K2 Literary
Fall 2026

K2 Literary

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fiction

Ryad Assani-Razaki

The Masters of the Soil

—Nominated, 2026 Prix du Roman Fnac—

"Masters of the Soil, with its prodigious ambition, shatters the boundaries of our imaginations." –Le Devoir

"Ryad Assani-Razaki breathes new life into the African kingdoms. A vast, vibrant, and vivid fresco that allows us to hear the sea, the drums, the breaths, and the voices long drowned out by the din of conquest." –Actualité

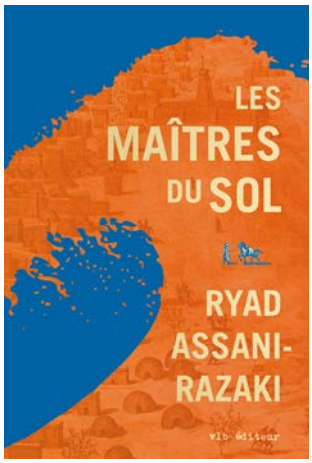
From the coast of Elmina, Ghana to the libraries of ancient Timbuktu, *The Masters of the Land* unfolds in a striking panorama the devastating effects of the first contacts between Africa and Europe in the 15th century. When land ceases to be an inheritance and becomes a commodity, the balance of the world falters.

In Aldea, a fishing village on the coast of present-day Ghana, lives Nyante, whose husband is being hunted on suspicion of murdering an oburoni—a warrior-merchant who arrived from distant Portugal many years ago. From their clifftop fortress, these visitors, who have come in search for gold, increasingly interfere in the affairs of the Fante kingdom. The omanhene no longer rules entirely alone, and the lust for gold has spread to the locals, who are abandoning traditional beliefs for this new wealth. The elders are worried, but no one seems fully aware of the new forces that govern the hearts and destinies of men.

Nyante's daughter, Efua, is born with twelve fingers, which the Fante consider a curse and a portent of their decline, despite a prophecy of such a girl being the salvation of her people. Despite her mother's efforts to protect her, Efua is considered dangerous and escapes the kingdom's wrath, travelling with a man with no name nor memory. They embark on a journey across the Songhai Empire to Timbuku, to recover his identity.

In Timbuktu, the balance of powers is shifting. Where hostility towards scholarship in favour of tradition was the norm, there is now the drive to eradicate what the new rulers consider superstition. It is here that the man without memory is embroiled in political, religious, and cultural clashes, where the stakes transcend his own quest.

Drawing inspiration from the oral traditions of West Africa, Ryad Assani-Razaki reveals little-known chapters in the history of several sub-Saharan civilizations, at a pivotal moment of their history. A spiritual and political meditation on the sovereignty and the means to regain it, *The Masters of the Land* is a grand sweeping epic that illuminates the past, present and, perhaps, future of the peoples of West Africa.



Publication:
French: 2011

Publisher: VLB Editeur

Rights Sold:

-VLB Editeur
(French, world ex. Europe)
-Editions Liana Levi
(French, Europe)
-CA/US/UK/ANZ/translation rights available

Ryad Assani-Razaki was born in 1981 in Cotonou in the West African state of Benin. His writing, something he already began in early youth, remains influenced today more than anything else by his regular visits to Benin. In 2009, his short story collection *Deux cercles* (tr. Two Circles), was awarded the the Trillium Book Award. His debut novel, the Governor General's award-nominated *La main d'Iman* (2011; tr. *The Hand of Iman*), drew from many years of research to create from the stories of people who otherwise remain unheard, in a prototypical, fictitious state in Africa as the location where the story takes place.

Ryad Assani-Razaki

The Hand of Iman

—Winner, Robert Cliche Prize 2011—
—Finalist, 2011 Governor Generals Award for French-Language Fiction—

*"[*The Hand of Iman*] confirms the value of this writer's work. A strong work endowed with an extraordinary sensitivity, which takes into account both the commitment—child trafficking, the burdens of the colonial past, the condition of women, emigration, run through the novel, and the aesthetic requirements that literary creation assumes."* –Le devoir

[...] a work as layered as it is urgent ... –The Globe and Mail

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Dreaming is a luxury that few can afford. And yet, however inadvisedly, Iman dreams.

In an unnamed African country devoured by rampant urbanization and haunted by the mirages of Western prosperity, where for a few CFA francs a child can be bought and sold for slavery, Toumani's earliest education is in the tolerance of suffering. He endures one master then the next, holding his survival—his very self—with open hands.

For Iman, a black and white biracial boy with an elusive presence, the only viable option appears to be an escape to bountiful Europe, where everything must be easier. Obsessed with this idyllic elsewhere to the point of losing himself completely, he remains, for those close to him, an object of fascination difficult to define.

When Iman reaches out his hand to rescue Toumani from certain death, he sets in motion a friendship that may satisfy their need for connection but cannot fundamentally change their circumstances. What is the point of survival without hope for a more livable future? And what happens to them when they both love the same girl?

In this stunning translation of Ryad Assani-Razaki's award-winning debut novel, dreaming is luxury that few can afford. And yet, however inadvisedly, Iman dreams.

Publication:
English: August 2025
French: 2011

Publisher: House of Anansi

Rights Sold:

-House of Anansi
(English, North America)
-L'Hexagone Éditeur
(French, World)
-Verlag Klaus Wagenbach
(Germany)
-UK/ANZ/Translation rights
available

Lisa Baldiserra

Dead Peasant

"Lisa Baldissera's thirteen missives in Dead Peasant hit sure and true. For those of us who have worked lonely, wept privately, or hurried to get something impossible finished immediately, this book is for you." –Maria Fusco, author of *Who Does Not Envy With Us Is Against Us: Three Essays on Being Working-Class*

"These are deftly written, impressive and intelligent stories. With her keen, curatorial eye, Lisa Baldissera thoughtfully and sensitively navigates the intersections of art, labour and commerce, paying particular attention to how people seek—and occasionally find—meaning amid systems intent on their dehumanization." –Pasha Malla, author of *All You Can Kill*

Drawing on her decades of navigating the art world, Lisa Baldissera weaves writing conventions from the visual arts with the imaginative possibilities of magic realism and autofiction in this groundbreaking collection of short fiction.

The stories in *Dead Peasant* reveal the fraught circumstances and neglected emotions of an underclass who toil below the glossy economies of the international high-art world, including artists and art workers. Here, characters from across centuries are haunted by war, floods, and their parental histories. An auction-house worker vomits blueberries on an art-collecting oligarch. An aspiring curator converses with Lindsay Lohan about an exhibition of horse paintings before tragedy strikes. An archivist studies planet Earth from space, reflecting on tax havens and the embattled ecology.

Through these startling, affective, incisive, and fun stories, Baldissera chronicles the unique challenges of the art world and the damage it inflicts on those struggling to get by. Like the evis-cerative work of Rachel Cusk and the dark humour of Miranda July, she satirizes the neoliberal double-speak of the "creative economy" and its punifiying forces, to ask, what is it, truly, that art can do now?

Publication: November 2026

Publisher: Book*hug

Rights Sold:
(K2 Literary selling UK/ANZ/ translation rights on behalf of client publisher)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Lisa Baldiserra has worked in curatorial roles in public art galleries in Western Canada since 1999, including as Director at Griffin Art Projects, Senior Curator at Contemporary Calgary, Chief Curator at Mendel Art Gallery, and Curator of Contemporary Art at Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. She holds MFAs in creative writing and art, and a PhD in art writing and curating. Her work has been published in *PUBLIC Journal of Art | Culture | Ideas*, and her thematic curatorial projects have included critical examinations of art and writing, social practice, and Emily Carr. She lives in Sechelt, BC.

Kate Cayley

Property

—Shortlisted, Foreword INDIES Finalist for Literary Fiction 2025—
—Shortlisted, Amazon Canada First Novel Award 2026—
—Shortlisted, Toronto Book Award 2026—

"Beautifully bleak and ultimately tragic, Property's sole consolation results from its own singular beauty, which is paradoxical in an account of the human condition that disturbs with such grim certitude." –Quill and Quire

"Cayley masterfully renders each character's inner world, showing how their fears and prejudices are amplified by loneliness. It's an unflinching tale of a community's fragile bonds."
–Publishers Weekly

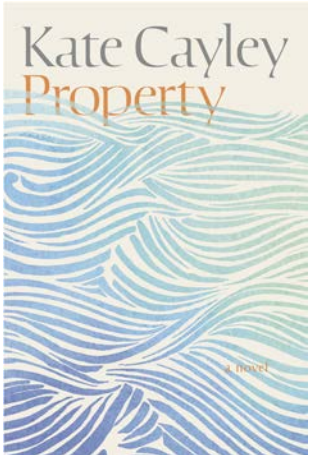
"Kate Cayley's Property is both minutely observed and movingly kaleidoscopic, a meditation on fate, accident, free will, and of the elusive and illusive qualities of selfhood. Its questions and hopes—layered into a single day on a single street—are a living, breathing presence."
–Madeleine Thien, author of The Book of Records

The day begins ordinarily, and by evening, someone is dead.

Property takes place over the course of a single spring day in an uneasily gentrifying urban neighbourhood, through several points of view, including Nat, a queer mother of two, the younger Maddy, a failed actress and stay-at-home mum, with whom Nat has an unstable and competitive friendship, and Ilya, a young man working on the renovation of a derelict house next door to Maddy's following a catastrophic accident at an industrial building site.

Paths cross and re-cross on the small network of streets. People shop for groceries, have small and ambiguously fraught interactions with their neighbours, take their children to buy treats, work on draining the flooding basement of an old house. A group of men drink beer on a porch. A lonely man wanders. Children observe adults without the adults noticing. Threats are suspected, never from the right place. As the tension builds, the water rises in the basement of the old house, and conflicts of personality, privilege, and past history explode.

Property is a literary novel that blends emotional complexity with elements of satire to explore class, environmental anxiety, the guilty navel-gazing of affluent liberals, marriage, queer respectability, friendship, the shifting identities of city neighbourhoods, loneliness, the real and imaginary perils of raising children, and the ways that we hurt one another without meaning to.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: October 2025

Publisher: Coach House Books

Rights Sold:

-Coach House Books (World)

Photo credit: Livia Ambros

Kate Cayley has published two short story collections, three collections of poetry, and a young adult novel, and her plays have been performed in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. She has won the Trillium Book Award, the Mitchell Prize for Faith and Poetry, the Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction, and an O. Henry Prize, and been a finalist for the Governor General's Award for Fiction, among other awards. She is a frequent writing collaborator with immersive company Zuppa Theatre, most recently on The Archive of Missing Things and This Is Nowhere, and her writing has appeared in *Best Canadian Poetry*, *Best Canadian Stories*, *Brick*, *Electric Literature*, *Joyland*, *The New Quarterly* and *The North American Review*. She lives in Toronto.

Charlene Challenger

The Architect to Elsewhere

Dorothy's life is tiny by design. She loves music and art, dancing and drinking, cats, and caring for the elderly. She wanted to be an actress. Her Maltese parents are jerks. She has never been in love and doesn't care to be. And, she's just dropped dead on her kitchen floor.

Dorothy now faces the last precious moments of her earthly existence, but she's not alone; Archie, a divine architect who may or may not also be a porcupine, is along for the ride. Archie's purpose is to help Dorothy create the afterlife of her dreams. She just has to examine the last forty-eight years of her life with all that's happened and not happened, to figure out what that means.

A poignant, cozy story told from a unique perspective, *The Architect to Elsewhere* is an affirmation of the highs and lows of life, and living.

Cover to come

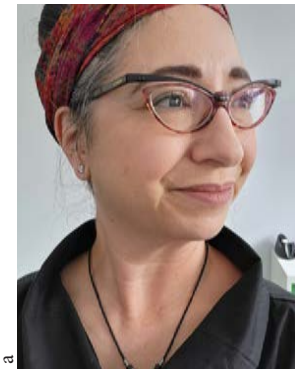
Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Spring 2028

Publisher: Erehwon Books

Rights Sold:

-Erehwon Books (World)



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Charlene Challenger is a writer and graduate of Toronto Metropolitan University's Acting Program. Her first novel, the young adult fantasy *The Voices in Between*, was nominated for the 2015 Aurora Award for Best Young Adult Novel and long listed for the Sunburst Award Young Adult Novel category. Its sequel, *The Myth in Distance*, was published in 2016. She lives in Cambridge, Ontario, Canada.

Dina Del Bucchia

Tougher Than the Rest

"Tougher Than the Rest is funny and dark in all the right places. It's everything that I enjoy in a short story collection: a not-too-distant future, intricate characters that are endearing and vexing, a struggle with dominating technologies, and a compelling look at community relationships and human responsibilities. Dina Del Bucchia's sharp wit and keen attention to detail create utterly engrossing prose. These astute stories are thoroughly unique and entertaining, and I hope she explores more of this fascinating world she's generated in future books."
–Waubgeshig Rice, author of Moon of the Crusted Snow *and* Moon of the Turning Leaves

"Tougher Than the Rest is a collection of stories that build like stacking blocks and connect like a web, with sharp prose equally humorous and dark. Grief hums beneath the surface of every story; characters grieve people lost to death or circumstance, the ballooning climate crisis, and lives made unlivable by late-stage capitalism. These same characters are forever reaching for connection and often find it in other women, friendships, and girlhood. You won't be able to put this one down."
–Jessica Johns, author of Bad Cree

A topical story collection with great humour and heart about the ripple effects of wealth disparity on women.

Set in the near future, Tougher Than the Rest features women in different stages of life from former trophy wives and activist yoga obsessives to retail and white-collar workers in an urban environment rife with wealth disparity. Their stories are linked by a corporate real estate developer who affects the protagonists' lives in ways both small and large, each one inspired by a classic song title from a hypermasculine artist.

In “Tougher Than the Rest,” a low-income gig worker moderates comments on YouTube. In “Night Moves,” a dental office receptionist buys a second-hand sex robot at the Salvation Army. In “It's All Over Now, Baby Blue,” a woman grieving her husband's potential suicide encounters talking animals and cryptids who become the tough love she needs. In “Dream On,” a social media influencer undergoes a drastic surgery to make her face literally more adaptable.

A clever and wry commentary on class, technology, white feminism, love and friendship, gender roles, and the loneliness of the modern world, in which you're always at the mercy of rich assholes, Tougher Than the Rest is for those who are angry but need some hope and humour to get through it all. Outlandish yet emotionally honest, this collection affirms Del Bucchia as a singular voice in capturing the zeitgeist of women in contemporary culture.

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Septmember 2026

Publisher: Arsenal Pulp Press

Rights Sold:

-Arsenal Pulp Press (World English)

Dina Del Bucchia (she/her) is the author of the story collection *Don’t Tell Me What to Do* (Arsenal Pulp Press) and five collections of poetry: *Coping with Emotions and Otters*, *Rom Com* (written with Daniel Zomparelli), *It’s a Big Deal!*, *You’re Gonna Love This* (all Talonbooks), and *Blind Items* (Insomniac Press). For ten years she hosted *Can’t Lit*, a podcast on Canadian literature and culture, with Jen Sookfong Lee. She lives in Vancouver, BC. dinadelbucchia.com

Samantha Garner

The Other Air

Praise for *The Quiet is Loud*:

"The Quiet is Loud *is a zeitgeist zirconia, a choker of sparkling speculation for Gen Z readers whose reading tastes are migrating toward adult literary spec fic. For her debut novel, Toronto writer Samantha Garner pours her curiosity into an approachable, recognizable narrative … Garner wears her spec fic, geek, and SF influences on her sleeve, and* The Quiet Is Loud *is a warm welcome to the more literary part of that universe.*" –Understorey Magazine

"The Quiet is Loud *is highly aware of its surroundings within time and culture, demonstrating that one can be present and engaged with the story while also thinking critically.*"
–Margaryta Golovchenko, Canthius

"Complex and vulnerable, The Quiet is Loud*, is a wonderful stepping stone for those who love magical realism but might find the likes of* One Hundred Years of Solitude *or* Love in the Time of Cholera *a bit intimidating, or for readers looking to explore magical realism for the first time."*
–Ruchika Gothoska, Hamilton Review of Books

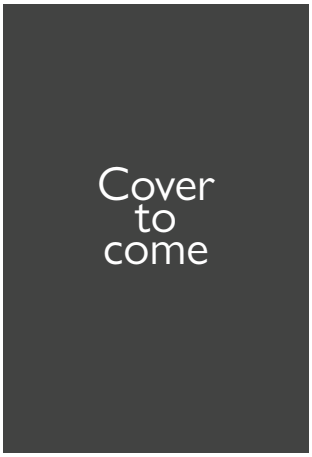
The settlers of Yuvis have always venerated the ore they pull from the land. Without its refined energy, they have no power, no protection. Abandoned by Earth generations ago on a volatile planet where the sun never sets, science keeps the colonies safe. Science—and lowly monster hunters like Alaya.

When an odd woman named Lumi hires Alaya to kill a monster in one of the outlying colonies, it seems like just another job, until Alaya learns that the monster's last appearance foretold a catastrophic event known as The Great Wave. Alaya, Lumi, and wildlife researcher Ektelian set off to deal with this fearsome harbinger, but little do they know it's the start of a journey to reveal the ancient forces that truly shape their world, and all three will leave their mark.

Told in three novellas from each character's point of view, The Other Air follows Alaya, Ektelian, and Lumi as they uncover the history under threat from human settlers—secrets that will jeopardize the resource extraction the colonies depend on. Will they be ready for the transformation their discoveries will cause, not just to Yuvis, but themselves?

The Other Air explores themes of colonialism, community, and humankind's environmental impact, inspired by Filipino and Finnish folklore and mythology.

Samantha Garner is a mixed-race Canadian fantasy author whose outsider characters find self-definition through small rebellion. Her work draws from Filipino and Finnish history, folklore, and culture to explore belonging in the in-between. Samantha's debut novel *The Quiet is Loud* (Invisible Publishing) was shortlisted for the 2022 Kobo Emerging Writer Prize. She also writes multigenre poetry, stories, folklore essays, and the occasional zine. Find her online at samanthagarner.ca.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Manuscript available

Liz Johnston

The Fall-Down Effect

"This gripping, tender novel by Liz Johnston tells us so much about lifetimes—of individuals and families, forests and ecosystems. Its characters and hopes are seared into my memory. Read this wondrous, extraordinary book and be moved." —Madeleine Thien, author of The Book of Records

"The Fall-Down Effect *had me from page one—a brave and beautiful novel about desperate measures, the bonds we break and the ones that miraculously endure." —Alissa York, author of* Far Cry

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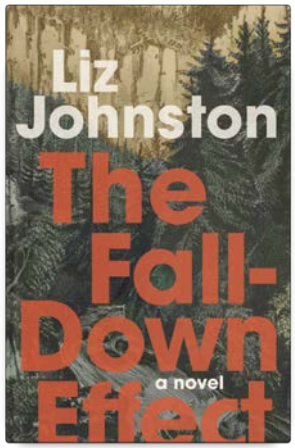
Exploring protest, climate change, and fractured family relationships, Liz Johnston's eagerly anticipated debut novel, *The Fall-Down Effect*, asks what we really owe people in our lives when we are fighting for a greater cause.

As a child in the late 1980s, Fern is the wild heart of her tree-hugging family—quick-tempered and yearning to spend every minute in the woods of the small Pacific Northwest logging town where they live. She is also most like her environmental activist mother, Lynn, who chafes against the demands of motherhood and yearns for the protests of her youth. As tensions escalate, Lynn leaves her partner, Tom, and their three children, telling herself she will devote her life more fully to fighting for the earth.

At nineteen, Fern commits her own radical act of protest in the town, which authorities label ecoterrorism. When Fern goes underground, her parents and siblings—responsible grad student Sylvia and budding artist River—struggle to make sense of her actions while also trying to cover up her absence. Fern's secret proves impossible to keep, and when she becomes a wanted woman, the rest of the family trades blame. Years later, when Lynn takes shelter from a forest fire in the home she left so many years before, the family is forced to confront their regrets during a fraught, baggage-filled reunion.



Publication: April 2026

Publisher: Book*hug

Rights Sold:
(K2 Literary selling UK/ANZ/ translation rights on behalf of client publisher)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Photo credit: Nathan Iverson

Liz Johnston grew up in Revelstoke, B.C., and now lives and writes in Toronto. Her essays and short stories have appeared in *Poets & Writers*, *The Fiddlehead*, *The Humber Literary Review*, *Grain*, *The Antigonish Review*, and *The Cardiff Review*. Johnston is an editor of *Brick, A Literary Journal*. *The Fall-Down Effect* is her debut novel.

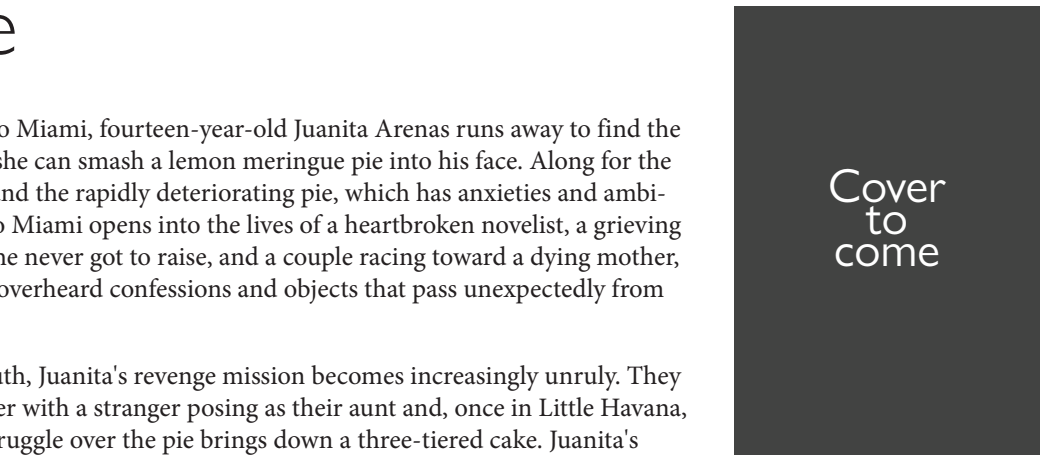
Selena Mercuri

Smooth Jazz and Other Forms of Torture

Boarding a bus from Toronto to Miami, fourteen-year-old Juanita Arenas runs away to find the father who abandoned her, so she can smash a lemon meringue pie into his face. Along for the ride are her best friend Lizzie and the rapidly deteriorating pie, which has anxieties and ambitions of its own. The journey to Miami opens into the lives of a heartbroken novelist, a grieving woman inventing a daughter she never got to raise, and a couple racing toward a dying mother, their stories colliding through overheard confessions and objects that pass unexpectedly from one life into another.

As the girls make their way south, Juanita's revenge mission becomes increasingly unruly. They bluff their way across the border with a stranger posing as their aunt and, once in Little Havana, crash a quinceañera where a struggle over the pie brings down a three-tiered cake. Juanita's journey also reaches back into a family history filled with catastrophes of its own: a pet goldfish named José Martí accidentally poached in Folgers coffee, Juanita's breech birth during a Toronto blizzard while her parents' restaurant floods downstairs, an Ash Wednesday mass derailed when she tells a priest he'll be dust before she is, and a grandfather who disappears at sea during a storm in Cienfuegos. Cuba.

Caught between wanting to punish her father and wanting to understand him, Juanita begins to see his departure as part of a much older history of leaving and being left. Playful and darkly funny, *Smooth Jazz and Other Forms of Torture* examines how families absorb the consequences of migration and economic precarity, and how the truths left unspoken in one generation become the burdens of the next.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Manuscript available

Selena Mercuri is a Toronto-based, Italian-Cuban writer and MFA candidate in Creative Writing at the University of Guelph. Her work has appeared in *The Fiddlehead*, *The Literary Review of Canada*, *The Ampersand Review*, and other journals. In 2023, Selena received the Norma Epstein Foundation Award for Creative Writing. She was runner-up in *The Ampersand Review*'s 2026 Essay Contest and was longlisted for *Camel Journal*'s 2026 Gilmer Prize in fiction. Selena is reviews editor at *The New Quarterly* and *Havana Times*, and a book publicist at River Street. Find out more at www.selenamercuri.com and on Instagram at @selenamercuriwriter.

Nabil Mohamad

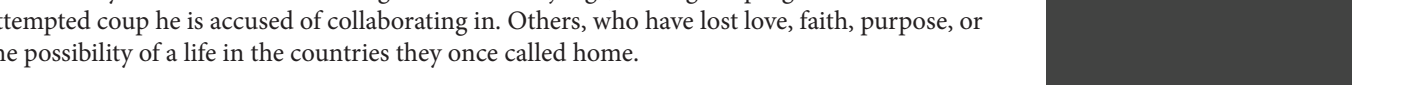
In Search of the Parsley Forest

Seven refugees from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey are making their way toward Germany when they are temporarily housed together in an isolated Croatian home that once belonged to a painter whose life was marked by both world wars. On its walls hang reproductions of famous paintings with one unsettling alteration: every figure has been given the painter's face.

Inside the house, the paintings and other remnants of the artist's life begin to stir the memories the refugees have carried with them. Each of the seven has left something behind. A Syrian tattoo artist who lost an eye in the war. An Iranian photographer tortured in Evin Prison for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. An Iraqi former officer, who watched corruption hollow out the army before ISIS seized his region. A Turkish judge, fleeing the purges that followed an attempted coup he is accused of collaborating in. Others, who have lost love, faith, purpose, or the possibility of a life in the countries they once called home.

At the centre of the novel is Rayan, who becomes the keeper of the others' stories, recounting them to Emir, a stray dog who becomes his closest listener. But as the days pass, Rayan's sense of what is happening around him becomes less certain. He smokes hashish, sleepwalks, and begins to encounter things he cannot always explain. Gradually, the paintings, the house, and his perception of what is happening around him begin to blur the boundary between reality and imagination.

The refugees' stories are fictional but rooted in documented political realities that Nabil Mohamad covered during his years as a journalist. Moving between dark humour, political reality, and psychological uncertainty, *In Search of the Parsley Forest* asks what people truly leave behind when they flee a country—and what crosses every border with them.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Manuscript available

Nabil Mohamad is a Syrian writer and journalist based in Montreal, Canada. He is the author of the Arabic novel *Freshmen Training* (Al Mutawassit, 2020), and has published more than 1500 articles, essays, and cultural features over the course of his journalism career.

His work has appeared in publications including *Aljumhuriya*, *Raseef22*, *Fanack*, and *Enab Baladi*. Writing in both Arabic and English. His writing explores exile, memory, displacement, and the fragile ways people carry their pasts across borders.

Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross

The Longest Way to Eat a Melon

"Inventive and charming, these stories offer a fishbowl view of what it is to be plunked into adulthood in these absurd, impossible times." –Lucy Corin, author of The Swank Hotel

"I've been a fan of Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross's writing for years and am so happy to see her debut collection cracking into the world. The stories in The Longest Way to Eat a Melon*, like most of my favorite stories, feel as if they've been written from some alternate dimension just to the side of our own—they're strange and smart and funny and true. Read them, and then we can all dream against capitalism together." –Danielle Dutton, author of* Prairie, Dresses, Art, Other

"The turns in Ross's smart, tender, darkly hilarious narratives are dazzling. At times we sail right off the road, and the beautiful thing about this book is, we survive it every time. These are fables for the future, full of hope." –River Halen, author of Dream Rooms

"A richly layered text imbued with wit and charm. Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross is an artist who breaks the mundanity of everyday life into artifacts. I was brought to the center of a gallery where curated notes of familiarity, the thoughts beneath my thoughts, guided me to reinterpret all that was around me. The Longest Way to Eat a Melon *transforms everydayness into a metaphor. The meaning of life and its multitudes dance quietly underneath."–Sheung-King, author of* Batshit Seven

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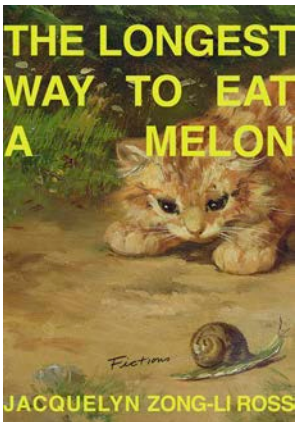
A cheeky debut of short fictions exploring the pitfalls and minor triumphs of the creative process.

Equal parts melody and malaise, *The Longest Way to Eat a Melon* charts the activities of a cast of speakers who all grapple in their own ways with what it takes to conjure a self in the midst of discordance. A brain argues with a non-brain about how to remain productive from a place of exhaustion; two supernaturally inclined twins named Han are separated at birth; and an emerging artist overwhelmed by possibility considers how best to transform a melon into a breakthrough work of art. Incorporating elements of fable, surrealism, satire, and art and cultural criticism, these stories have a playful peculiarity to them, an interweaving of self-deprecation and curiosity, of woe and hope, of absurdity and humanity. Reader, you will want to savour every bite.



Publication: June 2025

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publisher:
Sarabande Books

Rights Sold:
-Sarabande Books (North America)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Photo credit: Maegan Hill-Carroll

Jacquelyn Zong-Li Ross is a writer and editor based in Vancouver, the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Her fiction, poetry, essays, and art criticism have appeared in *BOMB*, *C Mag*, *The Ex-Puritan*, *Fence*, *Mousse*, and alongside exhibitions and artist projects at The Bows, Centre Clark, Franz Kaka, Mercer Union, SFU Galleries, Susan Hobbes Gallery, and elsewhere. Her chapbooks include *Mayonnaise* and *Drawings on Yellow Paper* (with Katie Lyle). She publishes books at the intersection of the literary and visual arts under the small press Blank Cheque, and is currently the Art Editor of *The Capilano Review*, a west coast journal of experimental art and poetics. She holds a BFA in Studio Art from Simon Fraser University and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph.

Miranda Schreiber

Iris and the Dead

"In this lyrical and original autofiction debut, Miranda Schreiber explores the coming out process of a young woman contending with depression, intergenerational trauma and an exploitative relationship with the person she looked to for help. Schreiber bravely reckons with themes of power, trust, love, loss and transformation." –Ms. Magazine

"Uncanny and captivating, Iris and the Dead weaves beauty into the darkness.... Schreiber's words will haunt those familiar with the feeling long after they've finished her slim novel." –Roxane Hudon, *Literary Review of Canada*

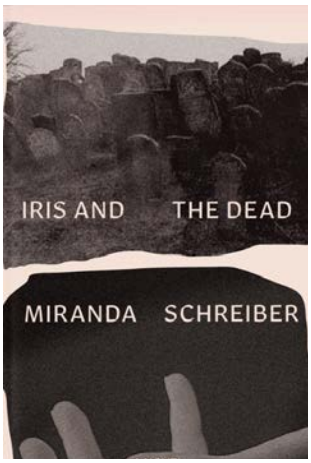
"Iris and the Dead *renders love, sickness, tragedy and the sublime lyrically and incisively, equal parts beautiful and haunting."* –Nicky Taylor in Conversation with Miranda Schreber, *Maisonneuve*

This haunting exploration of love and desire, disability and madness, trauma and recovery, is a diaristic marvel for fans of Annie Ernaux.

Weaving personal memory with magic realism and folklore, *Iris and the Dead* asks: What if you could look back and tell someone exactly how they changed the course of your life?

For our narrator, that someone is Iris, the counsellor with whom she developed an unusual, almost violent bond. There are things she needs to tell Iris: some that she hid during the brief time they knew each other, and some that she has learned since. She was missing her mind the autumn they spent together and has since regained it.

Iris and the Dead unfurls the hidden power dynamics of abuse, offering a beguiling inquiry into intergenerational trauma, moral ambiguity, and queer identity.



Publication: June 2025

Publisher: Book*hug

Rights Sold:
(K2 Literary selling UK/ANZ/ translation rights on behalf of client publisher)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Miranda Schreiber is a Toronto-based writer and researcher. Her work has appeared in places like the *Toronto Star*, *The Walrus*, *The Globe and Mail*, BBC, and the *National Post*. She has been nominated for a digital publishing award by the National Media Foundation and was the recipient of the Solidarity and Pride Champion Award from the Ontario Federation of Labour. *Iris and the Dead* is her debut book.

Sheung-King

Batshit Seven

—Winner, 2024 Writers' Trust Atwood Gibson Fiction Prize —

"[Sheung-King] presents [Glue's] story with the restrained force of an ethnographic study. The result is . . . incredibly powerful, rendering Batshit Seven a highly unusual, highly effective examination of both contemporary society and the quest for identity." –Toronto Star

"Glue has an intricate understanding of what ails him and his homeland of Hong Kong, but he's paralyzed by his status as a transnational, neither here nor there. This grimly hilarious book asks if imperialism does this to us by accident, or on purpose—but also, it doesn't matter. An astonishingly unflinching account of the spiritual wasteland where 'global' 'citizens' live; how it feels to have your personhood hollowed out by market forces, empire, and migration."
–Thea Lim, author of An Ocean of Minutes

"Glue is sticky. Sticky with Hong Kong heat and sex. Glue is stuck. Stuck to news of political protests and embedded in the 'complex workings of Asia,' he wishes sometimes for oblivion, but his ticker tape thoughts keep him going and keep him motoring this wonderfully strange and sage story. This is a book to be read for escape, in the best sense—escape from lasting imperialist ideas and the imperilling hollowness of late capitalism.... Escape into the soul-rebuilding pleasures of a deliciously subversive imagination." –Kyo Maclear, author of Unearthing

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From *Canada Reads*-nominated author Sheung-King comes a satirical novel about a millennial living through the Hong Kong protests, as he struggles to make sense of modern life and the parts of himself that just won't gel.

Glen Wu (aka Glue) couldn't care less about his job. He's returned to Hong Kong to teach English, just to placate his parents. But he shows up hungover to class, barely stays awake, and prefers to spend his time smoking up at Shenzhen Bay until dawn breaks.

As he watches the city he loves fall—the protests, the brutal arrests—life continues around him. So he drinks more, picks more fights with his drug dealer friend, thinks loftier thoughts about colonialism and Franz Fanon. The very little he does care about: his sister, who deals with Hong Kong's demise by getting engaged to a rich immigration consultant; his on-and-off-again girlfriend who steals things from him; and memories of someone he once met in Canada….

When the government tightens its grip, language starts to lose all meaning for Glue, and he finds himself pulled into an unsettling venture, ultimately culminating in an act of violence.

Inventive and utterly irresistible, with QR codes woven throughout, Sheung-King's ingenious novel encapsulates the anxieties and apathies of the millennial experience. *Batshit Seven* is an ode to a beloved city, an indictment of the cycles of imperialism, and a reminder of the beautiful things left under the hype of commodified living.

Publication: February 2024

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publisher:
Penguin Canada

Rights Sold:
-Penguin Canada (World)

Sheung-King's debut novel, *You are Eating an Orange. You are Naked*, was a finalist for the 2021 Governor General's Award and Amazon Canada First Novel Award, longlisted for Canada Reads 2021 and named one of the best book debuts by the *Globe and Mail*. Sheung-King taught creative writing at the University of Guelph and is now the creative writing coach at Avenues: The World School, Shenzhen. He holds an MFA in creative writing from the University of Guelph.

AGA Wilmot

Every Little Death

Praise for *Withered*:

"Ellis's recovery from their eating disorder cunningly intertwines with the ghost story as Wilmot interrogates the human desire for control over one's body, natural forces, and even life and death." –Publishers Weekly

"Wilmot's fast-paced psychological-horror novel offers a fresh spin on the haunted-house trope, with well-drawn queer and trans representation at its center. This thought-provoking blend of psychological and supernatural horror will appeal to fans of Stranger Things and allegorical haunted-house novels like Carissa Orlando's The September House." –Booklist

"Withered is a compassionate exploration of mental health, hauntings, and the way grief can pull, stretch, or erode our sense of self. Told with wit and warmth, it is a triumph of love in the face of heartache and death." –Suzan Palumbo, Nebula and World Fantasy Award finalist

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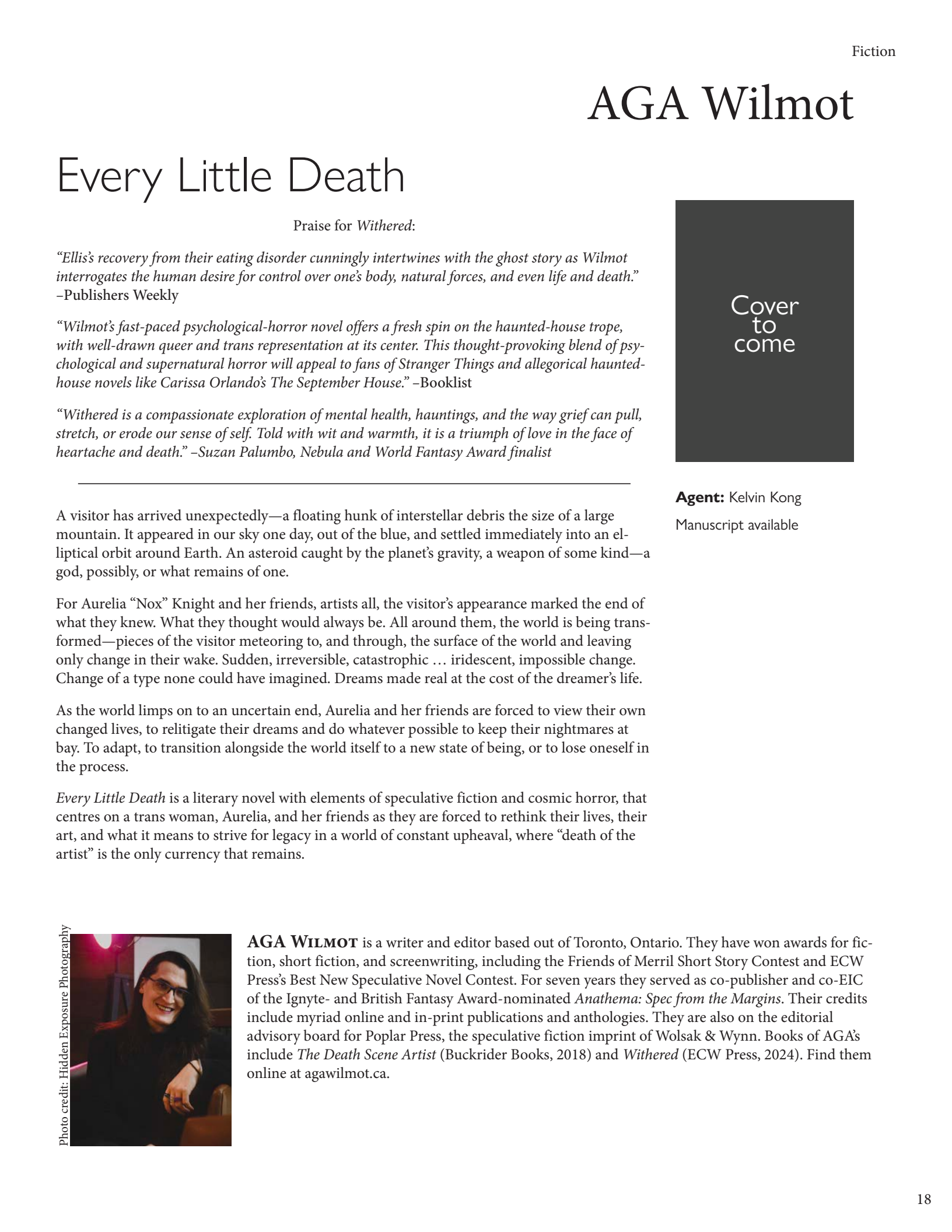
A visitor has arrived unexpectedly—a floating hunk of interstellar debris the size of a large mountain. It appeared in our sky one day, out of the blue, and settled immediately into an elliptical orbit around Earth. An asteroid caught by the planet's gravity, a weapon of some kind—a god, possibly, or what remains of one.

For Aurelia "Nox" Knight and her friends, artists all, the visitor's appearance marked the end of what they knew. What they thought would always be. All around them, the world is being transformed—pieces of the visitor meteoring to, and through, the surface of the world and leaving only change in their wake. Sudden, irreversible, catastrophic … iridescent, impossible change. Change of a type none could have imagined. Dreams made real at the cost of the dreamer's life.

As the world limps on to an uncertain end, Aurelia and her friends are forced to view their own changed lives, to relitigate their dreams and do whatever possible to keep their nightmares at bay. To adapt, to transition alongside the world itself to a new state of being, or to lose oneself in the process.

Every Little Death is a literary novel with elements of speculative fiction and cosmic horror, that centres on a trans woman, Aurelia, and her friends as they are forced to rethink their lives, their art, and what it means to strive for legacy in a world of constant upheaval, where "death of the artist" is the only currency that remains.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Manuscript available

Photo credit: Hidden Exposure Photography

AGA Wilmot is a writer and editor based out of Toronto, Ontario. They have won awards for fiction, short fiction, and screenwriting, including the Friends of Merril Short Story Contest and ECW Press's Best New Speculative Novel Contest. For seven years they served as co-publisher and co-EIC of the Ignyte- and British Fantasy Award-nominated *Anathema: Spec from the Margins*. Their credits include myriad online and in-print publications and anthologies. They are also on the editorial advisory board for Poplar Press, the speculative fiction imprint of Wolsak & Wynn. Books of AGA's include *The Death Scene Artist* (Buckrider Books, 2018) and *Withered* (ECW Press, 2024). Find them online at agawilmot.ca.

Matthew Wong Foreman

Itch

Separated at birth and by an ocean, a pair of twins have their lives forever tainted by a series of ill-fated happenings before their birth.

Alex grows up in a shoebox apartment in Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong. He dreams of a perfect life as an economics professor in the United States of America, hoping to one day reach the promised land of his catatonic father, who never speaks of their past. Aaron is raised by his genius but neglectful mother on Chicago's South Side, who abandons him for a hippie cult in California. He spends his days in foster care fantasizing about being the next Yukio Mishima and struggling with his burgeoning—and uncontrollable—sexuality. Despite their vastly different upbringings, both are bound by a desperate desire to fill their twin-shaped voids molded in the contours of their broken parents.

The brothers attend college in Chicago. Alex wins a full -ride to UChicago, while Aaron discovers his undocumented status at Northwestern. When a long-awaited reunion collapses into disaster, they spiral into addiction and despair. Their eventual confrontation with their respective immigration statuses in the wake of the COVID pandemic sends them hurtling towards catastrophe, one that forces each to grapple with the possibility of healing in the shadow of a tragic past.

A Sino-American meditation on the American Delusion, *Itch* explores the struggle for survival in a twenty-first century where the relentless search for hope and its inevitable disappointment have become default conditions of modern life.

Cover to come

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Manuscript available

Photo credit: Wong Yi

Matthew Wong Foreman is a Hong Kong-born writer. He read history and philosophy in Hong Kong then Oxford, before completing a PhD at Northwestern University in the United States, where he taught history and writing. His debut novel, *Sunset at Lion Rock*, was published in 2024 (Proverse, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press), and in North America in 2026 (7.13 Books). His non-fiction monograph, *To Mix or Not to Mix: The Making of the Chinese Race, 1895–1949*, is scheduled for publication with Brill (Leiden) in early 2027. His fiction and non-fiction have appeared in the *Pacific Historical Review*, *Asian Ethnicity*, *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*, and *The Oxford Review of Books*. He teaches at The University of Hong Kong.

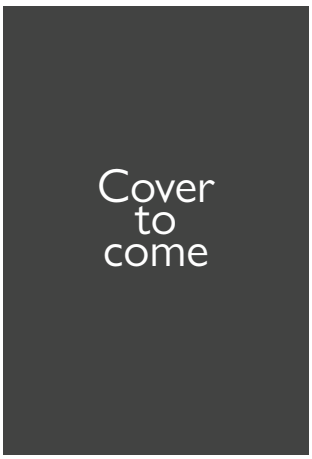
nonfiction

Del Cowie

This is a Throwdown: A Toronto Hip-Hop History

Drake is one of the most popular and influential artists in hip-hop, the most listened to genre of music in the world, according to streaming giant Spotify. Yet, despite Drake's overwhelming influence beyond popular culture and his fervent championing of Toronto in his lyrics, music and album covers, very little is known or documented of Toronto's rich hip-hop history

This is A Throwdown: A Toronto Hip-Hop History seeks to change this reality. Spanning 30 years of music history in one of the world's most diverse and unique cities, *This Is A Throwdown* traces Toronto's early, overshadowed contributions to the global phenomenon of hip-hop culture and contextualizes its present-day position as a nexus point for creatives where Drake and other Toronto hip-hop acts articulate the musical present and hint at the world's sonic future.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Winter 2027

Publisher: ECW Press

Rights Sold:
-ECW Press (World)

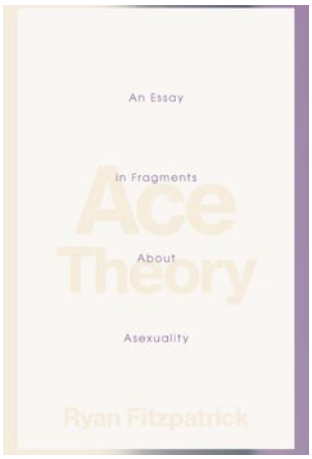
Del Cowie is an Toronto-based music journalist and editor who has worked as an associate producer for CBC Music and the Peabody and International Emmy Award-winning Netflix series *Hip Hop Evolution*. He has appeared on CBC Radio's *q*, *Here and Now*, and *Big City Small World*

Cowie was assistant editor and writer for Canadian national music publication *Exclaim!* for over a decade and has contributed to *NOW*, NOISEY, *XXL* and the *National Post*, among other publications. Since 2015, he produced and presented Before the 6ix, an ongoing panel discussion focusing on Toronto hip-hop history in association with the Toronto Public Library.

Cowie has been a member of the Polaris Music Prize jury since its 2006 inception.

Ryan Fitzpatrick

Ace Theory



Ace Theory offers a series of critiques, propositions, and embodied movements that challenge the pervasiveness of how heavily contemporary Western society is organized around the promises and hopes of sex and romance, and the great disservice this does to those who cannot align themselves with this ticking clock o allonormativity. Part theory, part poetics, Ace Theory will have you wondering if there are not perhaps other ways to make the most of our togetherness.
–Ela Przybylo, author of Asexual Erotics *and* Ungendering Menstruation

"The essays in this book, like Gruber's articulation of the chimera, reveal a matrilineal narrative of split flesh, eyeballs, sour milk, creepy puppets, blood, illnesses, and grief that leave the nerves exposed. Gruber writes with the precision of a scalpel, revealing with great dexterity, care, and fierceness a beast that lives across lives and stories." –Liz Ross, author of After Birth

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Current opinion always holds asexuality to be invisible. Hence the notion of a happy, gentle, jubilant asexuality is never to be found in any text. Where are we to read it, then?

In this revelatory book, critically acclaimed poet Ryan Fitzpatrick works through the ways in which they have interfaced with a sexual world as an asexual person. Often defined as the orientation of those who don't experience sexual attraction, asexuality is tied to a shared logic wherein our lives are shaped by sex, by romance, by economic and social pressures that determine what a good life looks like.

Leaping from the eureka-moment of finding the right words to name an unnameable experience, *Ace Theory* upends rigid definitions by turning over the pieces of a supposedly broken life. Through intellectual analysis, cultural criticism, and personal reflection, Fitzpatrick tangles with the trenchant knot of compulsory sexuality, putting a squeeze on the many pressures that make asexual people feel like they simply don't fit.

Publication: October 2026

Publisher: Book*hug

Rights Sold:
(K2 Literary selling UK/ANZ/ translation rights on behalf of client publisher)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Ryan Fitzpatrick is the author of five poetry books, including *No Depression in Heaven* and *Sunny Ways*. The 2024–2025 writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta's Department of English and Film Studies, they currently live in Calgary.

Tamara Jong

Worldly Girls: A Memoir

"In Worldly Girls*, Tamara Jong writes with clear-eyed honesty and emotional intelligence about the intertwined ties of family and religion. More than a memoir, this book is a tribute to women everywhere who struggle with love, depression, our relationships with our mothers and with motherhood itself. In other words, Worldly Girls is for all of us." —Jen Sookfong Lee, author of* Superfan: How Pop Culture Broke My Heart

"Tamara Jong's memoir Wordly Girls is a glistening mosaic of memory. Arranged in sharp and vibrant fragments, Jong explores the jagged divisions that break and shape us, and the love that can unite us beyond faith, time, and life. This story is sharp and soft; a razor's edge to your tender heart. An unforgettable read." —Hollay Ghadery, award-winning author of Fuse

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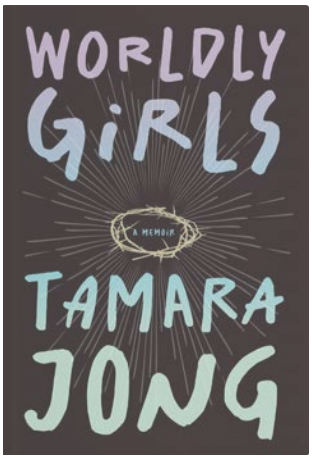
Tamara Jong's powerful memoir documents the slow unravelling of her connection to her faith and the tragic history of her fractured family, shining a light into the dark corners of memory that have haunted her well into adulthood.

With clear-eyed honesty and written in sparse yet searing prose, Jong collects the fragments of her unconventional childhood, with her busy schedule of Jehovah's Witness meetings, Bible study, and door-to-door ministering. She also details her emotionally distant father and alcoholic mother's tumultuous marriage, her deep yearnings to become a mother after the loss of her own, and her struggles with mental health.

After corporate and spiritual burnout, and a suicide attempt at the age of thirty-two, Jong comes to understand that the strict religion she had long believed would protect her prevented her from pursuing her true sense of self. In a story that traverses a wide range of potent themes—including addiction, estrangement, grief, infertility, and forgiveness—the ultimate message of *Worldly Girls* is one of hope as Jong finds her own path to healing and belonging.



Publication: September 2025

Publisher: Book*hug

Rights Sold:
(K2 Literary selling UK/ANZ/ translation rights on behalf of client publisher)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Tamara Jong is a Tiohtià:ke (Montréal) born writer of Chinese and European ancestry. Her work has been published in the *Humber Literary Review*, *Room Magazine*, and *The Fiddlehead*, and has been both long and shortlisted for various creative non-fiction prizes. She is a graduate of The Writer's Studio at Simon Fraser University, and a former member of *Room Magazine*'s collective. She currently lives and works on Treaty 3 territory, the occupied and ancestral lands of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinabewaki, Attiwonderonk, and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (Guelph, ON). *Worldly Girls* is her first book.

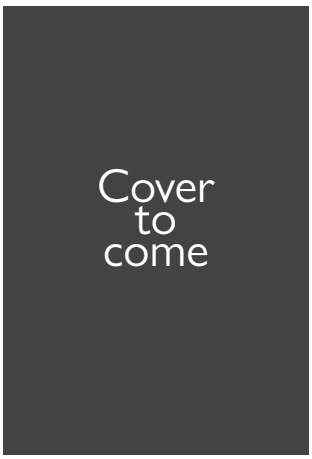
Stacy Lee Kong

Fan Service: How Fandom Changed Everything, From the Way We Work to How We Vote

A timely and intriguing look at parasocial relationships as a growing social phenomenon, how it has affected the world from labour to commerce to politics since the start of the 2020s, and what this may mean for the future.

Before 2020, fandom was predominantly understood as a cultural phenomenon centred around the entertainment sphere. Fuelled by a pandemic that took our lives mostly online, juxtaposed with conditions that highlighted growing income inequality, an similar imbalance in racial justice, and the resultant backlash, fan behaviour and parasocial relationships spread into other parts of our lives. And now, in a post-2020 world, fandom has become an increasingly influential organizing principle for our society.

In this deeply reported but accessible nonfiction book, journalist and culture critic Stacy Lee Kong breaks down what fandom actually means and how it works, and explains how the merging of internet and celebrity culture, the "celebritization" of regular folks, and the resulting parasocial relationships are changing how we vote, work, shop—and even how we perceive the world around us.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Fall 2028

Publisher:
University of Iowa Press

Rights Sold:
-University of Iowa Press
(English, North America)

Stacy Lee Kong is a writer, editor, and the founder of *Friday Things,* an independent media brand that delivers smart takes on the week's biggest pop culture stories—or at least, the ones she can't stop thinking about. She has worked as an editor at some of the largest magazine brands in Canada, including *Flare*, *Canadian Living*, *House & Home*, and *Chatelaine*. Most recently, she was the founding editor-in-chief of *3 magazine*, a national lifestyle magazine by, for and about immigrants and diasporic people. She is also the editorial director of The Issues Studio and a speaker, educator, and culture critic.

Renée Sylvestre-Williams

The Singles Tax: No-Nonsense Financial Advice for Solo Earners

*"It often feels like being unmarried means missing out on every long-term opportunity to improve your finances. That's precisely why financial reporter Renée Sylvestre-Williams wrote this incredibly useful guide to spending, saving, and investing smarter as a single person … If you value your independence—personal or financial—*The Singles Tax *is a must-read." –Apple Books*

The Singles Tax looks at the historical decisions that explain why single people can't seem to get a break: whether that's taxes, housing, retirement or something as simple as a hotel room on a group tour. There's nothing more irritating than trying to go on a vacation and having to pay extra for the hotel room because there's an extra bed that you're not going to use but you still have to pay for it because you're travelling solo.

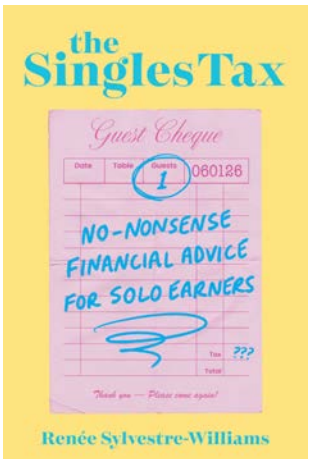
So you either grit your teeth and pay the single supplement or spend more time searching for an adventure that caters to solo travellers or at least won't ding your wallet.

Personal finance is used to talking to couples, whether it's about pooling finances to buy a home, spousal retirement plans where one spouse can contribute to their partner's plan or income-splitting for taxes. Couples are considered an economic household but bffs living together aren't.

Money can be a tricky subject, especially when you're single. As a solo dweller, you're responsible for all of your expenses, and it can be challenging to manage your finances efficiently. This book aims to be the ultimate intersectional guide for single people who want to take control of their financial lives and build a secure financial future.

Each chapter provides thought-provoking insights such as why can't two people just live together and be considered an economic unit? Can people get married to take advantage of the few tax benefits for couples? Will that lead to romcom shenanigans? This book delivers serviceable, battle-tested advice, all in a friendly and relatable tone.

*The Singles Tax i*s equal parts a personal finance book, a historical document and a political manifesto, urging people to take action with our money and our politics.



Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: January 2026

Publisher: ECW Press

Rights Sold:
-ECW Press
(North American English and Canada French rights)

-Translation/UK/ANZ rights available

Photo credit: Kristin Eff

Renée Sylvestre-Williams is a Toronto-based writer and journalist and yes, she is happily single. She has spent the last 15 years writing about finance, business and investing. Renée has been published in some of North America.'s top publications including *The Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, *Forbes*, *Canadian Business* magazine, MoneySense, WealthSimple, and Canadian Family Offices.

Felix Wong

Shall We Talk

In May 1991—three years before author Felix Wong was born—Lauda Air Flight 004 broke apart mid-flight, raining cargo, metal, jet fuel, and human bodies over the jungles of Thailand. All 223 passengers and crew were killed in what remains Thailand's deadliest crash. Felix's Aunt Cloud and her husband, en route to their honeymoon, were among the deceased, dramatic deaths that, for almost thirty years, were never discussed.

In *Shall We Talk*, Felix—unemployed, restless, and looking for a project—travels from his home in Vancouver to Thailand and Hong Kong and begins interviewing relatives about the plane crash and its aftermath, and soon discovers that every single person—aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws—remembers a wildly different version of events. Was Cloud's body ever identified? Who received the settlement money? Why did no one ever speak of Cloud or her life? In the process of looking for the absolute truth, he unearths only one certain thing: Chinese families don't speak of the dead, and no one wants to reopen old wounds.

Set against the backdrop of Hong Kong's protests in 2019, *Shall We Talk* is an investigative memoir that begins with an infamous aviation accident, but then explores the traditional C hinese cultural taboo against discussing past traumas, a silent practice that still divides generations and diasporic communities. Writing with generosity, affection, and curiosity, Felix Wong has crafted an unforgettable story about life and death, memory, migration, and the shared hurts that we keep in the dark.

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Fall 2027

Publisher: ECW Press

Rights Sold:
-ECW Press (World rights)

Felix Wong is a Chinese-Canadian writer. He has lived half his life in Vancouver and half in Hong Kong. His stories, often revolving around identity and Chinese traditions, can be found in *The Tyee*, *The Ex-Puritan*, *PRISM International*, and *Ricepaper Magazine*.

In 2019, his journey to the Lauda Air Flight 004 crash site became a feature story in South China Morning Post. In 2020, he was awarded a grant by the Canada Arts Council for the research and creation of *Shall We Talk*.

Felix holds an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. He is currently an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Hong Kong's MA in Creative Communications and MFA in Creative Writing programs.

children's

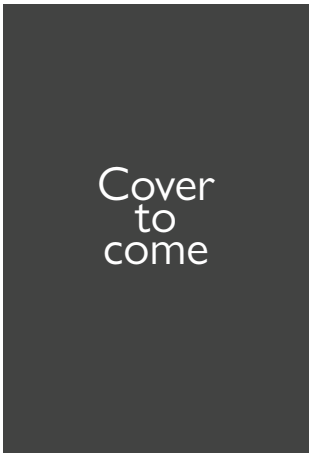
Melissa Leong

Maggie the Magpie

Maggie the Magpie loves to save money. In fact, she's awesome at it. But, she doesn't like to spend it. No matter what. Will Maggie ever change her mind?

It can be hard to talk to kids about money, especially for adults who may not feel the most comfortable with financial matters. While many children's books teach financial literacy, few books address money beliefs and behaviours which play a huge part in how we all use money. *Money Money Magpie* is a much-needed addition to the conversation. Maggie may be someone that you recognize. She's Melissa (who made this story). She may be you.

With themes of resourcefulness, frugality, self-love and sharing, this fun tale illustrates how you can overdo a good thing. Told with humour and energy, this is a story about how money can be used to make life meaningful. And sometimes, money is best spent when shared and enjoyed with others.



Format: Picture book

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: Fall 2027

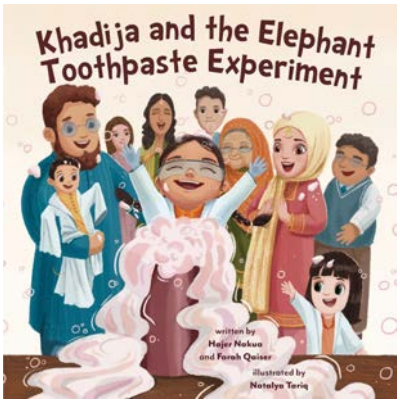
Publisher: Kids Can Press

Rights Sold:
-Kids Can Press (World)

Melissa Leong is a sought-after speaker, national media personality and award-winning author. She's the author of the award-winning feel-good finance guide, *Happy Go Money* published in 2019 by ECW Press, is a repeat guest on *The Drew Barrymore Show* (CBS) and serves as the resident money expert on Canada's leading daytime talk show, *The Social* (CTV).

Hajer Nakua and Farah Qaiser

Khadija and the Elephant Toothpaste Experiment



"Khadija and the Elephant Toothpaste Experiment clearly showcases its authors's passion for science and their desire to make the field accessible to people from all walks of life. Natalya Tariq's illustrations lovingly capture the cultural specificity of both characters and settings while remaining vibrant and appealing to young readers." –Canadian Review of Materials

"Farah Qaiser and Hajer Nakua show young readers that a little Muslim girl who wants to be a scientist can achieve that dream, because their message in Khadija and the Elephant Toothpaste Experiment is all about opportunity and inclusion. Ottawa illustrator Natalya Tariq uses cartoon art to give brightness and innocence to Khadija's story. There's a wide-eyed wonder to the child that is infused in every illustration.... This can only inspire all children to follow their dreams, whether into science or into the arts." –CanLit for Little Canadians

"The picture book illustrates how children can find their passion through play, and shows that you should never have to compromise your identity to fit in.... Khadija and the Elephant Toothpaste Experiment is well-written and beautifully illustrated." –Quill and Quire

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Format: Picture book

Agent: Kelvin Kong

Publication: February 2024

Publisher: Second Story Press

Rights Sold:
-Second Story Press (World)

Everyone can see themselves in science!

Khadija is inspired by her visit to the science fair. There are so many different scientists all wearing safety goggles and lab coats! But how come none of them are wearing a hijab?

After watching a scientist carry out the elephant toothpaste experiment, Khadija attempts to recreate it at home with mixed (and messy!) results. Surrounded by her family as they celebrate Eid, Khadija tries again….

"Salaam everyone, and Eid Mubarak!" she cries. "When I grow up, I'm going to be a scientist!"

Hajer Nakua is a neuroscience PhD Candidate researching the relationship between brain organization and mental health symptoms in children at the University of Toronto. She is currently pursuing a Fulbright Fellowship exchange at Stanford University. Beyond her research, she is also a science communicator whose focus is to make science accessible to youth who have been excluded from scientific conversations. She has served as the Chair of the Organization of Human Brain Mapping (OHBM)'s Student and Postdoc Special Interest Group; a volunteer-led committee which creates events and resources to enhance the careers of graduate students and post-docs in neuroscience.

Hajer's passion to make science more accessible led her to create a science communication Instagram platform, which currently has over 5,000 followers, and is one of the only English-Arabic neuroscience communication platforms on Instagram, and as such, has cultivated a community of youth from North America and the Middle East all motivated to learn more about their brains.

Farah Qaiser is a genomics researcher by training, now taking a detour into the world of science policy. She holds a Master of Science from the University of Toronto, where she carried out DNA sequencing to better understand neurological disorders. Now, Farah works as the Director of Research and Policy at Evidence for Democracy to promote the use of evidence in government decision-making.

Farah is passionate about building an engaging and inclusive science culture through outreach, policy and communication efforts. Her extensive volunteer and community experience includes co-founding the Toronto Science Policy Network, writing about science and scientists for various media outlets (including *Forbes*), and organizing Wikipedia Edit-A-Thons to create pages about under-represented scientists. Farah currently serves as a member of the Canada Chief Science Advisor's Youth Council, on Let's Talk Science's Board of Directors, and on 500 Women Scientists' leadership team.

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Dajeong Kim
dajeong@durankim.com

South Africa: Lennon-Ritchie Agency
Aoife Lennon-Ritchie
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