

TRANSFORMATIONS: A SYMPOSIUM

November 2-4, 2016

Vanier College Auditorium (A-103)

“What transforms this world is — knowledge...Nothing else can change anything in this world. Knowledge alone is capable of transforming the world, while at the same time leaving it exactly as it is. When you look at the world with knowledge, you realize that things are unchangeable and at the same time are constantly being transformed.”

— Yukio Mishima, *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*

At any given moment, someone--or something--somewhere in the world is undergoing a transformation. The transformation could be subtle, such as being inspired by a particular book. Or it could be dramatic, such as a nation's citizenry voting in a new government. To whatever degree they occur, transformations are inevitable in our lives.

Such changes can have an enormous impact on a person, a culture, an institution, or a society. Physically, they can alter the structure of a landscape. Mentally, they can affect the way people think, perceive, and dream. Spiritually, they can lead entire populations to turn to some divine being for guidance and hope. They can make life better. They can make it worse. Sometimes they are in our control. Oftentimes they are beyond it. It is difficult, then, to ignore the power of transformation in human life and its environment. It is ever-present, becoming part of our experiences, our histories, our stories.

Transformations, the theme and title of the 2016 edition of the Vanier College English Department's annual symposium, gathers speakers and performers from a wide range of artistic, scholarly, and professional fields. Please join us as we reflect on the significance of the transformations in our lives and cultures.

All events will take place in the auditorium (A-103), with the exception of the Coffee House (location TBA). A number of speakers will make copies of their work available for purchase at the Symposium. We look forward to seeing all of you there!

DAY 1: Wednesday, November 2, 2016

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

IN AN INSTANT!: SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD

This presentation will look at the uses of social media beyond simply sharing selfies and spreading gossip. **Allison Saunders** and **Arwen Fleming** will share their knowledge and expertise as professionals working in Concordia University's Communications Office, demonstrating how applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram can be effective tools for promotional and public relations purposes. They will also discuss some of the dangers that can arise when social media is used carelessly.

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

RETHINKING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE: TRANSFORMING *Z'ISLE*

Z'isle is a graphic novel about a zombie apocalypse in Montreal that is now being developed into a video game. What separates this zombie project from others of its kind is its focus on creating a racially and sexually diverse set of characters as a way of addressing the bigotry that has seeped into the gaming world in recent years. Thus, the production team behind *Z'isle* will speak not only to the process of adapting one medium into another, but also the political rationale driving their efforts in constructing this game.

12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. (A-103)
FILM: *SLAMNATION*

Live coverage with performances and judging in the annual 1996 National Poetry Slam held in Portland, Oregon. Over 120 poets from 27 teams gathered for this national conference of performance poetry.

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (A-103)
SAY SOMETHING!: USING PUBLIC SPEAKING TO GET OUT YOUR MESSAGE

Former CBC meteorologist-turned-entrepreneur **Geeta Nadkarni** will impart her experiences as a professional public speaker and media relations specialist, providing advice and techniques to those who have difficulty with articulating their ideas in a public setting while narrating the tale of her journey from her native India to Montreal, where she evolved from being one of the city's most popular local celebrities to one of its most successful independent businesswomen.

4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (A-103)
CONFABULATION: PERSONAL STORIES ABOUT TRANSFORMATION

Confabulation is Montreal's original, monthly all-true storytelling series. Created, produced and hosted by Vanier English professor **Matt Goldberg**, the show highlights the very best in true-life stories, told by the people that lived them. All stories are curated, workshoped, and true as we can tell them, using no props or gimmicks – just a storyteller and an audience. Normally, every instalment of the show is based around a theme. For this year's symposium, Confabulation, making its third appearance at Vanier, will be bringing in some favourites from the past six years, along with a few new stories. For more information on the show and its accompanying podcast, check out ConfabulationMontreal.com. OR .ca. We're patriotic that way.

DAY 2: Thursday, November 3, 2016

8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (A-103)
STORYTELLING IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF PODCASTING

Narrative audio is in the midst of an exciting revival and can provide a fresh avenue for the stories you want to tell. Join award-winning radio producers **Mira Burt-Wintonick** and **Cristal Duhaime** (CBC's *Love Me, WireTap*) as they offer insight into the art of storytelling and provide tips on how to make a career in podcasting.

10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (A-103)
WRITING REAL LIFE: A CAREER IN NON-FICTION

Journalist and essayist **Sarah Lolley** discusses her career as a non-fiction writer, highlighting how her streams of revenue have been transformed over time as well as how the different stages of her life have transformed the nature and content of her writing.

12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (A-103)
FIERCE FEMMES AND NOTORIOUS LIARS: PERFORMANCE AND READING

Celebrated local transgender artists of colour **Kai Cheng Thom** and **Kama La Mackerel** present readings from their solo work as well as a performance in tandem, addressing issues of race, class, and gender and sexual identity. **Co-sponsored by the Open Door Network.**

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (A-103)
SELF-EXILE: A PERFORMANCE

From a swamp in northern Ontario to the streets of Paris, **Nisha Coleman** uses music, recorded dialogue, soundscapes, and traditional storytelling to share a deeply personal tale involving mosquitoes, mental illness, and recurring self-exile. Told in her signature comedic style, Nisha tackles serious subjects with humour and grace. Be prepared to experience the emotional gamut, from flatulence to identity crises. Self-exile takes you on a quest away from and, eventually, back to the self.

4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (A-103)
METAMORPHOSIS: THE WAY THROUGH THE RABBIT HOLE

Writer and filmmaker **Eisha Marjara** explores the coming-of-age narrative and how it has shaped her film and writing work. In particular, she addresses the complicated intersection of gender and racial politics when it comes to growing up female, showing clips of her films and discussing her novel *Faerie*, the antithesis of a coming-of-age story, with a teenage protagonist who adamantly refuses to grow up.

DAY 3: Friday, November 4, 2016

8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (A-103)
INDIGENOUS STORIES OF THE CITY

In recent years, there has been a virtual explosion of Indigenous media on Turtle Island (a.k.a. Canada), whether they take the form of film, radio, TV, print, or the Internet. **Lachlan Madill**, host of *Urban Nations* on MATv, will share his stories as a member of both the Cree and Saulteaux Nations and discuss the current proliferation of Indigenous media projects, including his own show.

10 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (A-103)
EVOLVING THROUGH CRAFT AND ART

How does a student become an artist? How does an idea become an artwork? Thing-maker **Anders Bayly** will discuss their process and identity, covering an art practice that includes ceramics, music videos, and gender adventures. **Co-sponsored by the Women and Gender Studies Program.**

12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (A-103)
TRYING TO SURVIVE AS A COMEDY WRITER IN CANADA

Comedy writing is an efficient way to communicate. Though many of the delivery methods have changed thanks to technological transformations, content is still essential and writing is The Thing. Former CBC radio personality **Lorne Elliott** guides the audience through experiences as a writer and performer in the Canadian comedy scene and how he has seen it evolve over the years.

2 p.m. to 4 p.m. (TBA)
COFFEE HOUSE

Vanier students, faculty, and staff read from their own creative writing in a warm and welcoming environment. Refreshments served.