

NEWS RELEASE

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New poem unveiled on Nanaimo's Poetry Walk

Installment outside The Port Theatre marks the end of Kamal Parmar's term as the City's poet laureate

Summary

To honour Kamal Parmar's term as the City of Nanaimo's poet laureate, a new addition to the City's Poetry Walk will be unveiled to recognize Kamal's work as literary ambassador for the City. A poem by Kamal is featured on the sidewalk directly outside the main entrance to The Port Theatre.

Referred to as the Poetry Walk, poems written by outgoing poet laureates are displayed for all to enjoy in this accessible and well-trodden path. Kamal Parmar's contribution marks the third sidewalk stone displaying poetry outside of The Port Theatre. The first installment was unveiled in 2017, showcasing the poetry of Nanaimo's inaugural poet laureate, Naomi Beth Wakan. The second stone was added in 2019, displaying a poem by outgoing poet laureate, Tina Biello. The Poetry Walk reflects Nanaimo's appreciation of poetry and the literary arts and highlights the success of the Poet Laureate Program.

Kamal Parmar's tenure as the City's poet laureate was extended due to the pandemic and she has served as the City's literary ambassador from 2021 until summer 2024. In this role, Kamal has captivated and inspired, sharing her passion for poetry with audiences of all ages. Kamal has hosted countless free poetry events and readings for communities across Vancouver Island. In addition to these opportunities, Kamal has mentored local youth, served as a judge in poetry competitions and cultural panels and collaborated with the City of Nanaimo in realizing several creative poetry projects seen throughout the city. One such example was an innovative project called Hidden Messages, which brought poetry to city paths, trails and walkways. When it rained or the pathway became wet, poetry would appear in unexpected ways and unexpected places.

Through her term as poet laureate, Kamal's passion and dedication has been undeniable. Her contributions to the community while serving as poet laureate will continue to be felt for many years to come - a deserving legacy for an extraordinary poet.

The City of Nanaimo is currently inviting applications for the next poet laureate. The deadline for applications is Monday, September 16 by midnight PST. More information on the Poet Laureate Program can be found on the [City's website](#).

Strategic Link: The Poet Laureate Program aligns with the goals of the City of Nanaimo's City Plan: Nanaimo Reimagined by recognizing culture as a significant contributor to the city's quality of life and promoting the role that culture and the creative sector play in the community with respect to community identity and quality of life.

Key Points

- As local poet Kamal Parmar's term as the City of Nanaimo's poet laureate comes to a close, a new addition to the City's Poetry Walk is being unveiled in honour of Kamal's work as literary ambassador for the City. A poem by Kamal is featured on the sidewalk directly outside the main entrance to The Port Theatre.
- Kamal Parmar's tenure as the City's poet laureate was extended due to the pandemic; she has served as the City's literary ambassador from 2021 until summer 2024.
- The City of Nanaimo is currently inviting applications for the next poet laureate. The deadline for applications is Monday, September 16 by midnight PST.

Quotes

"The City's Poet Laureate Program nurtures an appreciation for the literary arts that has thoroughly benefited our community, providing opportunities for people of all ages to engage and learn. We sincerely thank Kamal for her passionate commitment to her role as poet laureate for our city and for her many wonderful contributions as ambassador for poetry and the written word."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"As I bow out of my role, all I can say is that I will always remember these wonderful times connecting with our community as one of my most cherished memories of my life. Three years have flown by. Time is fleeting, it waits for no one. Being a literary ambassador for the lovely people of Nanaimo has been a great learning experience and has left an indelible impression on my mind. I feel that poetry is ingrained in all of us, we just need to look inwards. Poetry touches our souls, expressing complex emotions and ideas in relatable ways. It fosters a sense of community and shared purpose. I would like to convey my best wishes and good luck to the incoming poet laureate. May your time be filled with excitement and fun, as mine was."

Kamal Parmar
Poet Laureate

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