



**Canadian Association for
Commonwealth Literature and
Language Studies (CACLALS)**

Conference Program 2016

**May 28-30, 2016
University of Calgary, Calgary AB**

Parallel sessions are in Science Theatres 027A and Social Sciences 06

Keynote Address by Christopher Lee (May 28) is in Science Theatres 128

Keynote Address by Aritha van Herk (May 28) is in Science Theatres 129

Plenary Address with Christine Bold (May 28) is in Science Theatres 140

Aboriginal Roundtable (May 29) is in Senate Room, Hotel Alma

CACLALS Annual General Meeting (May 30) is in Social Sciences 06

Abstracts appear in alphabetical order at the end of the program.

CACLALS acknowledges that the location of Congress 2016 at the University of Calgary is situated in Treaty Seven territory, the traditional ancestral lands of the Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, Tsuu T'ina, and Nakoda (Stoney).



SATURDAY, MAY 28TH

9:30-10:30

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr. Christopher Lee (UBC) with CCLA ST140
Passages of Community in Chinese Canadian Writing

About the Keynote: There is no concept as central - and as fraught - as “community” in Asian Canadian critique. Various depicted as an idealized counter-public, an insulated subculture, or a utopian social formation, contemporary articulations of community usually unfold within and against discourses of citizenship, equality, and belonging proffered by liberal multiculturalism, thereby reinforcing its nationalist frameworks. Paul Yee’s recent novel *A Superior Man*, set in the colonial contact zone of the West Coast around the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1885, attempts to displace markers of national belonging by depicting the transnational lifeworld of Chinese migrants. This talk explores how Yee conveys the “passing” nature of community and subjectivity while offering an alternative “passage” for contemporary attempts to rethink the meaning of Chinese and Asian Canadian identity.

CACLALS acknowledges the generous support of this address by the Interdisciplinary Sessions Fund of CFHSS.

10:30-11:00 BREAK

11:00-12 NOON

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr. Aritha van Herk (Calgary) with ACQL/ALCQ ST 129
Erasure and Embarrassment, Plenty and Paucity

About the Keynote: This lecture explores the role of art and the challenges for artists in a petro- and resource-rich/poor, boom/bust region: does Alberta's (and Canada's) prosperity, good fortune, and relative ease prescribe forgetfulness until economic decline again makes art socially imperative? Or does the zeitgeist insist on a critique of that wealth, and a subsequent literature of repudiation that benefits from the very resources that it spurns? Does Alberta itself demonstrate a lack rather than an urgent sense of cultural protocol and urgency? And does that focus swing with the economic times? Overall, the lecture will invite delegates to consider the rapprochement between social engagement and the economies of place as a key concern for our current moment, one that instigates urgent questions that continue to transform art, literature, and culture in Canada.

CACLALS acknowledges the generous support of this address by the Interdisciplinary Sessions Fund of CFHSS.

12:00-1:30 CACLALS EXECUTIVE MEETING — LUNCH PROVIDED ST 27A

1:30-3:00

SESSION #1: COSMOPOLITAN WRITING AND READING PRACTICES I SS 06

Chair: Laura Moss (British Columbia)

1. Heike Harting (Montreal): Narrating Afropolitan Communities in Emmanuel Dongala's *Little Boys Come from the Stars* and Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*
2. John C. Ball (New Brunswick): Oil and Water: Energy, Ecology, and Equivalency in Will Ferguson's *419*
3. Mark McCutcheon (Athabasca): Dionne Brand's Literary Production and Afro-Futurist Theory

SESSION #2: POLITICS AND COMMUNITY ST 027A

Chair: Diana Brydon (Manitoba)

1. Brenna Clarke Gray (Douglas): Troubling Canadian Community in Brian K. Vaughn's *We Stand on Guard*
2. Olga Krochak Sulkin (Calgary): The Promise of Global Labour and Communities of Shared Experience: The Case of Migrant Workers in the West
3. Stephanie Oliver (Western): "Stinking as Thinking": The Olfactory Politics of Warren Cariou's "Tarhands: A Messy Manifesto"

3:00-3:15 BREAK

3:30-5 PM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Dr. Christine Bold (Guelph) with ACCUTE ST 140
Indigenous Modernities: From Wild West to Vaudeville

About the Plenary: This presentation addresses the relationship between indigenous and settler communities in ways that will reshape our sense of colonial and communal history and culture. Analyzing the early development of mass popular culture in the early twentieth century, and specifically focussing on the populist entertainment form of Vaudeville shows, Dr. Bold's plenary will move from Canada, to the US, to Europe, to argue that "Indigeneity hid[es] in plain sight at the heart of modernity."

CACLALS acknowledges the generous support of this address by the Interdisciplinary Sessions Fund of CFHSS.

6:30 CACLALS ANNUAL DINNER

Held at a family-run Indian restaurant close to campus:

MAURYA Restaurant, 1204 Kensington Ave. NW phone: 403-270-3133

(Take the LRT to the Sunnyside Station; the restaurant is about a 5 minute walk down 10th Street and along Kensington Ave.)

SUNDAY, MAY 29th

9:00-10:15 (SMD 402)

SESSION #3: COSMOPOLITAN WRITING AND READING PRACTICES II SS 06

Chair: Terri Tomsky (Alberta)

1. Sylvia Terzian (St. Jerome's): Transnational Consciousness and Literary Cosmopolitanism: Arab-Canadian Literature in the Global Moment
2. Laura Moss (UBC): How Do Stories Travel?: Confronting Expectations in Global Literature
3. Henghameh Saroukhani (St. Mary's): The Problem of Revelatory Cosmopolitanism in Andrea Levy's *Small Island*

SESSION #4: SOUTH-ASIAN WRITING

ST 027A

Chair: Mariam Pirbhai (Wilfrid Laurier)

1. Asma Sayed (Grant MacEwan): Postcolonial Mothering in Anita Rau Badami's *Tamarind Mem*
2. Maryam Mirza (Liège): Representing Gendered Domestic Servitude in the South Asian Diaspora: A Study of Contemporary Fiction by Women Writers
3. Shazia Rahman (Western Illinois): Nuclear Warfare and Human/Nonhuman relations in a contemporary Pakistani novel

BREAK 10:15 - 10:45

10:45-12 NOON

SESSION 5: COMMUNITIES OF WITNESS AND INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES SS 06

Chair: Jasmine Spencer (British Columbia)

1. Louise Saldana (Douglas College): A Different Call for a Different Action: Representations of Residential Schools in Picturebooks Written in Canada
2. Brenda Vellino (Carleton): Settler Witnessing Alongside Indigenous Communities and Memorial Spaces
3. Michael Minor (Manitoba): Energy and the Sacred: Circling in the poetry of Halfe and Mercredi

SESSION #6: GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION PRIZE

SS 06

1. Chigbo Arthur Anyaduba (Manitoba): Allegories of Colonial Genocide and the Production of Civil Communities: Colonial Education in Ngugi's *In the House of the Interpreter* and Fontaine's *Broken Mirror*
2. Jason Sunder (Western): Narratology and Human-Animal Conflict in Tania James' *The Tusk that did the Damage*

3. Christina Turner (Toronto): Reanimating Atlantic Modernity: John Steffler's *The Afterlife of George Cartwright* and the Ethics of History

12:00-1:30 LUNCH BREAK

1:30-3:30

**16th ANNUAL ABORIGINAL ROUNDTABLE with ILSA SENATE ROOM, HOTEL ALMA
(other side of campus: allow 10+ minutes to walk there)**

Decolonial Solidarities and the Work of Sharron Proulx-Turner: A Roundtable Discussion

The session is organized and envisioned by literary scholars Aruna Srivastava, Keavy Martin, and Sophie McCall, The session will be emceed by Tlicho writer and filmmaker Richard Van Camp, widely renowned for his dynamic speaking engagements, his humour, and his profound sensitivity to matters at the heart of this discussion. Speakers include Joanne Arnott, David Bateman, Susan Briscoe, Weyman Chan, Marilyn Dumont, Hiromi Goto, Tasha Hubbard, Larissa Lai, Beverly Little Thunder, Ashok Mathur, Sharanpal Ruprai, Gregory Scofield, Aruna Srivastava

CACLALS acknowledges the generous support of this Roundtable by the Interdisciplinary Fund of CFHSS.

5:00 - 7:00 PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION Energy, Environment and Experiential Learning (EEEL) Building

MONDAY, MAY 30th

9:00-10:30

SESSION #7: SUSTAINABILITY AND INDIGENOUS STORYTELLING SS 06

Chair: Olga Krochak Sulkin (Calgary)

1. Sarah Henzi (McGill): From Tar Sands to Zombies: Indigenous Science Fiction and Sustainability
2. Margery Fee (UBC): Clashing or Interacting? Indigenous Communities and Communities of Scholars: The Case of Polar Bear Science

SESSION #8: ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITIES I ST 027A

Chair: Maryam Mirza (Liège)

1. Shazia Sadaf (Western): Understanding Tribal Community Codes in the Age of Terror: Jamil Ahmad's *The Wandering Falcon*
2. Mariam Pirbhai (Wilfrid Laurier): A Pan-American Hydro-Mythopoeitics: Indo-Caribbean Diasporic Literature and its 'Riverine' Mythologies

10:30-10:45 BREAK

10:45-12:00

SESSION #9: RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY SS 06

Chair: John Ball (New Brunswick)

1. Peter Forestell (Calgary): Peter Wildeblood and the "Glandular Cases": Transphobia and Post-War Gay Identity Formation
2. Sarah Kent (Calgary): Alienated by Affect: Hate, Shame, and Disgust in Joan Riley's *The Unbelonging*
3. Kathleen Fernando (Kenyon): Inhospitable Nation: Violence, Maternal Desire, and Healing in *Anil's Ghost*

SESSION #10: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ETHICS ST 027A

1. Jane Chamberlin (Calgary): Metafictional Empathy in Camilla Gibb's *The Beauty of Humanity Movement: Altering Affect During the Syrian Refugee Crisis*
2. Clara Joseph (Calgary): Indian Christians Run "Amok" in the 16th Century
3. Nora Foster Stovel (Alberta): "Ivory Tower or Grass Roots?" A Creative Writer's Commitment to Socio-Political Equality and Diversity as Revealed in the Essays of Margaret Laurence

12:00-1:00 LUNCH BREAK

1:00-2:15

SESSION #11: ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITIES II ST 027A

1. Paulomi Chakraborty (IIT Bombay) Social Work, Relief Camps, and the Mahatma in Noakhali 1946: Negotiating Communities, Fashioning Selves in Ashoka Gupta's *In the Path of Service*
2. Carl Watts (Queen's): Consuming Beyond Community: Timothy Taylor's Food Writing
3. Sarah D'Adamo (McMaster): Institutional Communities: World Literature v the Commonwealth

SESSION #12: PETROMODERNITY AND THE MEDIUM (member-organized panel) SS 06

Michael Truscello (Mount Royal), Jon Gordon (Alberta), Warren Cariou (Manitoba)

This panel provides three perspectives on petroleum as a defining medium of modernity, with a particular focus on the material and infrastructural elements of the medium. Michael Truscello's presentation articulates a theoretical perspective on petroleum as a key element of media infrastructure, even within contemporary contexts of digital representation and current theories of speed and immediacy. Jon Gordon and Warren Cariou's joint presentation moves from the theoretical to a deeply material engagement with petroleum as a medium of visual representation. A key argument of the paper is the reconfiguration of bitumen as a medicine in Cree/Métis contexts, which leads to an alternative Indigenous idea of the petro-medium as an active, relational substance with its own potential agency.

2:15-2:30 BREAK

2:45-4:00 P.M.

SESSION #13: INDIGENOUS FUTURITY SS 06

1. Suzette Mayr (Calgary): "This Shit House": The Uncanny House in Daniel David Moses' *Big Buck City*

2. Diana Brydon (Manitoba): Imagining Community Resurgence: Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song* revises a West Before and After 'the West'

SESSION #14: THE POLITICS OF MOURNING ST027

Chair: Veronica Thompson (Athabasca)

1. Chandrima Chakraborty (McMaster): Model Mourning in Eisha Marjara's *Desperately Seeking Helen*

2. Breanna Keeler (Ottawa): Community, mourning, and unconventional translation in Anne Carson's *Nox*: Confronting the paradox of mourning

4:15-5:30

CACLALS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SS 06

6:00 - 9:00 LITERARY READING LAST DEFENCE LOUNGE, MACEWAN STUDENT CENTRE

Readings by Shani Mootoo, Greg Scofield, Christian Bök and others. Followed by open mic. Co-sponsored with ACQL and hosted by Larissa Lai, Ryan Fitzpatrick and Deanna Fong. Food can be ordered at the Last Defence Lounge.

Conference Abstracts

Chigbo Arthur Anyaduba (Manitoba): Allegories of Colonial Genocide and the Production of Civil Communities: Colonial Education in Ngugi's *In the House of the Interpreter* and Fontaine's *Broken Mirror*

The proposed presentation will examine representations of colonial boarding schools in Kenya and Canada. My assumption is that the very nature of colonial schooling is not only genocidal but also that colonial schools as depicted in selected memoirs by Ngugi and Fontaine produced a traumatised community of civil people.

John C. Ball (New Brunswick): Oil and Water: Energy, Ecology, and Equivalency in Will Ferguson's *419*

Ferguson's *419* is a tale of two oil cities, Calgary and Lagos, whose theme of retributive justice invites questions about equivalencies and imbalances between Canadian and Nigerian characters and environments. Contrasting representations of Niger Delta vs. tar-sands oil, and of the relative opportunities, risks, and autonomies of protagonists, frame a transnational encounter that is, like oil and water, mutually contaminating and preclusive of productive mixture.

Diana Brydon (Manitoba): Imagining Community Resurgence: Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song* revisions a West Before and After 'the West'

Employing contemporary indigenous and decolonizing theory, this paper reads Lee Maracle's *Celia's Song* as an assertion of indigenous autonomy and community, which works through its revisioning of Western categories of time/space relations, knowledge production, and what counts as the real.

Chandrima Chakraborty (McMaster): Model Mourning in Eisha Marjara's *Desperately Seeking Helen*

The 1985 Air India bombings and its aftermath represent a clear moment of crisis in Canadian multiculturalism. While the Canadian state urges the Indo-Canadian community to "move on" in the aftermath of this "aberrant" event, *Desperately Seeking Helen* demonstrates the potential to create political community through ongoing, shared grief.

Paulomi Chakraborty (IIT Bombay): Social Work, Relief Camps, and the Mahatma in Noakhali 1946: Negotiating Communities, Fashioning Selves in Ashoka Gupta's *In the Path of Service*

I read in this paper the negotiations with forms of 'community' in Ashoka Gupta's account of her days in Noakhali relief camps, set up after 1946 riots, and her experience of working with M.K. Gandhi, in her memoir, *In the Path of Service: Memories of a Changing Century* (2005).

Jane Chamberlin (Calgary): Metafictional Empathy in Camilla Gibb's *The Beauty of Humanity Movement: Altering Affect During the Syrian Refugee Crisis*

Camilla Gibb's novel, *The Beauty of Humanity Movement*, helps readers consider the role of empathy in the Syrian refugee crisis. Using Judith Butler's idea of the precarious life and Shameem Black's vision of the crowded self, we can understand Gibb's conception of empathy as an imperfect – but practical – agent of change.

Brenna Clarke Gray (Douglas): Troubling Canadian Community in Brian K. Vaughn's *We Stand on Guard*

The premise of Brian K. Vaughn's six-issue comic arc, *We Stand on Guard*, is an old chestnut of Canada-US relations: 200 years in the future, Canada has been invaded by the US, and scrappy Canadian freedom fighters are fighting to take it back. But Vaughn's position as an American comics creator offers an interesting site for questions about how Canadian community is depicted on the page. This paper examines the notion of community divorced from cultural context in *We Stand on Guard* and builds on a larger theory of the exploitation of indigeneity as code for Canadian difference in mass market comic books.

Margery Fee (British Columbia): Clashing or Interacting? Indigenous Communities and Communities of Scholars: The Case of Polar Bear Science

Given Tricouncil requirements that research be conducted with or for Indigenous communities, what advice can literary scholars give to scientists about the use of traditional knowledge? The example of scientists studying polar bears and the Inuit and other Indigenous communities who live with them is used as a focus.

Kathleen Fernando (Kenyon): Inhospitable Nation: Violence, Maternal Desire, and Healing in *Anil's Ghost*

In this essay, I suggest that Ondaatje's representation of Sri Lanka is continuous with the Orientalist discourse of the "violent" colony, in need of civilization. Healing from violence is related to the physical labor of repairing of wounded bodies, signified by hospitals and physicians as well as what Ondaatje constructs as the "sexuality of maternal care".

Peter Forestell (Calgary): Peter Wildeblood and the "Glandular Cases:" Transphobia and Post-war Gay Identity Formation

An examination of Anglo-Canadian journalist, novelist, and pioneering gay rights activist Peter Wildeblood's overlooked memoir *Against the Law* (1955) will show how Wildeblood imagines gender as distinct from sexuality and will reveal a nascent transphobia that serves as a model for the fraught relationship between gay men and trans- and genderqueer folks today.

Heike Harting (Montreal): Narrating Afropolitan Communities in Emmanuel Dongala's *Little Boys Come from the Stars* and Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow*

This paper examines the role of what might be called Afropolitan storytelling in the making of new African communities at the beginning of the 21st century. Afropolitan forms of storytelling draw from local and cosmopolitan aesthetics of storytelling and involve self-reflexive narrative strategies and genres. They are often inclusive narratives that expand their sense of subjectivity outward beyond national, ethnocentric and racist discourses of belonging and deliberately sets themselves against European narratives of Africa as a continent steeped in perpetual crisis.

Sarah Henzi (McGill): From Tar Sands to Zombies: Indigenous Science Fiction and Sustainability

In this paper I will look at a selection of works, such as Gerald Vizenor's novel *Bearheart*, Richard Van Camp's short story "On the Wings of this Prayer" and Simon Ortiz's short story "Men on the Moon" as examples of Indigenous writers exploring environmental and sustainability concerns through the modus operandi of science fiction.

Clara A.B. Joseph (Calgary): Indian Christians Run "Amok" in the 16th Century

Through a close reading of the 16th century diary of a Portuguese archbishop who travelled in India, this paper considers the application of the word, 'amok' to describe suicide squads that protected Indian Christians from colonial control. A Levinasian theoretical framework points to an early instance of racial profiling.

Breanna Keeler (Ottawa): Community, mourning, and unconventional translation in Anne Carson's *Nox*: Confronting the paradox of mourning

Mourning death is an inherently paradoxical experience, both personal and universal. Anne Carson's *Nox* (2009) demonstrates how unconventional translation practices help a mourner confront this paradox and then establish a specific community of mourners. This community facilitates a shift from melancholia to productive mourning by allowing testimony and witnessing.

Sarah Kent (Calgary): Alienated by Affect: Hate, Shame, and Disgust in Joan Riley's *The Unbelonging*

Through a narrative of alienation, Joan Riley's *The Unbelonging* exposes the complex power relations of negative affects which inform and determine belonging. Deploying the framework of Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, my paper examines how negative affects become fettered to racialized bodies through the machinations of colonial ideology.

Suzette Mayr (Calgary): "This Shit House": The Uncanny House in Daniel David Moses' *Big Buck City*

The "animate" house in *Big Buck City* offers a more complicated model than the "haunted" house and corresponding metaphor of the "haunted" nation. This animate house is not a dwelling "haunted" by the dispossessed, but is a monster that subverts its owners' attempts to assimilate to white dominant culture.

Mark A. McCutcheon (Athabasca): Dionne Brand's Literary Production and Afro-Futurist Theory

This paper reads Dionne Brand's writing according to Afro-Futurism: the use of science fiction conventions in black diasporic cultural production. Details of Brand's work inviting such recontextualization include tropes of technology, devices of the fantastic, representations of slavery, and the setting of Toronto ("the city / that's never happened before").

Michael Minor (Manitoba): Energy and the Sacred: Circling in the poetry of Halfe and Mercredi

Through Allen's *The Sacred Hoop* and poems by Louise Halfe and Duncan Mercredi, this paper argues that a recovery of the sacred energy of the circle is deeply influential to the recovery of Indigenous communities. The energy of the circle can inform the communal relationships between people, as well as the natural and spiritual worlds.

Maryam Mirza (Liège): Representing Gendered Domestic Servitude in the South Asian Diaspora: A Study of Contemporary Fiction by Women Writers

This paper grapples with the South Asian immigrant servant as depicted in postcolonial fiction by women writers. It examines how gendered domestic labour complicates the distinction between integration and exclusion and in defining her sense of class and gender identity, informs the immigrant's relationship with the host country.

Laura Moss (British Columbia): How Do Stories Travel? Confronting Expectations in Global Literature

In his review of *We Need New Names*, Helon Habila reproaches NoViolet Bulawayo for "performing Africa" and succumbing to "poverty porn." Habila's review raises questions about how stories travel and what happens when they land. I approach such questions by considering how literature is produced, received, and circulated globally.

Stephanie Oliver (Western): “Stinking as Thinking”: The Olfactory Politics of Warren Cariou’s “Tarhands: A Messy Manifesto”

Departing from visualist approaches to the Alberta tar sands, my paper explores how olfactory frameworks may be useful for representing the “slow violence” (Nixon) of the tar sands. Focusing on Warren Cariou’s essay “Tarhands: A Messy Manifesto” (2012), I argue that smell’s particular materiality makes stench a powerful metaphor for representing forms of environmental destruction that are difficult to represent visually.

Mariam Pirbhai (Wilfrid Laurier): A Pan-American Hydro-Mythopoeitics: Indo-Caribbean Diasporic Literature and its ‘Riverine’ Mythologies

This paper considers a select number of works by Indo-Caribbean writers, including Shani Mootoo and Ryhaan Shah, and propose that this diaspora evokes a unique "hydro-mythopoeitics" in which river imagery not only has particular significance for a predominantly Hindu diaspora historically and spiritually connected to the sacred River Ganges, but also acts as a more dynamic or "energizing" marker of this diaspora’s "naturalization" in and across the Americas.

Shazia Rahman (Western Illinois): Nuclear Warfare and Human/Nonhuman relations in a contemporary Pakistani novel

In this paper, I argue that birds in Kamila Shamsie’s novel *Burnt Shadows* both represent the perpetrators of nationalist violence as well as those who resist it through a trope of animalization, which challenges both nationalist violence and the dominant discourse of humanism.

Shazia Sadaf (Western): Understanding Tribal Community Codes in the Age of Terror: Jamil Ahmad’s *The Wandering Falcon*

This paper argues that Jamil Ahmad’s interlinked stories in *The Wandering Falcon* re-dignify the ancient communal ways of life thought by the West to be barbaric, and provide a historical understanding of Pakistan’s tarnished tribal belt that is currently embroiled in America’s war on terror, offering a rare insight into the Pashtun tribal principles that have baffled the Western mind.

Louise Saldanha (Douglas College): A Different Call for a Different Action: Representations of Residential Schools in Picturebooks Written in Canada

This paper examines how residential school picturebook narratives can foster a critical pause framing reconciliation as critical and ongoing processes and not an endpoint. Instead of providing comforting resolutions, these books force us to question how we actually get to justice rather than simply proclaiming we are there.

Asma Sayed (Grant MacEwan): Postcolonial Mothering in Anita Rau Badami’s *Tamarind Mem*

Analyzing various mother-daughter relationships in Anita Rau Badami’s novel *Tamarind Mem*, this paper discusses how mothers in the novel negotiate various power relations, the social and cultural impacts of colonialism, and attitudes toward mothering that are rooted both in India’s patriarchal culture as well as the colonial legacy of the British.

Henghameh Saroukhani (St. Mary’s): The Problem of Revelatory Cosmopolitanism in Andrea Levy’s *Small Island*

This paper problematizes the conflicting aesthetics of Andrea Levy’s novel *Small Island* (2004). I argue that Levy undermines her own disruptive postmodern historiography, one that complicates a cohesive understanding of the multi-perspectival narrative, by enacting what I term a revelatory cosmopolitanism that relies upon the reader simplifying and rendering coherent the cross-cultural engagements within the text. It is *Small Island*’s dependence on

readerly revelation that informs its much celebrated though problematic cosmopolitan sensibility.

Nora Foster Stovel (Alberta): “Ivory Tower or Grass Roots?” Creative Writer’s Commitment to Socio-Political Equality and Diversity as Revealed in the Essays of Margaret Laurence

Laurence’s essays attempt to energize community engagement at local, regional, national and international levels regarding not only Canadian unity, literature, and the arts, plus post-colonial literatures, but also crucial socio-political issues, including nuclear disarmament, pornography and censorship, and environmental concerns. Her numerous essays, virtually unknown because largely unavailable, reveal a socially committed artist.

Olga Krochak Sulkin (Calgary): The Promise of Global Labour and Communities of Shared Experiences: The Case of Migrant Workers in the West

The most striking similarity between Marina Lewycka’s *Two Caravans* and Hari Kunzru’s *Transmission* is that both novels discuss the challenges economic refugees face in the host countries. By way of a comparative analysis, I will show how the ‘promises’ of global labour are challenged by Jacques Derrida’s concept of hospitality.

Jason Sunder (Western): Narratology and Human-Animal Conflict in Tania James’ *The Tusk that did the Damage*

This paper argues that the three intersecting narratives in Tania James’ *The Tusk That did the Damage*—of an American documentarian, an elephant, and a poacher—complicate conservation narratives of the global south that valorize endangered animal species while ignoring the impact of human-animal conflicts on rural communities.

Proposal (max 350 words)

Sylvia Terzian (St. Jerome’s): Transnational Consciousness and Literary Cosmopolitanism: Arab-Canadian Literature in the Global Moment

This paper suggests that the works of Hage engage fully with the insights of recent theories of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, marking it as “transnational literature” that positions the migrant antihero as articulating a new cosmopolitanism; a consciousness that is politically and socially informed and rooted in displacement.

Christina Turner (Toronto): Reanimating Atlantic Modernity: John Steffler’s *The Afterlife of George Cartwright* and the Ethics of History

Critics working in transatlantic studies explore the Atlantic’s historical and metaphorical importance to modernity. Working within this field, my paper investigates four potential “postures” to transatlantic history in John Steffler’s 1992 novel *The Afterlife of George Cartwright*. In reading Steffler’s novel this way, I also provide a model for transatlantic Canadian literary studies.

Brenda Vellino (Carleton): Settler Witnessing Alongside Indigenous Communities and Memorial Spaces

In the back and forth experience of going between Indigenous community events at the 2015 TRC proceedings in Ottawa and (mostly) settler academic settings at the Congress meetings, a kind of cognitive dissonance set in. In response, this paper seeks to articulate a space for settler witnessing alongside Indigenous community members by engaging Indigenous priorities of community performance, memorialization and witness.

Carl Watts (Queen’s): Consuming Beyond Community: Timothy Taylor’s Food Writing

This paper argues that Timothy Taylor’s “foodie” criticism converts his earlier work’s valorization of ethno-national identity into a fixation on familial and ultimately personal

histories of consumption. In simplifying his search for authenticity, however, Taylor replaces notions of collective identity with a mythologized and socially atomized conception of selfhood.