

NEWS RELEASE

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Kamal Parmar appointed as City of Nanaimo Poet Laureate

Activating poetry as a tool for healing is among Laureate's aims

Summary

The City of Nanaimo is pleased to announce Kamal Parmar as its Poet Laureate. She has been appointed by City Council for a two-year term which begins on August 1, 2021.

Kamal is a Nanaimo-based poet and writer who has been passionately engaged with writing from a very early age. She experiments often with Haiku poetry and also with creative non-fiction. Her poems explore a range of topics, from childhood recollections of her home in India, to the beauty of the Canadian prairies, to her personal journey, alongside her mother, through Alzheimer's. Kamal's work has been published in the UK, Canada and India. Her books include 'Still Waters' (2020), 'Letters to a Son and a Daughter' (2019), 'In the Rising Mist' (2013), 'Fleeting Shadows' (2010), and 'Filigree and Flint' (1997).

Kamal has been involved in the life of the cultural community in Nanaimo for many years. She has frequently presented poems at venues across Vancouver Island, was involved with the City of Nanaimo's Culture Committee, and more recently with Nanaimo Arts Council. She is an active member of several provincial and national writers' organizations and guilds. Currently, she is an Associate member of the League of Canadian Poets, and is a Board member of the Federation of BC Writers. She is also a member of Haiku Canada and of The Writers Union of Canada and the Canadian Authors Association. She has been involved with the Ontario Poetry Society.

As Poet Laureate, Kamal aims to raise the profile of poetry in Nanaimo and activate poetry as a tool for healing and increased connection between people of all ages. She says that she "firmly believes that each of us has some subtle form of poetry in us, which needs to be explored."

Past City of Nanaimo Poet Laureates include Tina Biello and Naomi Beth Wakan. On the occasion of her appointment to the role of Poet Laureate, Kamal Parmar offers a poem called 'Summer Is Passing'

Sky, not a deep blue but mottled with cloud.

Every time I look, they change from wispy silver to curling grey.

A week back, a burnt-orange sun hung in the coppery bowl of the sky

and the evening star, late coming.

The sea shimmered like lapis lazuli,

now ruffled, strong waves toss,

fill the air with spray that tickles my cheek.

The waning pulse of the day,

as darkness closes in, much before lights on.

The church bell tolls for evening vespers.

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Summer passes.

The breeze, empty of honeysuckle

claps through arbutus and maple leaves,

rises and falls among the willow.

No longer is there the mundane crescendo of the honey-bee

nor the rasp of crickets or cicadas,

echoing from overgrown bramble bush.

Feathery dandelions dance in the breeze,

children shout and run, chasing butterflies.

as summer is passing—

and children won't let go.

In dark lakes and moors, ringed with oak and willow,

the swallow and skylark stop and listen

to the first drizzle of rain.

The air laced with juniper.

This is my humble tribute to the wonderful City of Nanaimo, whose breathtaking beauty touches the heart and soul of every resident. Thank you, Nanaimo.---Kamal

Strategic Link: This initiative links to the City's commitment to make arts and culture visible and accessible. It's one of the ways the City is supporting arts, culture and recreation as an integral part of everyday life.

Key Points

- Kamal Parmar has been appointed as Poet Laureate for a term of two years, beginning on August 1, 2021.
- As Poet Laureate, Kamal aims to raise the profile of poetry in Nanaimo and activate poetry as a tool for healing and increased connection between people of all ages.

Quotes

"I'm delighted to welcome Kamal Parmar as the City's Poet Laureate for the next two years. Poetry can inspire anyone to learn and grow, and to observe the world around us with new eyes. With her focus on healing, Ms. Parmar will be a welcome voice in the community over the coming seasons."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- The City of Nanaimo's Poet Laureate contributes to public engagement with poetry and literature, highlighting the work of many local poets and writers.

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