

VIEWPOINTS: A SYMPOSIUM

November 8-10, 2017

Vanier College Auditorium (A-103)

“But to look back from the stony plain along the road which led one to that place is not at all the same thing as walking on the road; the perspective to say the very least, changes only with the journey; only when the road has, all abruptly and treacherously, and with an absoluteness that permits no argument, turned or dropped or risen is one able to see all that one could not have seen from any other place.”— James Baldwin, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

A viewpoint can be a point on the horizon, or a personal perspective; it can be a new contribution to a larger conversation. The way we understand the world around us, whether it be in our immediate community or within the larger scope of society as a whole, is informed by our viewpoints. Our everyday conversations and discussions are told through the lens of our individual perspectives, and so the way people view us and hear what we're saying and contributing to the conversation becomes a confluence of our point of view and theirs. Whether it's through considering history or telling a new story, our viewpoints change with experience. The story you have in the moment is a different one than the one you tell after committing the experience to memory. It's this range of viewpoints that contributes to our evolution of ideas.

Viewpoints, the theme and title of the 2017 edition of the Vanier College English Department's annual symposium, will involve speakers, performers, activists and writers who have created and shared ideas that are informed by their viewpoints, but have also delved into the consideration of other perspectives. Through this, they have brought to life new ideas in their art.

All events will take place in the Auditorium with the exception of the Coffee House, which will be held in the Theatre Room (B-325). We look forward to seeing you there.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. (A-103)

SURVIVING AS A SCRIBBLER: PROFESSIONAL WRITING IN CANADA

You can write for a living? Yes, indeed, you can. A panel of three people will discuss freelance professional writing and translation, and the process, challenges and perks of writing as a career choice. The speakers on this panel are **Andrea Juhász**, who is an early-career writer who will talk about getting started, **Julie Barlow**, president of the PWAC Quebec Chapter and writer and journalist, and **Kathe Lieber** who will discuss translation.

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (A-103)

"SEEING VOICES": DEAF CULTURE AND PERSPECTIVES

Come and learn about Deaf culture and perspectives on communication. **Jack Volpe** was born Deaf and raised in Montreal, and is a certified ASL (American Sign Language) instructor at the MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre. He has lectured for various organizations in McGill University since he co-founded **Seeing Voices Montreal** and teaches specialized ASL for health care students. In addition to speaking about Deaf culture, he will lead a workshop.

12:30p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (A-103)

CONFABULATION AND THE VANIER STORYTELLING PROJECT PRESENT: SPEAKING STORIES

This event is dedicated to the memory of Vanier English teacher and storyteller extraordinaire Brian Llewellyn-ap-Dafydd, who passed away on New Year's Eve 2015 – though his stories live on ... around campus and far beyond. For today's performances, teachers and students involved in the **Vanier Storytelling Project** have collaborated with **Confabulation** – Montreal's original, monthly series of true-life stories told by the people who lived them. All these stories are curated, workshopped, and true as we can tell them, using no props or gimmicks – just a storyteller and an audience. Hosted by Vanier English teachers and Storytelling Project leaders **Matt Goldberg** and **Stephen Dinsmore**.

2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (A-103)

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Novelist **Ami Sands Brodoff** will talk about the inspiration for her new novel, *In Many Waters*, the story of three orphans whose lives intersect on the island of Malta, which grapples with our current refugee crisis. How did she get the idea for this book? What was the writing process like? How did she research it and make it come alive as timely fiction? Ami Sands Brodoff will chat about her novel, read a couple of excerpts and engage the students in one or two writing activities connected to the themes of her novel.

This event is co-sponsored by QWF Writer's-in-CEGEP Program.

4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (A-103)

PLUCK'D

From the 2017 Montreal Fringe Festival we bring you *Pluck'd* written by **Kě Xīn Li**. The play is about a queer, non-binary, radical, anarchist who returns home to their traditional family. *Pluck'd* tells the story of Chinese immigrant family torn apart by gaps of generation, culture, and language and reunited by the beauty of Christmas and the protection of Saran wrap.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9

8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (A-103)

LIFE WRITING IN GRAPHIC FORM: *DURAN DURAN, IMELDA MARCOS AND ME*

How does writing and illustrating your personal history relate a different perspective? **Lorina Mapa** is the author and artist of the illustrated memoir, *Duran Duran, Imelda Marcos and Me*, which explores growing up in the Philippines during the 1980s. The memoir begins with the author going back to Manila for her father's funeral and takes the reader on a trip through food, family, culture and politics, with a soundtrack of 80's pop music.

This event is co-sponsored by QWF Writer's-in-CEGEP Program.

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (A-103)

POLITICS THROUGH THE ARTIST'S LENS: IRANIAN CANADIAN FILMMAKING

Shahrzad Arshadi and **Masoud Raouf** are multidisciplinary artists who have each made documentaries related to Iran and sometimes elsewhere. Arshadi's latest film, "Dancing for Change", looked at female Kurdish refugees in Iran. Raouf's work includes a documentary on Iranian political refugees in Canada and their activism.

12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (A-103)

THE 60'S SCOOP AND THE REPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS VOICES IN THE MEDIA

The 60's scoop was a government initiative to assimilate Aboriginal people through adoption or foster care to non-Aboriginal families. **Nakuset** will offer historical context and talk about implementation, the effects of cross cultural adoption and where things stand today. She will also talk about her own career and perspective on Indigenous issues in the media. Nakuset is the Director of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, Indigenous columnist for Citylife and creator of the TV show *Indigenous Power*.

This event is sponsored by Vanier's Indigenous Circle.

2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (A-103)

EXPERIMENTING WITH PERSPECTIVES

In his writing, **Kaie Kellough** situates the reader behind familiar eyes. At the same time, he creates an equally strong sense that those eyes don't see everything—they may harbor bias, and they may be prone to magnifying certain details while minimizing others. Perspectives, like the characters who possess them, are flawed and incomplete. Further, they shift with time and experience. As they shift, our characters develop, our narrative evolves, and our relationship with our readers deepens. Come and hear Kellough talk about these perspectives and his experimental novel, *Accordéon*.

4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (A-103)

WE'RE HERE, WE'RE QUEER: THE PERSONAL AS POLITICAL IN CANADIAN SHORT-FORM VIDEOS

Please join the **Queer Media Database Canada-Québec** and Vanier College's English Symposium at a screening of crucial works from the LGBTQ moving image archive. Various queer Canadian video works from the early 1990 to 2015, featuring filmmaker and educator **Colleen Ayoup** will be screened in a survey of shorts from animation to documentary, experimental, and hybrid forms. Learn about the police raids of Sex Garage in Montreal, and the protests that came after that ignited a community and a movement. Or be acquainted with the daring and topical work performance of artist 2Fik

and Two-Spirit filmmaker Thirza Cuthand. All works are in English or subtitled. Some mature subject matter. Curated by Alan Wong, Anne Golden, Julie Podmore, (John Abbott), Kim Simard (Dawson) and Jordan Arseneault.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10

8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (A-103)

MY JOURNEY IN POETRY: LIFE LESSONS

Poetry has played a prominent role in **Jason Selman's** life for many, many years. It has changed his life and what he thought was possible. Selman will talk about how he has learned a lot from his life as a poet, whether writing, performing or teaching. During his presentation he will share his experiences, his writing process, his philosophy with regard to poetry/spoken word and what he has learned. He will show how poetry is relevant, empowering and most of all fun. Selman has been active in the Montreal arts scene for more than 15 years as both a poet and a trumpet player. He is also part of the dynamic live hip hop group Nomadic Massive.

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (A-103)

MY PREGNANT BROTHER

In 2009 **Johanna Nutter** and Jeremy Taylor created the solo show *My Pregnant Brother* for the Montreal Fringe Festival. It won the Centaur Award for Best English Language Production and a subsequent MECCA and has since become an international hit in both English and French, playing across Canada, and in Belgium, France, and at London's SOHO theatre and the Pleasance Theatre in Edinburgh. The show traces Nutter's shifting caretaker identity while her transgender brother was coming to terms with his pregnancy.

12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (A-103)

SLAM POETRY: HISTORY AND PERFORMANCE

Incredibly talented Vanier students **Catherine Dorcas Boateng**, **Amilyon Oliver-Hall**, and **Ruchama Botat**, all competed in Speak Up Vanier 2017, Vanier's slam poetry competition, and will be performing today. The event will also feature a talk by **Deanna Smith** who has been involved in Montreal's spoken word scene since 2009 and will share her knowledge about what has happened in Montreal as well as the history of slam and spoken word in general.

2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (B-325)

COFFEE HOUSE

Join us in the intimate setting of the Theatre Room (B-325) as members of the Vanier community—teachers, staff, and students—are invited to read or perform their own original literary works. Refreshments will be provided. Everyone is welcome. Anyone interested in participating in the coffee house should contact April Lepitre at lepitre@vanier.college.qc.ca.

The English Symposium Committee would like to thank the Faculty of General Education for sponsoring this three-day event, and Printing Services, Student Services and Communications for assisting with various aspects of it. We would also like to thank Vanier's Indigenous Circle and the QWF Writer's-in-CEGEP Program for their support.