelly of Vancouver, in which Styvie Savard, a disgraced ex-police officer, forms an unlikely alliance with Ashleigh, a pregnant teenage cult member who goes by the name of Dharma; together they expose an opioid drug ring. As an ongoing crime procedural from the perspective of a disgraced female police officer who has been kicked off the force and is living out of her car. CHINA WHITE was a finalist in the 2018 HarperCollins Best New Fiction Prize. Sarah's short stories and nonfiction have appeared in Lonely Planet and BBC.com, among others. She received an MFA from UBC and now she teaches English at Langara College and volunteers as a literacy mentor in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Book two in the Styvie Savard crime series is under contract with Audible.



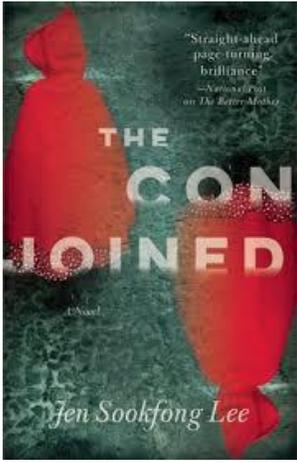
POLAR VORTEX by Shani Mootoo (Book*hug Canada Spring 2020; Akashic Books US, ms ready)

A seductive and tension-filled new novel by one of Canada's most widely acclaimed and award-winning novelists. When a visit from Priya's old friend Prakash disrupts Priya's home life with her wife Alex, questions of Priya's true intentions surface in her monogamous relationship with Alex. Did Priya invite Prakash? And if so why? And if not, why does she want him to visit so badly after being out of touch with him for years? And exactly what kind of a friendship did Priya have with Prakesh in university? Was it really just a platonic friendship, or something more? Shani Mootoo's novels include MOVING FORWARD SIDEWAYS LIKE A CRAB, long-listed for the Scotia Bank Giller Prize, shortlisted for the Lambda Award;

VALMIKI'S DAUGHTER, long-listed for the Scotia Bank Giller Prize; HE DROWN SHE IN THE SEA, long-listed for the Dublin IMPAC Award, and CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT (optioned by Bitterboy productions) shortlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize, The Chapters First Novel Award, The Ethel Wilson Book Prize, and long-listed for the Man Booker Prize.

CITIZENS OF LIGHT by Sam Shelstad (RBA Libros, Spain 2021, manuscript ready soon)

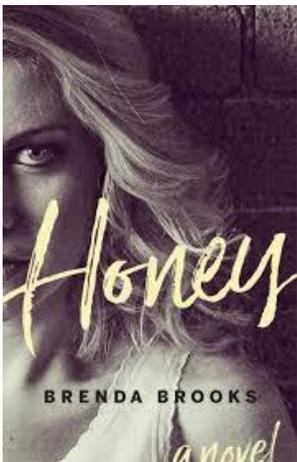
Debut novel CITIZENS OF LIGHT by Sam Shelstad melds the dark vision of a writer like Flannery O'Connor with the plot sense of hardboiled crime authors such as Raymond Chandler and James M. Cain. A telemarketer named Colleen awakes to the news that her husband Leonard's body has been found in a bog, far from their home in *Mimico, a neighborhood in Etobicoke (*a suburb of Toronto). Colleen believes a strange man knows—or could even be responsible for—what happened to Leonard and so she and her pushy co-worker Patti set out to find the man from the photograph. The investigation soon pulls them deep into the twisted and seedy underworld of the tourist city of Niagara Falls and its shifty haunted house proprietors, incarcerated cult leaders, scam artists, and a threatening reindeer within an online computer game. Sam Shelstad's work has appeared in literary magazines including *McSweeney's Internet Tendency* and *Joyland* and he recently completed an MFA in Creative Writing at the University of Victoria.



THE CONJOINED by Jen Sookfong Lee (ECW Press, North America 2018 books available)

Longlisted for the International Dublin Literary Award. On a sunny May morning, social worker Jessica Campbell, makes a shocking discovery following her mother's funeral — two dead girls curled into the bottom of her mother's chest freezers. She remembers a pair of foster children who lived with the family in 1988: Casey and Jamie Cheng — troubled, beautiful, and wild teenaged sisters from Vancouver's Chinatown. After six weeks, they disappeared; social workers, police officers, and Jessica herself assumed they had run away. As Jessica learns more about Casey, Jamie, and their troubled immigrant Chinese parents, she also unearths dark stories about Donna, whom she had always thought of as the perfect mother. Jen Sookfong

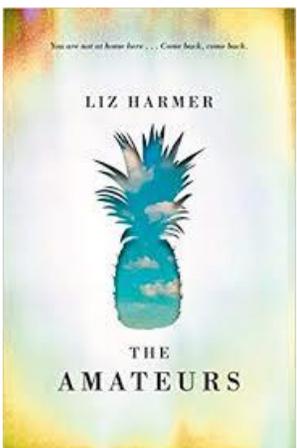
Lee was born and raised on Vancouver's East Side, where she now lives with her son. Her books include *THE BETTER MOTHER*, a finalist for the City of Vancouver Book Award, *THE END OF EAST*, and *SHELTER*. A popular radio personality, Jen was the voice behind CBC Radio One's weekly writing column, *Westcoast Words*, for three years, appears regularly as a contributor on *The Next Chapter*, and is a frequent co-host of the Studio One Book Club. Jen teaches writing in the continuing studies departments at both Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia.



HONEY by Brenda Brooks (ECW North America 2019, books available)

– noir suspense literary fiction novel with lesbian love story for fans of the film “Carol” or the bestselling novel “Notes on a Scandal”. Nicole Hewett’s best friend Honey reappears after a 6-year disappearance. Nicole’s father has died and she’s a loner piano player at the small-town casino living with her mother who is grieving. Soon Nicole is spending all her time with Honey. Then bad stories from Honey’s past come out, along with a potentially abusive ex-boyfriend Donald Arbuck. When Nicole arrives home to find Honey has killed Arbuck in self-defense the two women decide to bury his body in a lake and abscond to Las Vegas. But is Honey trustworthy? Does she really love Nicole the way Nicole loves Honey?

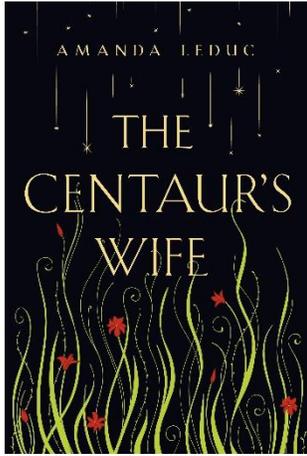
FANTASTICAL, NEAR FUTURE AND SCI-FI



THE AMATEURS by Liz Harmer (Knopf Canada 2018, books available)

In a time and place only slightly removed from now, PINA, the world's largest tech company, has introduced society to a new product called “Port.” This irresistible space-time travel device is mysteriously powered by nostalgia and longing: Step inside a Port and find yourself transported any place your heart desires, real or imagined. Earth's population plummets when many who pass through its portal don't come back—either unwilling or unable to return. In *THE AMATEURS*, Liz Harmer has crafted a subtle, many-faceted debut novel about rapture and romance—and the strange, dark, powerful alchemy that happens when technology meets desire. Liz Harmer's stories and

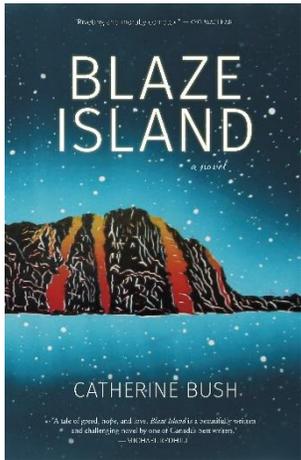
essays have been published in *The New Quarterly*, *Little Brother* and other journals. She won a National Magazine Award in Personal Journalism and was nominated for another NMA, both in 2014. She was longlisted for the CBC short story award and a finalist for a Glimmer Train Prize. Her next novel is *STRANGE LOOPS* forthcoming in 2021.



THE CENTAUR'S WIFE by Amanda Leduc (Random House Canada 2021, ms ready)

Following the terrain of “Station Eleven”, “The Leftovers” and “Neverwhere”, comes a story about our world, some steps into the future, steeped in lore and fairy-tale, alive with secret centaurs who live and thrive in the mountains. While the remaining humans, led by Tasha, carve out a thin survival filled with despair, desire and loss. The world has ended, and everything they know has disappeared. In the wake of destruction wrought by an unforeseen asteroid shower, the lives of two women – Heather, a disabled mother of twins who holds a special relationship to the centaurs in the mountain that towers over her home; and Tasha, a doctor from a faraway seaside city who has fled to the mountains in wake of the disaster –are thrown

together. Amanda Leduc is a disabled author with cerebral palsy whose stories and essays have appeared in publications across Canada, the US, the UK, and Australia, including *The Rumpus*, *The Butter*, *ELLE Canada*, and many others. Leduc’s new book *DISFIGURED: On Fairy Tales, Disability, and Making Space*, comes out in February 2020 with Coach House Books. *THE CENTAUR'S WIFE* is her second novel, she is at work on her next.



BLAZE ISLAND by Catherine Bush (Goose Lane Editions Canada, 2020, ms ready)

BLAZE ISLAND is a provocative and timely new novel that weaves climate change, love, family and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* onto a fictionalized version of Fogo Island called Blaze Island, a remote island community off the coast of Newfoundland. The time is now, or an alternate near now. After speaking out about the extremities of arctic melting, prominent climate change scientist Michael Wells finds himself set upon by climate change deniers and ousted from his university position in the US and settles on Blaze Island with his adult daughter, Miranda. Years later, with a massive hurricane churning up the North American east coast, Michael lures three men to the island with the promise of a climate engineering experiment

that may help lower planetary temperatures. The novel, which takes place over thirty-six hours, alternately follows the scientist’s daughter, nineteen-year-old Miranda Wells, and Caleb Borders, a local youth who works for the scientist and whose life has become inextricably and painfully entangled with that of Wells and his daughter. One of Canada’s most inventive and highly regarded novelists, Catherine Bush is the author of four novels. *ACCUSATION* (Goose Lane Editions, 2013) was one of *NOW* magazine’s Best Ten Books of 2013, an Amazon.ca Best Book and a Canada Reads Top 40 pick.

THE HUNTER AND THE OLD WOMAN by Pamela Korgemagi (House of Anansi Press North America, 2021, ms ready in summer 2020)

An epic tale of life and survival as seen and narrated by ‘The Old Woman’ a female cougar as she attempts the most remarkable of feats: survival in the forest. Young hunter Joseph Brandt has heard tales of the Old Woman since he was born, the

legendary mountain lion who stalks the night forest, tormenting men in their waking life and into their dreams. As Joseph grows older his obsession with the Old Woman deepens until finally, he steps into the forest to seek her out. An existential work that examines the links between one creature and the creatures its life intersects with, *THE HUNTER AND THE OLD WOMAN* is told with unfolding power. After graduating from York University's creative writing program Pamela Korgemagi moved to Toronto where she has worked at various jobs throughout the city including being a game tester at a video game studio, receptionist at an industrial engine repair site, and human money counter in a vault. *THE HUNTER AND THE OLD WOMAN* is her first novel. She is at work on her next novel.

DRAMA

THE SPECTACULAR by Zoe Whittall (U.S. Ballantine; Canada, HarperCollins, 2021, ms

ready soon) From award-winning screenwriter and Giller Prize finalist Zoe Whittall comes *THE SPECTACULAR*, an energetic exploration of three generations of women and their shifting relationships to sexuality, motherhood and each other. Ruth is in her seventies living in suburban Montreal and enjoying a hot affair with the widower neighbour, when she finds out she is dying. She decides to throw herself a farewell party in the seaside village on the Aegean where she spent her childhood in Turkey-- but declines to tell anyone the reason. She takes along Missy, her 22-year-old grand-daughter, a cello player in a notorious art rock orchestra. Missy, a hard-partying musical prodigy with a ravenous sexual appetite for multiple lovers on tour, is exhausted from touring and running away from an incident at the border involving a forgotten flap of cocaine. Missy decides to take Ruth up on the offer of the plane ticket to Turkey where she hopes to dry out and get some perspective. Discovering she's pregnant right before the trip, Missy and Ruth find their beliefs on motherhood and abortion are at odds. Andrea, Missy's mother, married young and never had a chance to fulfill her own needs and dreams, deciding in her twenties to leave her marriage and teenaged daughter Missy in Ruth's care. Winner of the Canadian Screen Award for best comedy writing, Zoe Whittall's third novel, *THE BEST KIND OF PEOPLE*, is being adapted for feature film by Sarah Polley, was shortlisted for The Giller Prize, named Indigo's #1 Book of 2016 and named a best book of the year by *Walrus Magazine*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Life*, & the *National Post*. She has worked as a TV writer on CBC/IFC's "The Baroness Von Sketch Show," (which *Vogue* called "the best thing out of Canada since Ryan Gosling"), "Schitt's Creek" and "Degrassi." Her second novel, *HOLDING STILL FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE*, won a Lambda literary award and was named a Stonewall Honor Book by the American Library Association and is under option with Marble Media, and her debut *BOTTLE ROCKET HEARTS*, was named one of CBC Canada Reads' best books of the decade.

ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING by Sophie McCreesh (Doubleday Canada 2021, manuscript

available summer 2020) Calling to mind smart, raunchy and unrepentant popular series and novels such as "Fleabag" and Sally Rooney's "Normal People" and Ottessa Moshfegh's "My Year of Rest and Relaxation" comes Sophie McCreesh's distinctive and arresting debut novel *ONCE MORE WITH FEELING*. The story follows a young artist named Jane as she navigates her closest relationships while struggling with her own self-doubt and isolation. Jane and her friend Kitty begin to examine their feelings of futility in relation to their confidence in their art. Their respective artistic practices and the dynamic of their friendship transforms as they collaborate to show their work at a competition in England. As one friend thrives, Jane's loneliness and personal devastation begin to get in the way of her artistic ambitions. Her relationship with Kitty, her absent lover Alex, and with a discredited therapist named

Anna begin to deteriorate as Jane starts to examine her growing dependence on substances. Sophie McCreesh is a fiction writer living in Toronto. She completed an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. Her writing has appeared in *Peach Mag*, *Bad Dog Review*, *Bad Nudes*, *Hobart*, *the Minola Review*, *Cosmonauts Avenue*, and elsewhere.



SMALL GAME HUNTING AT THE LOCAL COWARD GUN CLUB by Megan Gail Coles (House of Anansi, North America, 2019. Ms Available)

Finalist for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and Canada Reads. February in Newfoundland is the longest month of the year. Another blizzard is threatening to tear a strip off downtown St. John's, while inside The Hazel restaurant a storm system of sex, betrayal, addiction, and hurt is breaking overhead. Iris, a young hostess from around the bay, is forced to pull a double despite resolving to avoid the charming chef and his wealthy restaurateur wife. Just tables over, Damian, a hungover and self-loathing server, is trying to navigate a potential punch-up with a pair of lit customers who remain oblivious to the rising temperature in the dining room. Meanwhile Olive, a young woman

far from her northern home, watches it all unfurl from the fast and frozen street. Through rolling blackouts, we glimpse the truth behind the shroud of scathing lies and unrelenting abuse and discover that resilience proves most enduring in the dead of this winter's tale. By turns biting, funny, poetic, and heartbreaking, Megan Gail Coles' debut novel rips into the inner lives of a wicked cast of characters, building towards a climax that will shred perceptions and force a reckoning. This is blistering Newfoundland Gothic for the twenty-first century, a wholly original, bracing, and timely portrait of a place in the throes of enormous change, where two women confront the traumas of their past in an attempt to overcome the present and to pick up a future. Megan Gail Coles is a graduate of Memorial University of Newfoundland and the National Theatre School of Canada. She is co-founder and co-artistic director of Poverty Cove Theatre Company. She is a member of the Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador, Playwrights Guild of Canada, Playwrights' Atlantic Resource Centre and Playwrights' Workshop Montreal. Her completed plays include "Falling Trees," "Squawk," "The Battery," "Bound" and "Our Eliza" (Playwrights' Canada Press/Breakwater Books). Megan won the 2013 Rhonda Payne Theatre Award. Her debut fiction collection, EATING HABITS OF THE CHRONICALLY LONESEOM, won the BMO Winterset Award and The Margaret & John Savage First Book Award.



THERE HAS TO BE A KNIFE by Adnan Khan (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2019, books available)

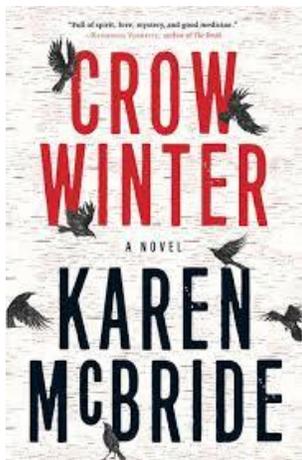
Adnan Khan's blistering debut novel investigates themes of race, class, masculinity, and contemporary relationships. Omar Ali is a ticking time bomb. A phone call from his ex-girlfriend Anna's father plunges him into darkness when he learns that she's committed suicide. Clueless and hurting, Omar turns to violence and petty crime to cope. His nefarious activities catch the attention of the RCMP, who pressure him into becoming an informant at a mosque they suspect harbours a terrorist cell. Unravelling from insomnia, sorrow, and rage, Omar grasps at his last shred of hope, embarking on a quest to find the note he's convinced Anna left for him. THERE HAS TO BE A KNIFE examines expectations - both intimate and political - on brown men,

exploring ideas of cultural identity and the tropes we use to represent them. Adnan Khan has written for *VICE*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *Hazlitt*. He has been nominated for a National Magazine Award and in 2016 was awarded the RBC Taylor Emerging Writer Award. *THERE HAS TO BE A KNIFE* is his first novel. He lives in Toronto.

WAITING FOR A STAR TO FALL by Kerry Clare (Doubleday Canada, North America

Summer 2020, ms ready) When political superstar Derek Murdoch is brought down by decade-old allegations of sexual misconduct, his on-again/off-again girlfriend Brooke is left to process the situation as his reputation is dragged through the mud for his propensity for relationships with much-younger women in his employ. As someone who fits that description exactly, Brooke is forced to re-examine the story of her relationship with Derek. Torn from the headlines, *WAITING FOR A STAR TO FALL* is a novel for the #MeToo era, a gripping story that examines the complex dynamics of politics *and* sexual politics, and questions the stories we tell about people in the public eye. *The Toronto Star* called Kerry Clare's debut novel *Mitzi Bytes* "Entertaining, engaging and timely," A National Magazine Award-nominated essayist, Kerry is also a book reviewer, editor of the Canadian books website 49thShelf.com, and writes about books and reading at her popular blog, Pickle Me This. Kerry Clare lives in Toronto with her family.

HALF LIFE by Krista Foss (McClelland & Stewart, 2021, Ms ready soon) For readers of Miriam Toews, *HALF LIFE* is a riveting portrait of sisters and daughters navigating the murky tensions of physics and belief, memory and family bonds. When a yellow-eyed dog is left on her doorstep and a strange creature appears under the trees outside her classroom, middle-aged Milwaukee physics teacher Elin Frederiksen has to reconcile her past, present and future or lose her mind, and job, trying. As she organizes a party for Mette, her soon-to-visit songwriter sister, Elin grapples with the recent death of her brother, her formidable Danish mother's new frailty and the imminent departure of an adored 18-year-old daughter. And then there are those uncomfortable memories triggered by her designer father's most admired modernist chair. Instead of a celebration, Mette's arrival underscores the sisters' brokenness, and forces Elin to confront the price paid for loving those who don't believe your story. Krista Foss' short fiction has appeared in *Granta* and has twice been a finalist for the Journey Prize and nominated for a National Magazine Award. Her first novel, *SMOKE RIVER*, published by McClelland & Stewart (2014), won the Hamilton Literary Award.



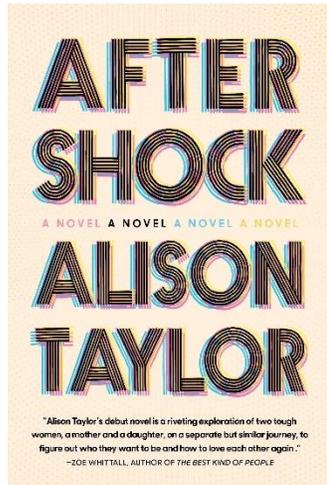
CROW WINTER by Karen McBride (HarperCollins Canada, 2019,

books available) Since coming home to Spirit Bear Point First Nation, Hazel Ellis has been dreaming of an old crow. He tells her he's here to help her, save her. From what, exactly? Sure, her dad's been dead for almost two years and she hasn't quite reconciled that grief, but is that worth the time of an Algonquin demigod?

Soon Hazel learns that there's more at play than just her own sadness and doubt. The quarry that's been lying unscathed for over a century on her father's property is stirring the old magic that crosses the boundaries between this world and the next. With the aid of Nanabush, Hazel must unravel a web of deceit that, if left untouched, could destroy her family and her home on both

sides of the Medicine Wheel. Karen McBride is an Algonquin Anishnaabe writer from the Timiskaming

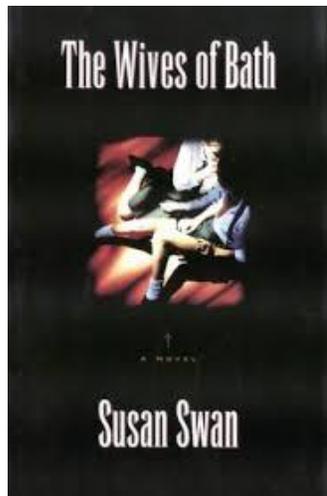
First Nation in the territory that is now Quebec. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and English, as well as a Bachelor of Education from the University of Ottawa. Most recently, Karen graduated with a Master of Arts in the Field of Creative Writing from the University of Toronto. Karen works as an elementary school teacher on her home reserve.



AFTERSHOCK by Alison Taylor (HarperCollins Canada 2021 ms available)

For fans of “Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine” about a mother and daughter relationship in crisis, revolving around the tragic death of the younger sister years before. When the novel opens, mother, Jules, has become addicted to opiates/Oxy because of her chronic pain that her doctor boyfriend over-prescribes her painkillers for. When her cuts her off, she finds herself arrested for faking scripts and her life spirals downward. Meanwhile daughter Chloe, a millennial lesbian, is frustrated with Jules lack of mothering when she needs help with challenges in university and her love life, so Chloe takes off and travels to New Zealand to meet-up with her father and his new girlfriend and baby daughter. Earthquakes in NZ jeopardize her father’s home and Chloe heads-off backpacking alone. When Jules, finally sober, hears of

the quakes she realizes she needs to help Chloe and flies to NZ to find her and address their traumatic past and heal their relationship. Debut novel, Alison Taylor is at work on her next work of fiction.



THE WIVES OF BATH by Susan Swan (HarperCollins Canada 2021 ms available)

In the international bestselling novel THE WIVES OF BATH, Susan Swan penetrates the world of a girls' boarding school and tells a story--at once shocking and wickedly funny--that encompasses rebellion and murder, and stunningly evokes the pain, confusion, and humor of female adolescence and sexual coming-of-age. It is 1963. Mary Bradford (a.k.a. Mouse) is thirteen when she is shipped off to Bath Ladies College. Mouse, motherless, a hunchback, enters the school feeling very much on its margins, determined never to fit in with the "normal" girls, never to succumb to the expectations of the elder role models: the spinster teachers, the elegant mothers of her schoolmates. But the school itself is stranger than Mouse ever could have imagined. A secret underworld of tunnels beneath the

buildings, stolen love letters, King Kong worship, and ghostlike apparitions - a world where young girls sometimes refuse to be simply "good little girls"--all lead Mouse into experiences, both terrifying and exciting, of an alternate reality for her sex. What begins as experimentation spins out of control, ending in a death that only Mouse can fully comprehend. Susan Swan has created in Mouse Bradford--wise, witty and vulnerable--an unforgettable heroine. THE WIVES OF BATH is a novel that both moves the heart an astonishes the imagination. Made into a feature film entitled “Lost and Delirious” directed by Lea Pool and starring Piper Perabo, Jessica Pare and Mischa Barton. It made its debut at the Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals and has since been sold to 32 countries, including Canada and the U.S., and film critic Roger Ebert picked it as one of the best independent films of 2001.

ROMANTIC COMEDY, LIGHT DRAMA & UP LIT

HER TURN by Katherine Ashenburg (Knopf Canada, 2021, ms ready soon) For fans of Nora Ephron, and movies such as “As Good as It Gets”, this novel tells the story of, Liz, an editor at a national newspaper in Washington, D.C. Divorced and the mother of a college-age son, she has a full life, including lots of friends and a few more or less plausible gentleman callers. She’s also having a clandestine affair with the married publisher of her newspaper. One day, her tidy life is upended when a submission comes in from Seattle, from the woman who had a secret affair with Liz’s husband for the last two years of Liz’s marriage and is now married to her ex-husband. Wife Two has no idea that she is sending an essay to Wife One, and Liz manages to keep her identity a secret while she engages in a long-running “edit” of the piece. The arrival of the essay destabilizes Liz, and she starts acting out in various directions--publishing provocative essays that infuriate her bosses at the paper, breaking up with her publisher/lover, making what her son considers very bad choices with other men, investing in a cache of self-help books about forgiveness. She even has an unexpectedly good time at a Cuddle Party. Meanwhile, the tangled web of Liz’s deception with Nicole (Wife Two) tears, and there is a showdown between the two women and Sidney, the husband. Katherine Ashenburg is the author of three books and many magazine and newspaper articles. She wrote for *The New York Times* travel section and *Toronto Life*, among others. Her books include *THE MOURNER’S DANCE: WHAT WE DO WHEN PEOPLE DIE* (shortlisted for two important prizes) and *THE DIRT ON CLEAN: AN UNSANITIZED HISTORY* (one of *The Independent*’s Ten Best History Books of the year and one of the New York Public Library’s 25 Best Books of the year), which was published in 12 countries and six languages including Profile, UK; Odoya in Italy; Larousse in Brazil; Bellona in Poland; Wisdom Publishing Co. in Korea, and Hougetsu Kamada in Japan.

LUCKY by Marissa Stapley (Simon & Schuster Canada, 2021) Luciana ("Lucky") Armstrong is a tough, talented grifter with a heart of gold, a painful past and a conscience that keeps her up at night. After pulling off a million-dollar heist with her boyfriend, Cary, she's ready to take off to the tropics and start a brand-new life, one where she isn't always looking over her shoulder. But Cary has always been one step ahead of her. When he leaves her holding the bag for the crimes he committed, she soon realizes she has nothing left except a lottery ticket she bought on a whim. She finds out the ticket is a winner at the same time she discovers the police are on her tail. Now, Lucky has both nothing and everything to lose and must travel back through her complicated and often heartbreaking life, looking for someone she can trust and trying to earn trust at the same time. With a quirky sense of adventure reminiscent of “Thelma & Louise” or “Catch Me If You Can,” *LUCKY* is an unforgettable tale that’s part thrill ride, part identity quest, and part deep reflection on what it means to be a good person in a complicated world. Marissa Stapley is a journalist and the author of three bestselling novels, including the acclaimed *MATING FOR LIFE* and *THINGS TO DO WHEN IT’S RAINING* which was published in ten countries, and the recently released *THE LAST RESORT*, which is currently in television development with CBS Studios/BruckheimerTV. She lives in Toronto with her family, where she teaches creative writing at the University of Toronto.

12 DAYS by Maggie Kristine (Karma Brown & Marissa Stapley) (Simon & Schuster

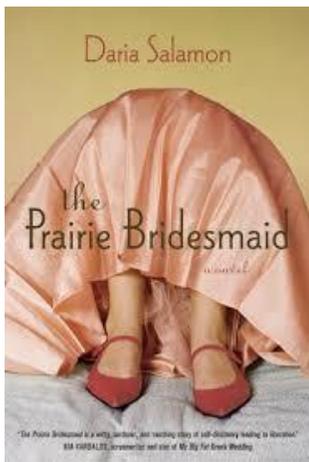
Canada, 2021) For fans of holiday romances comes Maggie Kristine’s debut, written under a pen name by author duo Karma Brown and Marissa Stapley, who between them have published multiple bestselling women’s fiction novels. When L.A.-based chef and reality baking show star Charlie Goodwin has an on-set accident (an intern knocks over a rack of pots and pans, and she gets hit on the head), the injury leads to a loss of taste and smell that, while doctors expect is temporary, is sure to spell disaster for her cooking skills and the show. Desperate, she begs her identical twin sister Cass Goodwin, who runs the family’s small-town bakery, to take her place until the show wraps just before Christmas and she gets the money she needs to open her own restaurant. Though the twins are identical—practically indistinguishable even to their own family—things do not go as smoothly as hoped. As the pressure of each twin’s life ratchets up, playing the parts they’ve agreed to becomes increasingly difficult. At the start of the 12 days, the twins were counting down to returning to their old lives, but as the timeline draws to a close, they both start wishing they had reasons not to switch back. When their identities are revealed and everyone—including two gentleman they’ve come to care for--discovers they’ve been caught up in one big lie, the twins may not be able to salvage their former lives...if they even want to. Cass and Charlie may have discovered different sides to themselves and finally figured out what they want, but in doing so have they also lost their chance for “happily ever after?”



WHY BIRDS SING by Nina Berkhout (ECW Press North America

2020, ms ready) For fans of “Lady Bird” and “Little Miss Sunshine”. In the company of her ailing brother-in-law, his pet parrot, and a group of outspoken songsters, a disillusioned opera singer finds her way back to music through whistling. Following a disastrous performance resulting in her departure from the opera world, Dawn Woodward’s days are consumed with re-watching her failed stage appearance and staring out at her dying garden, until her husband announces that his brother Tariq will be moving in to undergo cancer treatment. And Tariq does not show up alone, bringing with him a temperamental parrot named Tulip. On top of everything, coinciding with her brother-in-law’s arrival, Dawn is tasked with leading a course for which she is

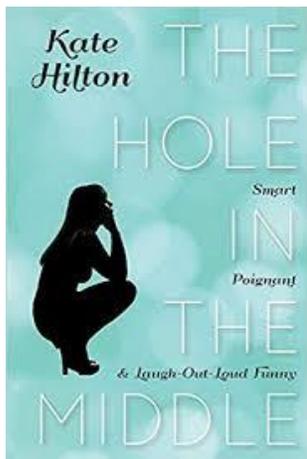
unprepared. Her students are the Warblers, a small group devoted to the lost art of whistling. Eventually Tariq and his bird join the night class, and Dawn finds herself helping the Warblers learn arias for an upcoming convention, while secretly trying to learn how to whistle herself. Nina Berkhout is the author of two novels, most recently THE MOSAIC (Groundwood Books), which was nominated for the White Pine Award and the Ottawa Book Awards, and named an Indigo Best Teen Book and a Toronto Public Library Top Book for Young Adults. Her adult novel, THE GALLERY OF LOST SPECIES (House of Anansi, Thomas Dunne/St. Martin’s, Éditions XYZ) was acclaimed by the Toronto Star (“Berkhout does a masterful job”) and *The Globe and Mail* (“deeply moving”). The novel was named an Indigo and Kobo Best Book and a Harper’s Bazaar Hottest Breakout Novel.



THE PRAIRIE BRIDESMAID by Daria Salamon (books available)

Reminiscent of “Bridesmaids” a heartfelt and hilarious story of a woman reclaiming her power. Just cresting her thirties, Anna Lasko, a frustrated school teacher whose almost ex-boyfriend, Adam, is away on temporary assignment in Europe, finds herself tricked into a break-up-with-the-bad-boyfriend intervention by her supportive but meddling misguided girlfriends. To cope with it all, Anna starts smoking again, keeps nightly counsel with the brash attic squirrel, Buddy, and starts sessions with a caring but fashion-challenged therapist. Her well-intentioned family adds to the emotional workload when her beautiful and free-spirited sister decides to move

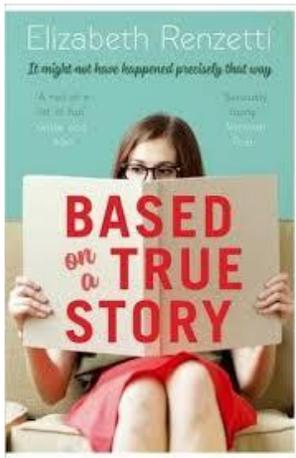
disappears to the Middle East with her boyfriend. Luckily, Anna has her devoted and gun toting grandmother as a role model who constantly says tells it like it is, refuses to conform to anyone’s requests, and continues to live on her prairie farm half-blind, happy and alone. Winner of the Eileen McTavish Sykes Award for Best First Book by a Manitoba Writer and nominated for the Carol Shields Winnipeg Book Award; the novel also received an Honourable Mention in *Foreward Magazine’s* Books of the Year General Fiction category. Her humour essays, articles and columns have appeared in *The Washington Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Today’s Parent*, and *The New York Times*. She has co-written the comedic travel memoir, *DON’T TRY THIS AT HOME: One Family’s (Mis)Adventures Around the World*, about a year of globetrotting with her young family. She lives in Winnipeg, with her family and their cat, Craig.



THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE by Kate Hilton (HarperCollins Canada, books available)

Sophie Whelan is the epitome of the modern superwoman. When she operates at peak performance, she can cajole balky employees, soothe her cranky children, troubleshoot career disasters, throw a dinner party for ten and draft an upbeat Christmas letter—all in the same day. But as Sophie's fortieth birthday looms, her seamless life reveals disturbing web-like fractures. Conflict with her boss, blossoming jealousy of her husband's femme fatale business partner and her feelings of hopeless inadequacy as a mother and daughter are cracking the edifice of her life. Rescue may be at hand when Lillian Parker, a wealthy widow who befriended Sophie during her university days, makes Sophie an irresistible offer. Why,

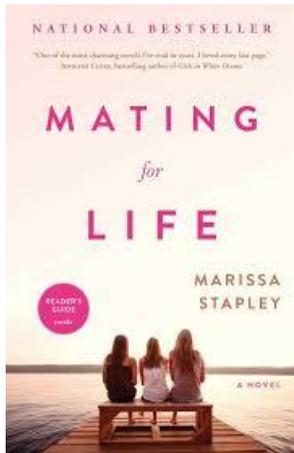
then, does Sophie hesitate? The answer is the reappearance of Lillian's nephew, Will Shannon, the great unresolved love of Sophie's life. As she remembers the vivid drama of their college romance, Sophie confronts the choices she has made in life and in love and looks for the answer to a question that has always troubled her: What does she really want? *THE HOLE IN THE MIDDLE* is a heartbreaking love story, a laugh-out-loud portrayal of the twin demands of work and family and a fresh take on the hot debate about having it all. Kate’s Hilton’s non-fiction writing has appeared in *The National Post*, *Canadian Living*, and *The Huffington Post*, on topics ranging from working motherhood to creativity to reinvention. She lives in a blended family – including a husband, two sons, a stepdaughter, and a rescue dog – in Toronto. Her next novel is *BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME* forthcoming HarperCollins Canada 2020 (under option to Untitled Entertainment).



BASED ON A TRUE STORY by Elizabeth Renzetti (House of Anansi Press, North America, books available)

Augusta Price (not her real name) is famous in England for playing a slatternly barmaid on a nighttime soap opera and for falling down drunk in public. Now, she has no job, no relationship with her long-lost son, and a sad shortage of tranquilizers — but she has had an improbable hit with her memoir (which is based on a true story, but only very loosely). But when Frances Bleeker — an insecure and not very successful American tabloid journalist — tells Augusta that a man she once loved has written a book, Augusta becomes terrified that her life story will be revealed as the web of lies it really is. She sets out on a trans-Atlantic journey from London to California to seek revenge on her former lover — a

journey that will require the reluctant help of Frances. Elizabeth Renzetti is a bestselling Canadian-British author and journalist. Her popular column runs weekly in Canada’s national newspaper, the Globe and Mail, where she is also a feature writer. Her latest book, a collection of essays about contemporary feminism called SHREWED: A WRY AND CLOSELY OBSERVED LOOK AT THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS, became a national bestseller upon its release in 2018. Her first novel, BASED ON A TRUE STORY, was also a bestseller and was shortlisted for the 2014 Kobo Emerging Writer Award.



MATING FOR LIFE by Marissa Stapley (Simon & Schuster Canada, Atria US, books available)

Reminiscent of “This Is Us”, this novel is about three very different sisters, their feminist mother, and what it takes to love someone—whether it be family, friends, or spouses—for life. Former folk singer Helen Sear was a feminist wild child, raising three daughters, Liane, Ilsa and Fiona (each by different fathers) largely on her own. Now in her sixties, Helen has fallen in love with a traditional man who desperately wants to marry her—and while she’s fearful of losing him, she’s equally afraid she’ll betray everything she’s ever stood for if she goes through with it. Her youngest daughter, Liane, is in the heady early days of a relationship with the love of her life. But he has an ex-wife and two daughters—and her new role as “step-

something” doesn’t come with an instruction manual. Ilsa, an artist, is fervently hoping her second marriage will stick. Yet her world feels like it is slowly shrinking, and she realizes she may need to break free again, even if it means disrupting the lives of her two young children. And then there’s Fiona, the eldest sister, who discovers her husband has been harboring a huge secret, which makes her own past harder to ignore. Marissa Stapley is a journalist and the author of three bestselling novels, including the acclaimed MATING FOR LIFE and THINGS TO DO WHEN IT’S RAINING which was published in ten countries, and the recently released THE LAST RESORT, which is currently in television development with CBS Studios/BruckheimerTV. She lives in Toronto with her family, where she teaches creative writing at the University of Toronto



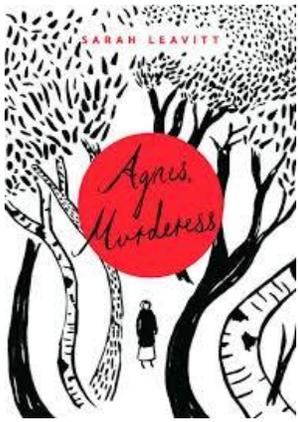
THINGS TO DO WHEN IT'S RAINING by Marissa Stapley (Simon & Schuster, Canada; Graydon House, US, Spring 2018; Rowholt Verlag, Germany; Sperling & Kupfer, Italy; Ikar, Slovakia; Euromedia Group, Czech Republic; Cappelen Damm, Norway, **Manuscript Available**)

In the tradition of “The Notebook”, from the bestselling author of *MATING FOR LIFE* comes two love stories in one. When secrets tear love apart, can the truth mend it? Mae Summers and Gabe Broadbent grew up together in the idyllic Summers’ Inn, perched at the edge the St. Lawrence River. Mae was orphaned at the age of six and Gabe needed protection from his alcoholic father, so both were raised under one roof by

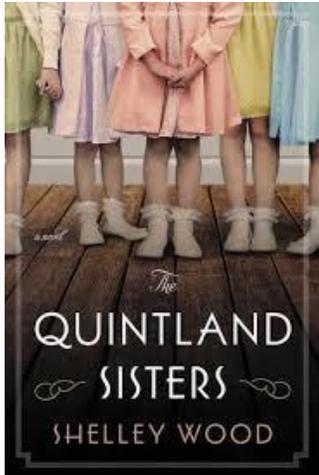
Mae’s grandparents, Lily and George. A childhood friendship quickly developed into a first love—a love that was suddenly broken by Gabe’s unexpected departure. Mae grew up and got over her heartbreak and started a life for herself in New York City. After more than a decade, Mae and Gabe find themselves pulled back to Alexandria Bay by separate forces. Hoping to find solace within the Summers’ Inn, Mae instead finds her grandparents in the midst of decline and their past unravelling around her. A lifetime of secrets that implicate Gabe and Mae’s family reveal a version of the past that will forever change Mae’s future. With honesty and heart, Marissa Stapley reminds us of the redemptive power of love and forgiveness, and that, ultimately, family is a choice. Marissa Stapley is a journalist and the author of three bestselling novels, including the acclaimed *MATING FOR LIFE* and *THINGS TO DO WHEN IT’S RAINING* which was published in ten countries, and the recently released *THE LAST RESORT*, which is currently in television development with CBS Studios/BruckheimerTV. She lives in Toronto with her family, where she teaches creative writing at the University of Toronto.

HISTORICAL

DISCRETION by Miranda Hill (Knopf Canada, 2021. Ms ready summer 2020) For fans of top-drawer, compelling historical fiction epics like “*Downton Abbey*”, “*Upstairs Downstairs*” and “*Little Women*”. It all begins in 1890. Lady Ada and Evelyn are traveling by train toward Pittsburgh and two very different futures, one affluent, the other quite the opposite. Ada is reluctantly making a journey toward a marriage to a man she has never met (arranged by her once-respected British family); Evelyn is on her way to work as a domestic servant in one of the city’s finer houses. This chance meeting between Ada and Evelyn, and the envy it triggers when they impulsively switch identities, is the beginning of a recurring connection, weaving together their contrasting lives —from the drawing rooms of upper class Pittsburgh homes, to its factories and slums, and then over the border to the golden age of the grand hotels of Muskoka—and ultimately impacting their families over several decades of shifting fortunes and remarkable circumstances. Winner of Canada’s most prestigious short story prize, the Writers Trust/McClelland & Stewart Journey Prize, Miranda Hill’s stories have appeared in the *Globe & Mail*, *Reader’s Digest*, *The New Quarterly* among others. Her debut collection *SLEEPING FUNNY*, published in 2012, was one of the bestselling and well-reviewed collections of the year. Hill is also the founder and executive director of the Canadian literary charity Project Bookmark Canada. She lives, writes and works in Hamilton, Ontario. *DISCRETION* is her debut novel.

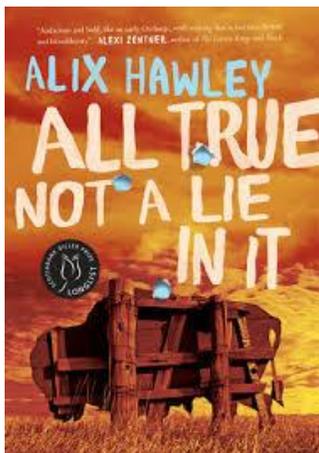


AGNES MURDERESS a graphic novel by Sarah Leavitt (Freehand Books Canada 2019, books available) For fans of “Wynonna Earp”; based on the bloody legend of Canadian serial killer Agnes McVee who ran a road house in the wilds of the Cariboo region of interior British Columbia in the late 1800s. Agnes and her accomplices used her roadhouse/brothel as the perfect hunting round for victims: gold prospectors travelling alone with large amounts of gold. Sarah Leavitt’s first book TANGLES was optioned by Giant Ant and has been published in the US, UK, Germany and France to international critical acclaim (LA Times, Vanity Fair, Globe and Mail, The Guardian), and Korea.



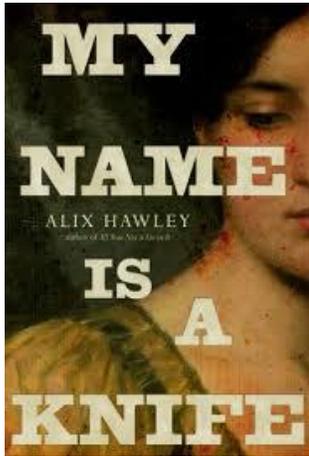
THE QUINTLAND SISTERS by Shelley Wood (William Morrow 2019; Hurtubise, books available) An International Bestseller. For fans of “Sold on a Monday” or “The Home for Unwanted Girls”, Shelley Wood’s novel tells the story of the Dionne Quintuplets, the world’s first identical quintuplets to survive birth, told from the perspective of a midwife in training who helps bring them into the world. Reluctant midwife Emma Trimpany is just 17 when she assists at the harrowing birth of the Dionne quintuplets: five tiny miracles born to French farmers in hardscrabble Northern Ontario in 1934. Emma cares for them through their perilous first days and when the government decides to remove the babies from their francophone parents, making them wards of the British king, Emma signs on as their nurse. Over 6,000 daily visitors come to ogle the identical “Quints” playing in their

custom-built playground; at the height of the Great Depression, the tourism and advertising dollars pour in. While the rest of the world delights in their sameness, Emma sees each girl as unique: Yvonne, Annette, Cécile, Marie, and Émilie. With her quirky eye for detail, Emma records every strange twist of events in her private journals. As the fight over custody and revenues turns increasingly explosive, Emma is torn between the fishbowl sanctuary of Quintland and the wider world, now teetering on the brink of war. Steeped in research, THE QUINTLAND SISTERS is a novel of love, heartache, resilience, and enduring sisterhood—a fictional, coming-of-age story bound up in one of the strangest true tales of the past century. Shelley Wood is a writer, journalist, and editor. Her work has appeared in the *New Quarterly*, *Room*, the *Antigonish Review*, *Causeway Lit*, and the *Globe and Mail* (UK).

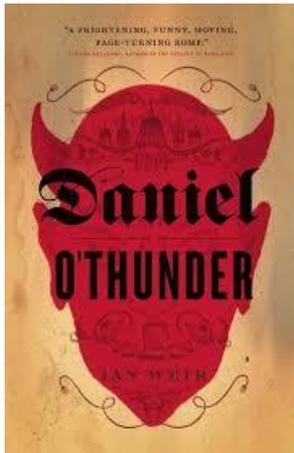


ALL TRUE NOT A LIE IN IT by Alix Hawley (Knopf Canada; Ecco USA; Red Apple China, books available) Longlisted for the Giller Prize, winner of the Amazon.ca / Walrus First Novel Award and the BC Book Prize for Fiction ALL TRUE NOT A LIE IN IT is pioneer Daniel Boone’s life, told in his voice—a tall tale like no other, startling, funny, poignant, romantic and brawling, set during the American Revolutionary War and hinging on Boone’s capture by the Shawnee. Alix Hawley presents Boone’s life, from his childhood in a Quaker colony, through two stints captured by Indians as he attempted to settle Kentucky, the death of one son at the hands of the same Indians, and the rescue of one daughter. Alix Hawley studied English Literature and Creative Writing at Oxford University, the University of East

Anglia, and the University of British Columbia. Her first book, a story collection titled *The Old Familiar* was longlisted for the ReLit award. Her most recent book is *MY NAME IS A KNIFE*, one of Esi Edugyan's picks for 2018. Alix lives in British Columbia and has two more novels underway.

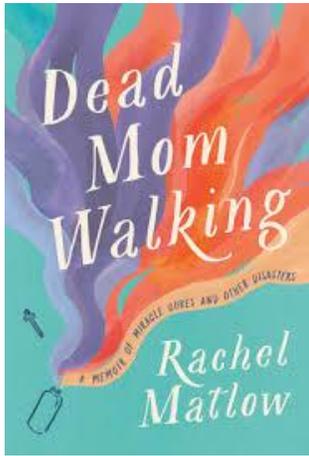


MY NAME IS A KNIFE by Alix Hawley Vintage/Knopf Canada, books available) Following on *ALL TRUE NOT A LIE IN IT*, her brilliant, award-winning first novel, Alix Hawley brings us the dramatic end of fabled frontiersman Daniel Boone's story--a heartbreaking and powerful imagining of a crucial period in North American history. The truth of it is that Daniel Boone, captured by the Shawnee, now the adopted son of a chief he respects and husband to a Shawnee wife, does not want to come back to his settler life. But when he learns the Shawnee and the English plan to attack the fort he founded, where his white wife and children remain, he escapes in order to warn them. No arms open to greet him, however: Rebecca has taken all of their children save one--Jemima--back east, and he finds a wife who has made a life for herself and their children, and still resents him for their oldest son's death.



DANIEL O'THUNDER by Ian Weir (D&M, books available) A rollicking, comic and ultimately haunting tale of fist-fighting, faith and fine madness. In the 1850s, in the slums of the great city of London, Daniel O'Thunder, a troubled but charismatic former prize-fighter turned evangelist, runs a safe house for those in need of food, shelter, prayer and good counsel. But in London's dark streets, an ancient evil is wreaking havoc, throwing into peril the lives of its most vulnerable souls. *DANIEL O'THUNDER* is a novel of amazing wealth of character and variety of voice. Comedy bumps up against cruelty, tragedy against farce, inhumanity against love—a dazzling debut that is hilarious, harrowing, and deeply moving. Ian Weir is an award-winning screenwriter, playwright and novelist. He is the writer and executive producer

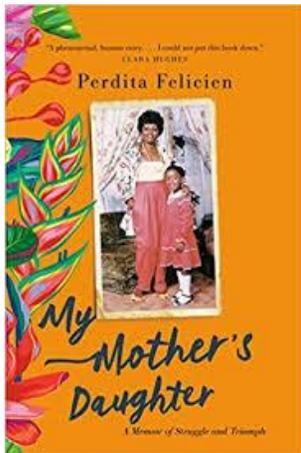
of the acclaimed crime-thriller “*Dragon Boys*,” a CBC mini-series that first aired in 2007. Other TV credits include episodes for more than 20 different series, including “*Flashpoint*,” “*Cold Squad*,” “*Edgemont*,” “*Odyssey*,” “*ReBoot*,” “*Beachcombers*” and “*One Life to Live*.” Weir's stage plays have been produced across Canada as well as in the U.S. and England. He has won two Geminis, four Leos, a Jessie and the Writers Guild of Canada Screenwriting Award. He lives in Langley, British Columbia.



DEAD MOM WALKING by Rachel Matlow (Penguin Canada 2020, ms ready)

A traumenty about life and death (and every cosmic joke in between). When her mother is diagnosed with cancer, Rachel Matlow is concerned but hopeful. It's Stage 1, so her mom will get surgery and everything will go back to normal. But growing up in Rachel's family, there was no normal. Elaine, an alternative school teacher and self-help junkie, was never a capital M "Mommy"--she spent more time meditating than packing lunches--and Rachel, who played hockey with the boys and refused to ever wear a dress, was no ordinary daughter. When Elaine decides to forgo conventional treatment and heal herself naturally, Rachel is forced to ponder whether the very things that made her mom so special--her independent

spirit, her belief in being the author of her own story--are what will ultimately kill her. As the cancer progresses, so does Elaine's conviction in doing things her way. She assembles a dream team of alternative healers, gulps down herbal tinctures with every meal, and talks (with respect) to her cancer cells. Anxious and confused, Rachel is torn between indulging her pie-in-the-sky pursuits (ayahuasca and all) and pleading with the person who's taking her mother away. With irreverence and honesty--and a little help from Elaine's journals and self-published dating guide, plus hours of conversations recorded in her dying days--Matlow brings her inimitable mother to life on the page. DEAD MOM WALKING is the hilarious and heartfelt story of what happens when two people who've always written their own script go head to head with each other, and with life's least forgiving plot device. Rachel Matlow is an arts and culture journalist/audio producer at the CBC. She worked on Q for eight crazy years as well as Day 6, The Sunday Edition, and now, Spark. Her writing has appeared in *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *CBC.ca* and *The Believer*.

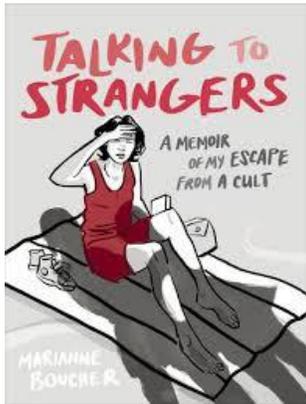


MY MOTHER'S DAUGHTER by Perdita Felicien (Doubleday Canada, North America, 2020, ms ready)

A raw and affecting memoir about a mother and daughter who beat the odds together. Decades before Perdita Felicien became a World Champion hurdler running the biggest race of her life at the 2004 Olympics, she carried more with her than a nation's hopes—she carried her mother Catherine's dreams. In 1974, eighteen-year-old Catherine is determined and tenacious, but she's also pregnant with her second child and just scraping by in St. Lucia. When she meets a wealthy white Canadian family vacationing on the island, she knows it's her chance. They ask her to come to Canada to be their nanny—and she accepts. This was the beginning of Catherine's new life: a life of opportunity, but also suffering. Within a few

years, she would find herself pregnant a third time—this time in her new country with no family to support her, and this time, with Perdita. Together, in the years to come, mother and daughter would experience racism, domestic abuse, and even homelessness, but Catherine's will would always pull them through. As Perdita grew and began to discover her preternatural gifts—athleticism at what would one day prove to be an Olympic level—she was edged onward by her mother's love, grit and faith. Facing literal and figurative hurdles, she learned to leap and pick herself back up when she stumbled. This book is a daughter's memoir—a book about the power of a parent's love to transform

their child's life. Perdita Felicien is an Olympian, 10-time National Champion and the first Canadian woman to win a World Championship gold medal in track and field. During her career as a 100-metre hurdler she earned numerous honours, including Canada's Athlete of the Year, Keys to the City of Pickering, and the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal. Perdita retired from professional sport in 2013 and is now a broadcast journalist. She has worked for CHCH News, TSN and been a contributor for Newstalk 1010. A long time advocate for social responsibility, she and her mother, Catherine Felicien Browne are part of a campaign that will help raise funds to build a new home for The Denise House, the women's shelter in Durham Region they credit with helping the family get on their feet in the late 1980's.

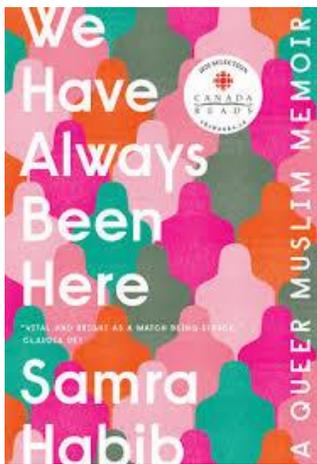


TALKING TO STRANGERS by Marianne Boucher (Doubleday Canada, 2020, ms ready)

A stunning graphic memoir about a teenage girl who was lured into a cult and later fought to escape and reclaim her identity. It was the summer of 1980, and Marianne Boucher was ready to chase her figure skating dream. Fuelled by the desire to rise above her mundane high-school life, she sought a new adventure as a glamorous performer in L.A. And then a chance encounter on a California beach introduced her to a new group of people. People who shared her distrust of the status quo. People who seemed to value authenticity and compassion above all else. And they liked her. Not Marianne the performer, but Marianne the person. Soon, she'd abandoned

school, her skating and, most dramatically, her family to live with her new friends and help them fulfill their mission of "saving the world." She believed that no sacrifice was too great to be there--and to live with real purpose. They were helping people, and they cared about her . . . didn't they? TALKING TO STRANGERS is the true story of Marianne Boucher's experiences in a cult, where she was subjected to sophisticated brainwashing techniques that took away her freedom, and took over her mind. Told in mesmerizing graphic memoir form, with vivid text and art alike, Marianne shares how she fell in with devotees of a frightening spiritual abuser, and how she eventually, painfully, pulled herself out.

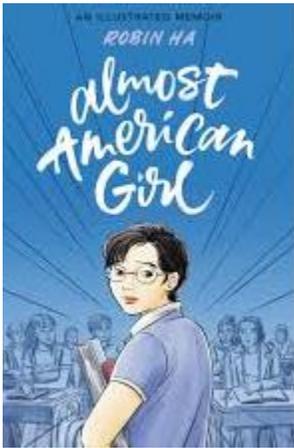
Marianne Boucher is an illustrator and painter. She works for a television station in Toronto and has covered major criminal trials as a court reporter/illustrator since graduating from OCAD University. She lives in Toronto with her cool family, she is at work on her next graphic novel.



WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE by Samra Habib (Penguin Canada, 2019 books available)

Longlisted for the RBC Taylor Award and a Canada Reads Finalist. How do you find yourself when the world tells you that you don't exist? Samra Habib has spent most of her life searching for the safety to be herself. As an Ahmadi Muslim growing up in Pakistan, she faced regular threats from Islamic extremists who believed the small, dynamic sect to be blasphemous. From her parents, she internalized the lesson that revealing her identity could put her in grave danger. When her family came to Canada as refugees, Samra encountered a whole new host of challenges: bullies, racism, the threat of poverty, and an arranged marriage. Backed into a corner, her need for a safe space -- in which to grow and nurture her creative, feminist spirit -- became dire. The men in her life wanted to police her, the women in her life had only shown her the example of pious obedience, and her body was a problem to be solved. So begins an exploration

of faith, art, love, and queer sexuality, a journey that takes her to the far reaches of the globe to uncover a truth that was within her all along. A triumphant memoir of forgiveness and family, both chosen and not, WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE is a rallying cry for anyone who has ever felt out of place and a testament to the power of fearlessly inhabiting one's truest self. Samra Habib is a writer, photographer, and activist. As a journalist she's covered topics ranging from fashion trends and Muslim dating apps to the rise of Islamophobia in the U.S. Her portraits have been exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and SOMArts in San Francisco and are part of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives' permanent collection. She works with LGBTQ organizations internationally, raising awareness of issues that impact queer Muslims around the world. WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE is her first book.



ALMOST AMERICAN GIRL by Robin Ha (Balzar & Bray HarperCollins 2020, Korea Gilbutschool, books available)

Introducing the touching true story of NYT bestselling author Robin Ha's childhood experience of moving to Huntsville, Alabama from Seoul, South Korea without knowing a drop of English. With the emotional resonance of "American Born Chinese" by Gene Luen Yang ALMOST AMERICAN GIRL rips your heart out and reminds us all how terrifying childhood relationships can be, especially when you're the new kid who looks different and can't speak American. When Korean born, non-English speaking, 14-year old, Robin Ha is unexpectedly thrown into an abrupt move to Huntsville, Alabama from Seoul Korea, by her impulsive and driven single mother, she instantly drowns in waves of culture shock. She is the only

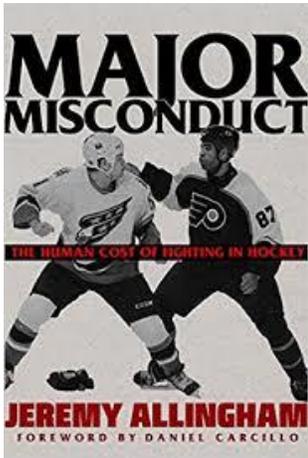
immigrant in the entire school and there are no ESL classes available. Although, perhaps the only thing worse than adapting to school in Alabama is adapting to her new Korean American stepfamily... At its core this is a powerful mother daughter relationship story. While young teenage Robin worships her tiger mother and learns incredible grit and determination from her, it is ultimately her struggle to break away from her mother and establish her independence which truly sets her on her way to fly with her own wings. Born in Seoul, Korea, Robin Ha grew up reading and drawing comics. At fourteen she moved to the United States. After graduating from RISD with BFA in Illustration, she moved to New York City and started a career in the fashion industry. Her work has been published in independent comics anthologies including Secret Identities and The Strumpet, as well as Marvel Comics and Heavy Metal Magazine. Her comic recipe cookbook, COOK KOREAN! published by Ten Speed Press in North America was a NYT bestseller and NPR favorite. You can find out more about her work on her website: <https://robinha81.wixsite.com/robinha> and at @RobinHaArt.



BIX by Scott Chantler (North America, Gallery 13/Simon & Schuster Inc. 2020, ms ready)

Set in the 1920s and from award-winning graphic novelist Scott Chantler, comes BIX, which highlights the harrowing life story and career of the legendary but often overlooked jazz trumpet player Leon Bix Beiderbecke, who rose rapidly to fame in the 1920s before falling just as quickly from grace due to a wretched dependence on alcohol. He was the first white musician to contribute significantly to the development of jazz, and was considered in his time the most innovative soloist next to the great Louis Armstrong (who appears among the book's supporting cast, alongside other '20s jazz legends such as Bing Crosby, Paul Whiteman, and Frank Trumbauer). Torn between the "respectable"

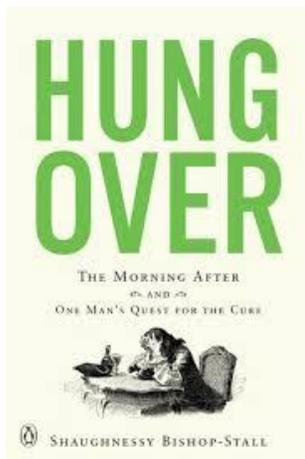
classical music that would please his traditional parents (represented in the book by a piano) and the exciting new world of jazz, in which he displays true genius (represented by his trumpet), Bix comforts himself with booze. Soon, of course, the bottle becomes the very demon his parents warned him about, another enemy in the battle for control of his creative destiny. Scott Chantler is the acclaimed creator of the graphic memoir *Two Generals*, which was nominated for two Eisner Awards, named one of Chapters-Indigo's Best Books of 2010, selected for Best American Comics 2012, and voted by CBC's Canada Reads as one of the 40 best Canadian non-fiction books of all time. His other work includes *Northwest Passage* (nominated for Eisner and Harvey Awards) and the *Three Thieves* series (winner of the Joe Shuster Award for Best Comic for Kids and listed by YALSA as a Great Graphic Novel for Teens). He recently served as Writer-in-Residence at the University of Windsor, the first cartoonist to be appointed so by a Canadian university.



MAJOR MISCONDUCT by Jeremy Allingham – (Arsenal Pulp Press 2020, books available)

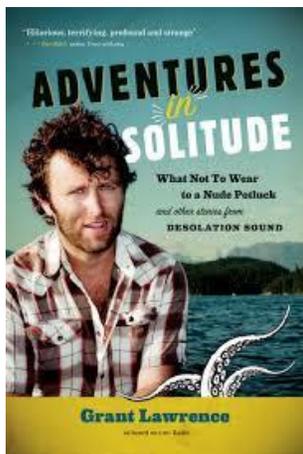
After more than 200 fights in junior and the pros, a hockey fighter finds himself alone in a dark closet, a knife to his wrist, on the brink of suicide. Another former enforcer who brought thousands to their feet with the drop of his gloves burns his family's home to the ground, becomes addicted to drugs and is now living on the streets. Yet another enforcer who traveled the continent wowing fans with his strength and toughness, finds himself facing 25 years in American prison after drugs and alcohol take over his post-hockey life. Many of the stories about those who gave their lives to the violent side of hockey are alarming, and often, downright devastating.

Despite all that we know about the dangers of concussions and chronic traumatic encephalopathy, fighting is still celebrated by so many in the hockey world as, not only a necessity, but as an expression of courage and teamwork. But as we examine the lives that lie wasted in the wake of a hockey fighting life, we must ask: at what cost do we allow bare-knuckle boxing to continue in the sport? MAJOR MISCONDUCT: The Human Fallout from Bare-knuckle Boxing On Ice sheds light upon the important personal stories and examines the issues surrounding the violence that persists within Canada's favourite pastime. Jeremy Allingham is an award-winning journalist from Vancouver, B.C. Jeremy's writing has reached millions of readers on cbc.ca, and vice.com.



HUNGOVER by Shaughnessy Bishop-Stall (HarperCollins; Penguin Books US; Dumont Verlag, Germany Blink Publishing, UK; Cassiopeia Publisher, Korea; Bukowy Las, Poland; United Sky, China; Kokushokankokai, Japan, books available) Courageous journalist Shaughnessy Bishop-Stall has gone to the front lines of humanity's age-old fight against hangovers to settle once and for all the best way to get rid of the aftereffects of a night of indulgence (short of not drinking in the first place). Hangovers have plagued human beings for about as long as civilization has existed (and arguably longer), so there has been plenty of time for cures to be concocted. Cutting through the rumor and the myth, *Hungover* explores everything from polar bear swims, to saline IV drips, to the age-old hair of the dog, to let us all know

which ones actually work. Shaughnessy Bishop-Stall's first book was *DOWN TO THIS: Squalor and Splendour in a Big-City Shantytown*. It was nominated for the 2005 Pearson Writers' Trust of Canada Non-Fiction Prize, the Drainie-Taylor Biography Prize, the Trillium Award and the City of Toronto Book Award. The following year, he was awarded the Knowlton Nash Journalism Fellowship at Massey College. He currently teaches writing at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies. *GHOSTED*, his first novel was published by Random House Canada in 2010, in the US by Softskull Press and in France by Actes Sud. *Ghosted* was a finalist for the Amazon First Novel Award.



ADVENTURES IN SOLITUDE by Grant Lawrence (Harbour Publishing, books available) *Adventures in Solitude* is Grant Lawrence's thoughtful and comedic memoir about a lifetime spent cottaging in the remote Desolation Sound in British Columbia. Grant's father bought a piece of land next to the park in the 1970s, just in time to encounter the left-over hippies, outlaw bikers and an assortment of other characters. In those years Russell the Hermit's school of life (boating, fishing, and rock 'n' roll) was Grant's personal Enlightenment—an influence that would take him away from the coast to a life of music and journalism and eventually back again. With rock band buddies and a few cases of beer in tow, an older, cooler Grant returns to regale us with tales of “going bush,” the tempting dilemma of finding an unguarded grow-op,

and his awkward struggle to convince a couple of visiting kayakers that he's a legit CBC radio host while sporting a wild beard and gesticulating with a machete. With plenty of laugh-out-loud humour *ADVENTURES IN SOLITUDE* delights us with the growth of a young man amidst the magic of Desolation Sound. Grant Lawrence is a writer, broadcaster, host, musician and journalist based in Vancouver BC. A national and regional host on CBC 1, 2 and 3, he is a leading voice of independent music in Canada. Prior to radio, Grant was the lead singer of The Smugglers, an internationally acclaimed Vancouver rock band that released eight albums and toured throughout the world.