

**Eastern Horizons III:
Navigating Diversity
in Canadian Children's Literature**



St. John's, NL
October 12 - 14, 2006
Holiday Inn St. John's &
MacDonald Drive Elementary

Registration Information



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada

Program Information

Keynote Address & Opening Reception

"Many Stories, One Tale: Unity through Diversity"

Kit Pearson

Thursday, October 12th, 2006
7:30 pm

Every Canadian book for children, whether folktale, poetry, play, non-fiction, picture book or novel, reflects the cultural background of its creator. In this time of increasing and frightening cultural conflict, one way to encourage harmony may be for the young to read about and celebrate each other's differences. What unifies our multitudinous voices? Can all these different stories tell one tale? Kit Pearson will try to answer these questions through an exploration of many authors' writings, including her own.

This year, Eastern Horizons will be sponsoring a library in Muwanya Full Primary School in Malawi through CODE Canada. See the registration page for more information about how you can help.

Lunchtime Delights & Diversions

Friday, October 13th 1:15 - 1:45
Dzolali African Drum and Dance Troupe

Saturday, October 14th 1:15 - 1:45
Puppetry from Soup Theatre
"Big Klaus, Little Klaus"
Come early for the show; admission is free, but seating will be limited.

Granny Bates Children's Books will be our conference bookstore again this year - visit their table in the lobby to find books by visiting authors and illustrators.

Author Signings & Celebrations

Friday, October 13th 3:00 - 4:30
Chat with visiting authors and illustrators, and get your favourite book signed.

Saturday, October 14th 3:00 - 4:30
Join us as we celebrate the release of Joan Clark's newest book - *Snow* -- a picture book featuring illustrations by Kady MacDonald Denton.

Concurrent Sessions

Friday 9:00 - 10:00

F1: Don Aker

"We Are Our Stories: the Power of Personal Narrative"

"I alone have lived to tell the tale," Ishmael tells the reader in *Moby Dick*. As human beings, we all live to tell the tale, and few are more compelling than the real-life moments that continue to resonate in our memories. Teacher and award-winning author Don Aker guides participants through the process of selecting memories that resonate, and crafting them into powerful

personal narratives, a process that educators will want to share in their classrooms as they support students.

(Audience: Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F2: Linda Bailey

"Inside a Dog"

What does the world look like from inside a dog? From inside a twelve-year-old detective? From inside a hockey player who happens to be a pig? Linda Bailey will talk about where her fictional characters come from and how, as a writer, she gets "inside" points of view that are extremely different from her own ... or are they? Using characters such as Stevie Diamond, girl detective, and Stanley the partying dog as references, Linda

will discuss her sources of inspiration and tell how they translate into characters who breathe (and bark!) on the page.
(Audience: Prim / Elem / General Interest)

F3: Pam Harris & Kimberley S. Mills
"Borrowed Voices: The Use of Narrative in Public Library Programmes and Services"

This session will involve a dialogue with participants about appropriation of voices from other cultures. Some argue that it is not suitable for authors to write or tell about cultures that are not their own, while others feel that "borrowing voices" can help to promote understanding of other cultures. What are the implications of this debate for librarians gathering folktales and fiction about other cultures for their library collections? How do the same issues impact storytellers? Pam and Kimberley will tell some stories; provide tips for integrating books and story into library programming; and give a bibliography of places to begin.
(Audience: General Interest)

F4: Leslie Kennedy

"The Use of Picture Books in High School Classrooms: Not Just for Children Any More!"

Favorite childhood picture book? Instantly awash in nostalgia? Using picture books in the high school classroom can harness this power and create opportunity. Besides extended engagement, picture books address multiple intelligences and the multimodality familiar to teens. Visual support for comprehension, easy access to information beyond students' experience and depth of treatment can scaffold deeper learning. Aesthetic, emotional and intellectual engagement with many topics is possible. As times change technologically, politically and socially, the use of picture books to engage readers in critical analysis is under-utilized.
(Audience: Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F5: Stéphane Jorisch
(Session will be given in French)
"How a Book Comes to Be"

Stéphane's presentation will focus on the process of producing a book for market. A book is a product; authors and illustrators can take pleasure in creating something that will please a large audience without hindering their creative process. Having a repertoire of styles permits creators to approach a project with what suits it best. Style is how an artist thinks rather than what is on the paper. Stéphane will show how he approaches each project with support from sketches, storyboards and originals. He will talk

about traditional working methods, pen and ink, watercolour etc, and about digital applications.
(Audience: General Interest)

F6: Kevin Major
"Christmas Post Cards: Making the Most of the Mail"

Kevin will introduce his newest picture book, *Aunt Olga's Christmas Postcards*. He will discuss how the book could be a springboard for several curriculum-related activities -- writing, art, collecting, the study of Christmas traditions around the world -- making it a perfect focus for one of those frantic days leading up to Christmas.
(Audience: Prim / Elem / General Interest)

F7: Martine Leavitt
"Marketing Metaphor"

Martine will talk about how words saved her life. How a story decides how she spends her discretionary income. How literature for young people, including fantasy, can save the world. And why teachers and librarians have the most subversive jobs on the planet.
(Audience: Jr/ Sr High / General Interest)

F8: Susan Tooke
"Free as the Wind: Working from Afar with Zoe Lucas"

To create the illustrations for *Free as the Wind* by Jamie Bastedo, Susan worked with noted Sable Island resident Zoe Lucas, whose incredible knowledge of the island, and her magnificent photographic documentation of the horses and their environment opened Susan's eyes to the beauty of this isolated Eden in the North Atlantic. Original artwork will be presented.
(Audience: General Interest)

F9: Victoria Pennell
"They Came to Canada: A Look at Canada's Multicultural Heritage through Historical Fiction"

This presentation will examine recent Canadian historical fiction for children and young adults which deals with the many ethnic groups that have contributed to the mosaic making up Canada today.
(Audience: General Interest)

F10: Norene Smiley
"Celebrating Differences: Using Hackmatack Books as a Springboard to Understanding"
 The Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Awards is an Atlantic bilingual reading program aimed at youth in grades 4, 5 and 6. This session will suggest creative ways educators can use nominated books to encourage understanding of other cultures; discuss bias in society; discuss the

rights of people of all races, genders and ages in Canada and other parts of the world; and discuss different viewpoints and opinions.

(Audience: Elem / General Interest)

Friday 11:00 – 12:00

F11: Deirdre Baker

"The Familiar and the Strange: Using Children's Literature to Consider Race, Ethnicity and Multicultural Notions of What Makes a Story"

Fantasy offers a critical view of notions of race, ethnicity and narrative. Tolkien and Lewis mingle ethnicity, race and morality; in more recent fantasy, their attitudes are sometimes echoed, sometimes criticised. Even beyond these portraits of race, certain archetypal patterns dominate in epic fantasy, thanks to its Western mythological/religious roots. By looking at works in which writers present not just alternative relations of race and ethnicity, but also alternative narrative shapes, Deirdre encourages participants to think differently about what makes a story, and to understand that ways of making sense of the world can differ. Thus fantasy allows readers to examine deeper notions of "diversity".

(Audience: General Interest)

F12: Deborah Ellis

"War, Children and Literature"

A look at the types of war children are put into, and the ways literature can be used to further an understanding in the classroom of the impact of those wars. Deborah will look specifically at the war in Afghanistan, Israel-Palestine, and the war on AIDS in Southern Africa, using first-person stories and novel excerpts to examine how serious, disturbing topics can be discussed with students in such a way that they can relate international issues to their own lives.

(Audience: Elem / Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F13: Eugenie Fernandes

"Creatures and Words"

I -uh -ummm - I love you. I love YOU? I LOVE YOU!!#@! Sometimes it's not what you say - but how you say it. Of course - it really *does* matter *what* you say. Words are very powerful. They can help you - and hurt you. Eugenie will entertain participants with her new, controversial story about the power of words. People build personalities and rocket ships and cultures with words - and bridges between cultures, between people and creatures. Creatures? Eugenie will show how she creates creatures with baker's clay - after all, creatures are part of our cultural diversity.

(Audience: Prim / Elem)

F14: James Heneghan

"KIDLIT in the 21st Century: Please, Spare Me the Details!"

James makes much use of his Irish background in his work as a writer of books for young people. As well, he tries to keep up with what is happening in the world of children's literature and wonders if much of it is just too darned grim.

(Audience: Jr/ Sr High / General Interest)

F15: Tomson Highway

"Fun with Reading"

Tomson will read from his books *Caribou Song* and *Fox on the Ice*, in both Cree and English. He will then talk about where the stories came from culturally and historically, and about the Cree language and where THAT comes from. He will focus on the value of multi-lingualism and how that transforms a human life in the most awesome, magical, powerful way possible. He believes that early childhood is where, and when, one starts to be multi-lingual by acquiring the "muscles" -- in the tongue, brain, and spirit -- to absorb language much like a musician absorbs music. There will be time for questions.

(Audience: Prim / Elem / General Interest)

F16: Vivian Howard & Lisa Doucet

"IBBY Canada: Building Global Bridges Through Children's Books"

This session will describe the history of IBBY (the International Board on Books for Young People), a non-profit organization that encourages peace and cultural understanding through children's books. It will focus on some specific initiatives promoting exchange of quality children's literature between Canada and the international community. Special attention will be given to a project in which grade 6 students from Canada are paired with counterparts in various schools in South Africa, and get to know each other through the shared experience of writing endings to four story starters. The presentation will assess the success of this project and introduce other initiatives to reach out globally through children's books.

(Audience: Prim / Elem / Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F17: Janet McNaughton

"The Case for Sex in Young Adult Literature"

Young adult novels dealing with sex often encounter censorship. Janet will argue that the young adult novel is one of the most appropriate places for young people to learn about sexuality, explore ideas about sex, and begin to understand what sorts of relationships they might want to have, whether the readers are sexually active yet or not. Examples of good YA novels that deal

with sex, sexual orientation and gender roles will be discussed.

(Audience: Jr/Sr High)

F18: Tololwa Mollel

"Story to Stage"

In this session, Tololwa will share a story he has adapted into a play, and excerpts from the play. He will demonstrate differences and similarities between his writing process as a story writer or teller and as a dramatist, and how a play and a story creatively serve each other. Through lively storytelling, dramatic presentation, audience participation and overheads, Tololwa will highlight some important things that teachers can encourage or remind students to bear in mind in order to achieve effective story making, whether for a play or not.

(Audience: Elem / General Interest)

F19: Paul Morin

"Why Myth Matters"

Paul will look at the importance of myths in defining culture. Using photos and videos taken during his travels researching the children's books he has illustrated, Paul will weave stories of his research trips and illustrate the importance of myth in preserving cultural diversity. He will show the different ways cultures integrate symbols and stories as a means of teaching children their way of life and beliefs. Paul will bring instruments and artifacts to do interactive music. This multi-media presentation also covers the development of Paul's creative process and integrates original music embodying the spirit of the cultures on which his books are based.

(Audience: Elem / Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F20: Vivian Howard

"Teens and Pleasure Reading: A Critical Assessment from Nova Scotia"

This paper reports on the first phase of a two-part research study into the role of recreational reading in the lives of Nova Scotia teenagers. Phase one, a quantitative survey, explores a range of issues relevant to an understanding of teen information-seeking behaviour in their selection of pleasure reading materials and provides context for the second phase of this study, which will give a critical exploration of that behaviour. Phase two, currently underway, uses qualitative methodology (focus groups and interviews) to illuminate findings from the preliminary survey research.

(Audience: Jr/Sr High)

F21: C. Garth Brooks

"Building Bridges to Global Education"

In many parts of the developing world, the need for global assistance is ongoing and urgent.

Project Love, a global education program developed by CODE Canada, provides an opportunity for Canadian students and educators to act in a concrete way to provide schools in the developing world with basic school supplies.

(Audience: General Interest)

*Friday - 2:00 - 3:00 / 3:30**

F22: Kevin Hehir

"Teaching Poetry is Serious Play: using simple technologies to create talking poetry anthologies"

Teachers often talk abstractly about "voice" in poetry but what if students could really hear the voice of Langston Hughes reading a poem he wrote in high school? Or, what if Robert Frost stopped by on a snowy afternoon with a Jamaican Dub poet to read a few poems? Resources for on-line sound files can give students access to the wide range of the global, historical and contemporary poetries available, from both text-based and oral traditions. Kevin will introduce a simple (and free!) way to record and present a digital poetry anthology representing the diversity of voices in the classroom. Once students hear poets reading their work, they'll create their own talking books.

(Audience: Sr High / General Interest)

F23: Susan Juby

"The Serious Role of Funny Books"

It has been said that "comedy deals with that portion of our suffering that is exempt from tragedy." This goes to the heart of the importance and effectiveness of funny books for all teenagers, and especially for those who are experiencing difficulties. Teenagers are handed countless disappointments as they emerge from childhood into adulthood, including loneliness, confusion, fitting in or not fitting in, finding out why they are and maybe being a bit concerned at the discovery. This presentation traces one writer's personal transformation from bookish child into sullen, smoking, juvenile delinquent, and looks at the role funny books played in turning things around.

(Audience: Jr/ Sr High / General Interest)

F24: Janet McNaughton

"Introducing *The Raintree Rebellion*"

Janet will introduce her new novel, *The Raintree Rebellion*, discuss its relationship to *The Secret Under My Skin* and explore its central themes.

(Audience: Sr High / General Interest)

F25: Ange Zhang

"Red Land Yellow River, and Beyond"

Ange will focus on his experiences in China and Canada. He will tell stories from his autobiography *Red Land Yellow River*, and what happened after the story from the book. He will also touch upon how he continued his artistic career in Canada. He will show images from his work and life: personal photos, theatre designs, paintings, drawings and book illustrations. (Audience: Elem / Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F26: Helen Porter

"Validating Newfoundland and Labrador in the Provincial Literature Curriculum"

Helen has long contended that it is essential to include and promote Newfoundland and Labrador's literature in the provincial curriculum. A student in the 1940's, she never thought Newfoundland an authentic place because it didn't appear in any of the fiction or poetry she read. It was as though the country as it was then didn't exist. There's an abundance of literature from Newfoundland suitable for use in schools today. Helen will elaborate on this theme. (Audience: Sr High / General Interest)

F27*: Rachna Gilmore

"Building Bridges through Stories - *Mina's Spring of Colors; A Group of One; 'The Sower of Tales'*"

Rachna will offer an inside glimpse of the creation of her critically acclaimed children's novels *Mina's Spring of Colours* and *A Group of One*. Both feature Canadian children of Indian heritage, and bear witness to our evolving Canadian ethos. The books' historical contexts will be examined, as well as their specific and universal themes. Classroom activities will be suggested to demonstrate how particular cultural experiences may be woven into the larger cultural tapestries of society. The importance of telling our tales, and some creative writing exercises will also be presented through Rachna's fantasy novel *The Sower of Tales*. (Audience: Elem / Jr High)

F28*: Myrtis Guy

"Using Children's Literature to Develop Voice in Student Writing"

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

This session will examine how the rich, compelling language in selected children's literature (fiction and non-fiction) can help students develop expressive and engaging language in their own writing. Participants will leave with a list of children's literature and strategies to develop voice in student writing. (Audience: Prim / Elem)

F29*: Roberta F. Hammett

"Navigating Gender Myths of Literacy and Learning"

This presentation will review the myths that Roberta and her co-researcher, Dr. Kathy Sanford, consider to underlie the current moral panic about boys' achievement in school and, in particular, their scores on international literacy tests. It will share various perspectives on the issues, and will suggest critical projects that explore how literacy learning becomes gendered and masculine identities constructed in schools, media, and society at large. (Audience: Prim / Elem / Jr/Sr High / General Interest)

F30*: Susan Ryan

"Using Literature to Engage Primary School Children in Mathematical Reasoning"

Participants will have the opportunity to explore how selected books are connected to the primary mathematics curriculum and how the books can be used to engage children in mathematical reasoning. (Audience: Primary)

F31*: Joyce Bainbridge, Ingrid Johnston & Lynne Wiltse

"Pre-service Teachers Negotiating Identity through Multicultural Picture Books"

This presentation will focus on pre-service teachers' perspectives and understandings of notions of Canadian diversity. The researchers conducted a study with pre-service teachers at two universities to raise awareness of Canadian identity. The study found that participants were generally unfamiliar with Canadian children's literature and had limited understandings of Canadian identity and multiculturalism. The researchers question how to encourage pre-service teachers to work with Canadian picture books in their classrooms, and challenge their own sense of self and others as they relate to the culturally diverse students in their classrooms. (Audience: General Interest)

Saturday 9:00 - 10:00

S1: Don Aker (see F1)

S2: Eugenie Fernandes (see F13)

S3: Tomson Highway (see F15)

S4: Susan Tooke & Janet McNaughton
"All About Jack: Presenting *Brave Jack and the Unicorn*"

Susan and Janet will talk about their picture book *Brave Jack and the Unicorn*, and how a picture book is put together. They will discuss where ideas for the story and illustrations came from, and give ideas about using the book in the classroom.

(Audience: Prim / Elem / Jr. High)

S5: Kit Pearson
"Hiding and Seeking: A Personal Examination of the Importance of Imagination"

For Kit, one of the joys of writing fiction is making things up and inhabiting other characters the way she constantly did as a child. But why do modern children no longer play imaginary games to the extent that many of their elders did? Is pretending a vital part of childhood or an unhealthy escape from reality? Kit will explore this issue in her childhood and books, especially in *Awake and Dreaming* and in "A Perfect Gentle Knight," her work-in-progress.

(Audience: Elem / Jr High)

S6: Ange Zhang (see F25)

Saturday 11:00 - 12:00

S7: Linda Bailey (see F2)

S8: James Heneghan (see F14)

S9: Stéphane Jorisch (see F5)
 (Session will be given in English)

S10: Susan Juby (see F23)

S11: Martine Leavitt (see F7)

S12: Paul Morin (see F19)

*Saturday 2:00 - 3:00 / 3:30**

S13: Deborah Ellis (see F12)

S14: Rachna Gilmore
"Connecting Our Stories - The *Gita Trilogy* and *Grandpa's Clock*"

Rachna will share some of the stories behind the creation of her popular GITA books (*Lights for Gita, A Gift for Gita*) and explore their universal themes to discuss the wider contexts of these tales. She will suggest classroom activities that demonstrate how specific cultural experiences may be woven into the wider cultural framework

of society. *Grandpa's Clock*, her new picture book, which has a Maritime origin, will be presented. (Audience: Prim / Elem)

S15: Tololwa Mollel (see F18)

S16: Veselina Tomova
"Maggie and Hero - The Making of a Truly Local Children's Book"

Veselina will describe her latest book in which Maggie, a Labrador puppy, is befriended by Hero, a Newfoundland dog, and learns to turn a disastrous day into a triumph. Veselina's experience as a new Canadian, and her struggle to establish herself in her new home helped tell the story of Maggie and her desire for acceptance and belonging. Written by Margaret O'Brien, an Irish citizen, and illustrated by Veselina, born in Bulgaria and educated in Germany, the book is a fine example of multicultural collaboration.

(Audience: Prim / General Interest)

S17: Susan Tooke
"Presenting Atlantic Canada"

Through illustration, Susan has become better acquainted with our region. She will give an overview of her process researching and creating five picture books based in Atlantic Canada. (Audience: General Interest)

S18*: Myrtis Guy
"Using Children's Literature to Develop Critical Literacy"

This session will examine the social and cultural diversity in selected children's literature (fiction and non-fiction) to help students develop their critical thinking skills. Participants will leave with a list of children's literature and strategies. (Audience: Prim / Elem)

S19*: Anne Burke
"Exploring Picture Books through Drama for Language Development"

This hands-on workshop will explore how Drama may be used to explore the narrative storylines and character development in children's picture books. There will be an exploration of introductory drama techniques such as tableau, character - in-role and choral speaking and of language through a number of representations and modes. (Audience: Preschool / Prim)

