



Wild Words
NORTH

September 26-29, 2019

*North Peace Cultural Centre
Fort St. John, BC*



PEACE LIARD
REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

Wild Words

*The PLRAC acknowledges Treaty 8
on whose traditional territory we reside.*

Welcome

The Peace Liard Regional Arts Council (PLRAC) welcomes you to the second Wild Words North Writing Festival and Art Exhibit.

From song writing to storytelling, from student writers to those who have been creating for decades, Wild Words North hopes to encourage our region's writers to share and to learn and in so doing broaden PLRAC's mandate to provide opportunities for arts and culture and heritage for the people in northeast BC.

We hope you enjoy the panel discussion, presentations, readings and performances along with the art exhibit featuring the work of visual artists who have created pieces inspired by some of this year's feature writers.

The PLRAC thanks its many sponsors, volunteers, and all the writers who have made the 2019 Wild Words North possible.

—*Donna Kane, Executive Director, PLRAC*

NORTH

Official Opening

Thursday September 26
(Free Event)

4 pm – 7 pm / North Peace Cultural Centre (NPCC)
Info and Welcome to Participants—Multipurpose Room

7 pm – 8 pm / NPCC Peace Gallery North
Wild Words North Opening and Welcome
Doig River Drummers
Welcome by May Apsassin

The official launch of the festival will begin with the opening of the art exhibit where visual artists **Kim Ans, Milka Meyer, mary mottishaw, Sara Norquay, Iliia Reschny,** and **Barbara Swail** have created work inspired by the words of some of our feature writers. The art exhibit will also include the launch and display of the Ekphrastic Writing Contest Broad sides with readings by contest winners **Marilyn Belak, Pamela den Ouden, Denise Gardiner, Melanie Mason,** and **Seanah Roper.**

8 pm – 10 pm / NPCC Conference Room
Coffee House (hosted by **Naomi Shore** and **Ryan Domico Sebastiano**) with **Dori Braun, Airik Clark, Lorissa Scriven, Ryan Domico Sebastiano, Naomi Shore, Joseph Te Bulte, Adam Winn,** and **Ben Waechter.**

Wild Words

Friday September 27
North Peace Cultural Centre

10 am – 11 pm / NPCC Conference Room
Shirlee Smith Matheson—*This Was Our Valley*



First released in 1989, **Shirlee Smith Matheson's** *This Was Our Valley* won the Alberta Culture Nonfiction prize and a Silver medal for the Roderick-Haig Brown BC Book Award. Chronicling the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, Matheson's book brought to light the environmental and social changes wrought by the project. With the announcement of Site C, Matheson, in a new edition published in 2019, continues to register the voices that demand to be heard. In her presentation, Matheson will read from the book and answer questions from the audience.

11 am—11:30 am / NPCC Conference Room
Brenda Neil—*Thriving on Rejection*



Come listen to regional writer **Brenda Neil** as she enlightens us on constructive vs. destructive criticism, how to find a beta reader, how to trust your gut, the benefit of online classes, the pitfalls of online help and most importantly how to not take criticism personally!

NORTH

11:30 am—12 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Jenna Morland—*Building an Author Social Platform*



Last year, **Jenna Morland** shared her expertise on marketing one's writing with an informal group. People enjoyed it so much, she is back this year to share her knowledge with all audience members on how to build an author social platform. As someone who grew their social media following from 0 to 17,000 in just one year, she should know!

1 pm—2 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Jillian and Robin Ridington with special guest Shirley Acko-Howatt
Where Happiness Dwells: A History of the Dane-zaa First Nations



Published in 2013 by UBC Press, *Where Happiness Dwells* has become a seminal history of the Dane-zaa First Nations. At the request of the Doig River First Nations in the Peace River, celebrated anthropologists **Robin and Jillian Ridington** presented a history of the Dane-zaa people based on oral histories collected over a half century of fieldwork. Come hear Jillian and Robin, Professor Emeritus at UBC, talk about the book and their

work with the Dane-zaa people. Jillian and Robin will be joined by Shirley Acko-Howatt, the youngest daughter of a Dane-Zaa family whose roots in the area go back for millennia.

Wild Words

2 pm—3 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Kym Gouchie—*Giving Back with Voice*



In this presentation, Kym, through music and storytelling, will encourage audience members to use their voices for whatever it is that they are passionate about when it comes to standing up for justice and for Mother Earth.

3 pm – 5 pm / NPCC Multi-Purpose Room

Social Meet and Greet

(Event is free. Refreshments / Cash Bar)

This is your chance to come out and meet the writers featured at Wild Words North, to get to know others attending the festival, and to be entertained by guitar and fiddle playing duo **Adley and Shannon**.

7 pm – 10 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Evening of Words

Refreshments / Cash Bar

The evening will begin with readings by regional writers **Tamara Dannecker Sunchild, Wayne Ezeard, Ovvian Castrillo Hill, Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Olemaun Pokiak-Fenton and Brenda Neil** followed by feature writers **Shirlee Smith Matheson, Jillian and Robin Ridington and Billy-Ray Belcourt**.



Matheson



Ridington



Belcourt

NORTH

Saturday September 28

*9:30 am—10 am / NPCC Conference Room
Theresa Gladue—Tell me a Story*



With her trademark warmth and great sense of humor, Theresa will engage participants in telling their stories through images. Come prepared to use your imagination and to be entertained. “This is such a powerful way of getting your story to others in a safe environment - for both the story teller and the listener.” - Theresa



*Painting by Barbara Swail inspired by Erin Moure’s “Purpose” -
Wild Words North Art Exhibit*

Wild Words

10 am – 11 am / NPCC Conference Room

Panel Discussion: Histories, Presences, Places: How Can Regional History Best Be Transmitted to Future Generations, in our Communities and Elsewhere?

With Panelists Shirley Acko Howatt, Lillian Apsassin, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Kym Gouchie, Erin Moure, Jillian and Robin Ridington, Richard Van Camp and Shirlee Smith Matheson

First Nations history has been transmitted over centuries by elders, supported by traditional protocols around the telling of stories that ensure respect for ceremony, authenticity, and audience. More recently, some stories appear on First Nations internet sites, and in print, accessible to all. Family history books, for their part, have long played a popular role in settlers' and tourists' understanding of history along the Alaska Highway. These "pioneer" books very rarely accounted for any First Nations' view (or for the views of women or minorities), although more recently, some, such as *Century in the North Peace*, have invited a different approach. All these forms try to expand knowledge, celebrate community identity, and instill pride. The visiting writers — a poet, a storyteller, a poet-translator, and an anthropologist — will speak about how the tasks of history inform their own work in memoir, poetry, fiction, non-fiction. They'll share their ideas: How can we speak of histories, presences, and places in better ways in the future? What questions do we need to ask of history? What does history ask of us?



Belcourt



Gouchie



Ridington



Moure



Van Camp



Matheson

NORTH

11 am – 12 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Billy-Ray Belcourt – *Notes on Poetry in the Canadian Context*



In this presentation, Billy-Ray Belcourt will offer a series of meditations on “poetry” and “Canada” as hotly contested categories, drawing from anecdote, theory, and the poetry of racialized writers. He suggests we need a poetry that is against unfreedom and for a world-to-come imbued with Indigenous/queer possibility.

1 pm – 2 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Erin Moure – ***BRING PAPER. BRING ONE WORD. LET’S MAKE POETRY!***



Have you ever wanted to try writing a poem? Or ever wanted to loosen up your old poetry writing habits by doing a strange exercise? Come and spend a fun hour working with Erin Moure to make poems from a very strange language and share the experience ... but you have to bring a word to contribute! And bring loose paper and pen.

2 pm – 3 pm / NPCC Conference Room

Viewing of Richard Van Camp’s *Three Feathers*



Come see Richard Van Camp’s film, *Three Feathers*, followed by a Q&A with the author.

Wild Words

3 pm – 5 pm / NPCC Multi-Purpose Room

Social Meet and Greet

(Event is free. Refreshments / Cash Bar)

This is your chance to come out and chat with the writers featured at Wild Words North, to get to know others attending the festival, and to be entertained by singer/songwriter **Dori Braun**.

7 pm – 10 pm / NPCC Theatre

Evening of Words

Refreshments / Cash Bar

The evening will begin with readings by regional writers **Theresa Gladue**, **Karl Mattson** and **Rebekah Rempel** followed by readings by feature writers **Erin Moure**, **Richard Van Camp** and a performance by **Kym Gouchie**.



Moure



Van Camp



Gouchie

NORTH

Sunday September 29th
(Free Event)

10 am – 12 pm / NPCC Multi-Purpose Room
Student Reading emceed by Erin Moure featuring Kalyn Johnston, Ly Le, Milli Patel and the Energetic Dance Explosion.

12 pm – 1 pm / NPCC Multi-Purpose Room
Lunch and Wrap-Up of Festival

Contributing Artists to the Wild Words North Art Exhibit

Kim Ans, Fort St. John, BC

“Her Dress is made of Memories” (inspired by Kym Gouchie’s “Purple Fingers”)
Acrylic—\$425

Milka Meyer, Dawson Creek, BC

“Purple Moon” (inspired by Kym Gouchie’s “Purple Fingers”)
Acrylic—\$330

mary mottishaw, Dawson Creek, BC

“contemplation” (inspired by Erin Moure’s “Purpose”)
mixed media—\$290

Sara Norquay, Edmonton, AB

“A Bench” / “A Walk: / “A Filament of Sun” (inspired by Erin Moure’s “Purpose”)
Linocuts—\$260 Each

Ilia Reschny, Rolla, BC

“My Smoke Signal” (inspired by Billy-Ray Belcourt’s “Love is a Moontime Teaching”)
Acrylic—\$450
“Rooted in the Forest” (inspired by Billy-Ray Belcourt’s “Love is a Moontime Teaching”) Acrylic—\$300

Barbara Swail, Dawson Creek, BC

“Words Rising” (inspired by Erin Moure’s “Purpose”)
Watercolour, ink, chalk & coffee on paper—\$225

Wild Words

Meet the Writers

Adley and Shannon are a guitar and fiddle playing duo from the Fort St. John area. Their music is old-time/bluegrass/older country. The couple enjoys a rural lifestyle and the outdoors.

Marilyn Belak lives in Dawson Creek. Her poetry is published in literary magazines and online including *The Malabat Review*, and her work has appeared in anthologies such as *Enpipeline*, *Boobs* and *Unfurled*. She was a recent winner of the PLRAC's Ekphrastic Writing Contest.

Billy-Ray Belcourt is a writer and academic from the Driftpile Cree Nation. A Rhodes Scholar with a Masters from the University of Oxford and Wadham College, he is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Alberta. Billy-Ray's debut book of poems, *This Wound is a World* (Frontenac House 2017) won the 2018 Griffin Poetry Prize and the 2018 Robert Kroetsch City of Edmonton Book Prize. Billy-Ray's second book, *NDN Coping Mechanisms: Notes from the Field*, was released in September with House of Anansi Press, and his third book, *A History of my Brief Body*, is due out in May 2020 with Hamish Hamilton, an imprint of Penguin Canada.

Dori Braun is a potter/sculptor and a singer/songwriter from the Dawson Creek area. A founding member of Peace Songwriters, she writes and sings about life's transitions and relationships intermixed with imagery of the Peace River Area's seasons

and weather. Dori has always been a strong advocate of human rights, and her songs reflect her concerns of equality and fairness for all.

Tamara Dannecker Sunchild is a wrangler, carpenter and spoken word poet. Of Cree descent, she currently resides in Fort Nelson, BC.

Pamela den Ouden is a Fort St. John author, poet, letter-writer, journalist, and artist, gathering inspiration from the local milieu and also from travels farther afield. She was a recent winner of the PLRAC's Ekphrastic Writing Contest.

Wayne Ezeard likes to describe himself as an entertainer, poet and writer who is constantly looking for ways to expand his horizons. Wayne currently has three CDs, one DVD, one book of poetry and prose, and another short novel in progress. He lives in Dawson Creek, BC.

Denise Gardiner's passion for words began as a child. Writing prose, sometimes poetry, is a daily exercise to keep the writing muscle flexible. Residing in Moberly Lake, BC, she was recently a winner of the PLRAC's Ekphrastic Writing Contest.

Theresa Gladue is playwright and producer of plays and concerts which address cultural diversity. Residing in Dawson Creek, she is an outstanding advocate for Indigenous people in the area and has played an instrumental role in helping the community to better understand racism and other important social issues.

NORTH

Singer/Songwriter **Kym Gouchie** is from the Lheidli T'enneh Nation in Prince George, BC, Canada. A self-taught guitar player and a traditional hand drummer, she utilizes her eclectic background to inspire her as she combines elements of traditional, folk and country to create a unique voice. Raised among musicians, it wasn't until dealing with personal tragedy that she was able to find her voice on her own journey, which is realized with her debut album.

A sculptor, designer and writer, **Ovvian Castrillo Hill** is a multi-faceted artist living in Fort St. John, BC. She has authored numerous English language articles and features for dailies and magazines including the Philippine Panorama, The Philippine Daily Inquirer and the Manila Bulletin. Her book, *Goddess in the Mirror: A Book of Self Discovery for the Filipino Woman the World Over*, is a testament to her expression as a humanist and a creative artist.

Kalyn Johnston from Fort St. John, BC first found her wings for creative expression through a free verse writing assignment in high school. She's been a member of the Fort St John Public Library staff for five years, where she has become more acquainted with the alphabet than she ever dreamed possible. Her abecedary expertise frequently makes an appearance in her work.

From Fort St. John, BC, **Christy Jordan-Fenton**, along with her mother-in-law, Margaret Olemaun Pokiak-Fenton, have published four award-winning books that unearth Margaret's childhood stories. Together, they speak with 100 audiences a year, from Anchorage to Havana.

Ly Le is an international student from Vietnam currently pursuing an Associate of Arts Degree at Northern Lights College's Fort St. John campus. For Ly, writing helps her understand herself and calms her soul.

Fort St. John writer **Melanie Mason** is a northern roots writer, poet and sketch artist. Her serial story, *Temerarious Tabias*, prints weekly in *The Alaska Highway News*. She is a member of *Writers of the Peace* and a recent winner in the PLRAC's *Ekphrastic Writing Contest*.

First released in 1989, **Shirlee Smith Matheson's** *This Was Our Valley* won the Alberta Culture Nonfiction prize and a Silver medal for the Roderick-Haig Brown BC Books award. Chronicling the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, Matheson's book brought to light the environmental and social changes wrought by the project. With the announcement of Site C, Matheson, in a new edition published in 2019, continues to register the voices that demand to be heard.

Wild Words

Meet the Writers

From Rolla, BC, **Karl Mattson** is a self-taught, multimedia artist who has been fuelled by his compulsion to create and speak through art, which has always played a central role in his life.

A Canadian born author, song writer, and mother of two from Fort St. John, **Jenna Morland** is the author of *Empress Unveiled* published by Oftomes Publishing in 2018.

Erin Moure is an award-winning poet and translator of poetry based in Montreal and Kelowna. Recent work includes *Kapusta* (Anansi), *Planetary Noise: Selected Poetry of Erin Moure* (Weselyan), a translation of Brazilian Wilson Bueno's *Paraguayan Sea* (Nightboat), finalist for Best Translated Book Award), and the memoir *Sitting Shiva on Minto Avenue, by Toots* (New Star), finalist for both the Mavis Gallant Award for Non-Fiction and for the City of Vancouver Book Award. In 2019, Erin will be launching three new books including *The Elements*, a book in homage to her late father (Anansi)).

Brenda McQueen Neil is a fluffy, fabulous, and fifty-something writer from Northern BC with a weakness for chocolate and a predilection for novels of dubious distinction. She writes thrillers, mysteries, and cozies. At present her latest novel, *Out of the Woods*, is in the query trenches.

An international student at the Fort St. John campus of Northern Lights College, **Mili Patel** is passionate about writing poetry and short stories.

Rebekah Rempel studied creative writing at the University of Victoria. Her poems have appeared in a number of literary journals, including *Prairie Fire*, *Room*, and *CV2*, as well as the anthologies *Refugium*, *Force Field* and *Unfurled*. She lives near Dawson Creek.

Seanah Roper is a BC based writer of fiction and poetry. She completed her BA in English Literature at Thompson Rivers University and holds an MA in Adult Education and Cultural Studies through Athabasca University. She has been published in various journals and anthologies including *Filling Station*, *Undercurrents*, and *Writing Without Direction*. She lives in Fort Nelson, BC.

Margaret Olemaun Pokiak-Fenton was born on Baille Island in the Arctic Ocean enroute with her nomadic family to their winter hunting grounds on Banks Island. Being Inuvialuk, her young childhood was filled with hunting trips by dogsled and dangerous treks across the Arctic Ocean for supplies in a schooner known as the North Star. Her childhood experiences have been documented with her daughter-in-law, Christy Jordan-Fenton, in four award-winning children's books.

NORTH

Jillian Ridington received her B.A. and M.A. from UBC. She has had fifty years of experience in writing and editing on Women's issues and First Nations ethnography. Her work includes articles and monographs on violence against women, pornography, prostitution and issues facing women with Disabilities. At the request of the Doig River First Nation, Jillian and Robin Ridington researched and wrote *Where Happiness Dwells: A History of the Dane-zaa First Nations*, published by UBC Press in 2013.

You may know **Naomi Shore** as one half of the award winning folk/roots duo Twin Peaks. Hailing from Northern British Columbia and having toured Canada and Australia relentlessly over the last seven years, Naomi recently branched out with her first solo recording *Piece by Piece*.

Lorissa Scriven grew up in a small town set deep in the yawn of the Peace River Valley. Her northern life has been one of music and wild places. She chooses to be inspired every day, whether by a winding conversation, a fleeting moment of light, or a wayward feather found in the woods; beauty is everywhere.

Joseph Te Bulte is a singer-songwriter from BC's Peace country. His songs shed light on the stories of real life and real people, stories that compel the artist and listener alike. He's the front man of the Folk Rock

band Last Horse Standing. They released their debut album in 2016.

An internationally renowned storyteller and best-selling author, **Richard Van Camp** was born in Fort Smith, NWT, and is a member of the Dogrib (Tlicho) Dene Nation. He acted as a cultural consultant for CBC Television's *North of 60*. A graduate of the En'owkin School of Writing in Penticton, he completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Writing at the University of Victoria and completed his Master's of Creative Writing at UBC. Richard was awarded Storyteller of the Year for both Canada and the US by the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers. His most recent novel, *Moccasin Square Gardens*, was published in 2019.

Ben Waechter believes music is the universal language, and the songs he writes are written to connect with different people at different moments in time. The idea that music has the ability to make you forget everything or remember everything is the goal with each song he writes. Not too flashy of a guitarist, but the four chords he plays, he plays well.

Hardworking singer/songwriter **Adam Winn** has his roots firmly in folk and rock, but delve deeper and you'll find musicality that draws from both classical training and a driven self-taught aesthetic. The Creston, BC native now lives in Fort St. John.

The PLRAC Acknowledges the Support of



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



BRITISH COLUMBIA
Supported by the Province of British Columbia



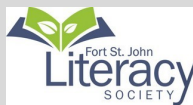
van^oancouver
foundation



THE MIRROR

Alaska Highway News

Indigo



The PLRAC thanks all of the writers and artists who are a part of Wild Words North 2019.