

Surrey Art Gallery presents
Sound Thinking 2015

Voicing the City In/verse: Reading Surrey and the Super Suburb

November 28, 7 to 11:30pm Olympia Restaurant
November 29, noon to 5pm Surrey Art Gallery

Keynote: **M.G. Vassanji**

Participating writers and spoken word artists:

**John Armstrong | Sadhu Binning | Roxanne Charles | Joseph A. Dandurand
Veeno Dewan | Connor Doyle | Lakshmi Gill | Heidi Greco | Leona Gom
Heather Haley | Taryn Hubbard | Tom Konyves | Judy MacInnes Jr.
Cecily Nicholson | Fauzia Rafique | Renée Sarojini Saklikar | Kevin Spenst
Rup Sidhu**

Convened by **Phinder Dulai** and **Jordan Strom**

SURREY ART GALLERY
in collaboration with **SOUTH OF FRASER INTER ARTS COLLECTIVE** and
SFU ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Voicing the City In/verse: Reading Surrey and the Super Suburb

The region South of the Fraser River is the quintessential super-suburb (a term sometimes used to describe suburbs with populations that exceed 250,000). Here, both the past and potential story of the future is palpable in this area's literature and everyday speech. The communities of Surrey, Langley, Delta, and White Rock all coalesce to form a rapidly sprawling narrative of post-war civic expansion and settlement where the world of cul-de-sacs, "a" and "b" streets, and community spaces intersect with indigenous oral histories of place and meaning. In these locations, European colonial settlement patterns converged with migration from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East to form new neighbourhoods and a new kind of suburb that is both culturally and linguistically diverse.

Rather than a suburb on the edge of the Vancouver metropolis, Surrey more and more resembles a downtown centre in its own right. Urban theorists are also observing this city-suburb inversion in other areas across Canada. Industrial activities, new migrant settlement patterns, and small businesses formerly located in urban centres are now located in the new super-suburbs that have grown on the edge of the old urban core. This process of inversion includes a rapid increase of cultural production in the visual arts, music, theatre, and literature.

Sound Thinking 2015 examines the rich literary and spoken word output of Canada's super-suburb, specifically Surrey and its surrounding South of the Fraser region. Here, poets, novelists, and spoken word artists have been working for decades and are working in greater numbers to portray and depict these complex and changing spaces.

ABOUT SOUND THINKING

Founded in 2008, Surrey Art Gallery's Sound Thinking symposium is an annual one-day event which brings together practitioners and professionals in the field of sound art. The symposium features leading sound artists, scholars and researchers in the field of sound studies, along with visual artists who use sound as key components of their practice and musicians who experiment with the limits of music and sound. Past symposia have addressed subjects such as radiophonic space, the relationship between voice and technology, and background sound.

Sound Thinking is part of Surrey Art Gallery's Open Sound program, an exhibition program developed in 2008 to support the production and presentation of audio art forms as part of contemporary art practice.

Open Sound 2015: Polyphonic Cartograph is a three-part series of sound projects. This year's Open Sound uses the metaphor of mapping as a means of considering the relationship between landscape, language, and voice. Part I of Polyphonic Cartograph presented Taryn Hubbard's *Surrey City Centre née Whalley*, a multi-channel soundscape documenting life in the Central North Surrey community. Part II of Polyphonic Cartograph presented *Anspayaxw*, an "installation for voice, image and sound" featuring the endangered language of Gitksanimax of the Gitksan people based near Hazelton, BC. Part III of Open Sound, currently on exhibit at the Surrey Art Gallery Tech Lab, features *The Grove: A Spatial Narrative*, a sound art installation inspired by the hidden geographies of Surrey's Newton Town Centre by Carmen Papalia, Andrew Lee and Phinder Dulai.

Open Sound is made possible with the ongoing support of the City of Surrey, the Canada Council of the Arts and the BC Arts Council.

SCHEDULE

Day 1: Sound Thinking cabaret night Olympia Restaurant, 10257 King George Boulevard

7:00-7:15	Introductions Jordan Strom and Phinder Dulai
7:15-7:25	Welcome from Renée Sarojini Saklikar , Surrey Poet Laureate
7:30-7:40	Connor Doyle
7:45-7:55	Taryn Hubbard
8:00-8:10	Roxanne Charles
8:15-8:25	Veeno Dewan
8:25-8:40	<i>Break</i>
8:40-8:50	Leona Gom
8:55-9:05	Cecily Nicholson
9:10-9:20	Joseph Dandurand
9:25-9:35	Sadhu Binning
9:40-9:50	Heidi Greco
9:55-10:05	Lakshmi Gill
10:05-10:20	<i>Break</i>
10:20-10:30	Fauzia Rafique
10:35-10:45	Judy MacInnes
10:50-11:00	Kevin Spenst
11:05-11:15	Tom Konyves
11:20-11:30	Heather Haley
11:35-11:45	John Armstrong
11:50-12:00	Rup Sidhu
12:00-12:05	Concluding Remarks

Day 2: Sound Thinking Symposium
Surrey Arts Centre, 13750 88th Avenue

12:00-12:10	Refreshments available
12:10-12:20	Traditional Kwantlen Welcome and Drum Song Kwantlen Nation Elder Kevin Kelly and Michael Gabriel
12:20-12:30	Introductions Jordan Strom and Phinder Dulai
12:30-1:30	Keynote presentation M.G. Vassanji
1:35-2:45	Panel 1 – <i>Edge City as Space of Exile, Refuge</i> Fauzia Rafique Cecily Nicholson Joseph A. Dandurand Heidi Greco
2:45-2:55	Q&A
2:55-3:10	<i>Break</i>
3:10-4:10	Panel 2 – <i>Kinetic City/City in Motion</i> Sadhu Binning Taryn Hubbard Kevin Spenst Tom Konyves
4:10-4:20	Q&A
4:20-4:40	Open discussion & closing remarks

BIOGRAPHIES

Keynote presentation:

M.G. Vassanji

M.G. Vassanji is the author of seven novels, two collections of short stories, a travel memoir about India, a memoir of East Africa, and a biography of Mordecai Richler. His honours include two Giller prizes, the Governor General's Prize for best work of nonfiction, and the Canada Council Molson Prize for the Arts. Vassanji has given lectures worldwide and written many essays, including introductions to the works of Robertson Davies, Anita Desai, and Mordecai Richler, and the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi. Vassanji was born in Nairobi, Kenya and raised in Tanzania. He received a BS from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, before going to live in Canada. He is a member of the Order of Canada and has been awarded several honorary doctorates. He lives in Toronto, and visits East Africa and India often.

Kevin Kelley

Kevin Kelly is a member of the Soowahlie First Nation, and is married into the Kwantlen First nation through his wife, Marilyn Gabriel, a hereditary chief. Kelly serves as a cultural ambassador for the Kwantlen First nation, and acts on behalf of his wife at public occasions. He is proud to lead the life of his culture.

Michael Gabriel

Michael Gabriel is the son of Kevin Kelly and Marilyn Gabriel. Through his talents as a skilled drummer and singer, he acts as a youth role model. He was one of two individuals selected to be a youth representative of the British Columbian First Nations during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and hopes to study business.

John Armstrong

After working as an award-winning journalist for nearly 20 years, John Auber Armstrong published his first book, the punk rock memoir *Guilty of Everything*, in 2002. It is currently in development as a feature film. His second book, *Wages*, (New Star Books, 2006), detailed his unlikely job history: operating an electric knife on an industrial chicken-killing line, as a Bible camp counselor, a TV writer, a porn video marketing

director, and as a caregiver for violently insane youth. Armstrong has since published several more books. He now lives in Chilliwack with his wife, dogs, cats, and children.

Sadhu Binning

Sadhu Binning, a retired UBC language instructor, has authored and co-authored more than seventeen books of poetry, fiction, plays, translations and research. His works have been included in close to fifty anthologies both in Punjabi and English. He edited a literary monthly, *Watno Dur* and co-edits a quarterly, *Watan*. He is founding member of Vancouver Sath, a theatre collective, and *Ankur* magazine. He sat on the BC Arts Board from 1993 to 1995, and has received several awards for his contributions to Punjabi culture in Canada. He has promoted Punjabi language education in BC for two and a half decades.

Roxanne Charles

Roxanne Charles is a mixed media artist of Strait Salish and European decent. She is an active and proud member of Semiahmoo First Nation where she resides in Surrey, BC. Her goals are to promote art, language, and culture with in her community. Charles received her BFA from Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Her work explores numerous themes such as spirituality, environment, identity, hybridity, and various forms of violence. She works in a wide range of mediums and views herself as a contemporary story teller. Her goal is to touch, move, and inspire others with her work.

Joseph A. Dandurand

Joseph A. Dandurand is a member of Kwantlen First Nation. He resides there with his children. Dandurand is the Heritage/Lands Officer for his people, and has been performing his duties for 20 years. He is tasked with protecting his people's heritage from the destructive elements of development in Kwantlen territory. Dandurand received a Diploma in Performing Arts from Algonquin College, and studied Theatre and Direction at the University of Ottawa. He has produced numerous plays, and his poems have appeared in multiple publications. He has served as a Playwright-in-Residence for the Museum of Civilization, Native Earth, and the National Arts Centre.

Veeno Dewan

Veeno Dewan was born within earshot of the church bells of St Mary-le-Bow in the East End of London, meaning he can claim Cockney heritage as a working-class Londoner. Veeno grew up in West London and spent a thirteen-year career as a television director and producer for the BBC in London and Birmingham. A graduate of the 2013 SFU Southbank Writer's Program, he is currently studying writing at the Simon Fraser University Writers Studio Program and is completing his first project, a book of interlinked short stories exploring the pan-immigrant experience and cross-cultural themes of love, loss, place, and identity.

Connor Doyle

Connor Doyle received twin bachelor degrees in English Literature and Creative Writing from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, where he was also received multiple scholarships for writing and his work within the writing community. He is one of the founders and a former Managing Editor of *Pulp Magazine* and was the recipient of the 11th Annual Lush Triumphant Award for poetry from *subTerrain*. When you began reading his bio, Connor felt a tinge of recognition as if an old friend, many years removed, had suddenly called his name.

Lakshmi Gill

Lakshmi Gill has several degrees, including a Ph.D. from the University of New Brunswick. She has taught in Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, Ireland, Macau, the Philippines, and England. Gill is the author of several books of poetry and literature, and has published in a variety of anthologies and magazines. Along with Dorothy Livesay, Gill is one of only two women amongst the founders of the League of Canadian Poets in 1966; she is a current member of The Writers Union of Canada. She lives in Delta, where she has been writing since she arrived in Canada in 1964.

Leona Gom

Leona Gom has published six books of poetry and eight novels, and has won both the CAA Award for poetry and the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize. She taught for many years at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey, where she edited the award-winning magazine *Event*, and also at the University of Alberta and UBC. Gom has held residencies at the University of Alberta, University of Lethbridge, and University of Winnipeg. Her work has appeared in over fifty anthologies, and five of

her books have been translated into other languages. Her most recent novel is *The Exclusion Principle*, published in 2009 by Sumach Press.

Heidi Greco

A longtime resident of Surrey, Heidi Greco served as the city's 'resident poet' in 2012 and was commissioned to write a poem for the cross-Canada Mayor's Challenge. As part of her presentation, she challenged the City to hire an official Poet Laureate. Happily, that wish has now come true. In addition to advocating for the arts, Heidi works as an editor, reviewer and occasional instructor. Since last spring, her poems have appeared in several anthologies: *Make it True* (Leaf Press, 2015), *The Revolving City* (Anvil Press, 2015) and *Translating Horses* (Baseline Press, 2015).

Heather Haley

Poet Heather Haley integrates disciplines, genres and media. Her writing appears in numerous journals and anthologies including the *Antigonish Review*, *Geist* and *The Verse Map of Vancouver*. Haley was an editor for the *LA Weekly* and publisher of the *Edgewise Cafe*, one of Canada's first electronic literary magazines. She is the author of poetry collections *Sideways* (Anvil Press, 2003), *Three Blocks West of Wonderland* (Ekstasis Editions, 2009), and debut novel, *The Town Slut's Daughter* (Howe Sound Publishing, 2014). Haley's videopoems are official selections at dozens of international film festivals, and she has toured Canada, the U.S. and Europe in support of two critically acclaimed cds of spoken word song.

Taryn Hubbard

Taryn Hubbard's poetry, fiction, reviews, and interviews have appeared in journals such as *Canadian Literature*, *Room* magazine, *The Capilano Review*, *Canadian Woman Studies*, *filling Station*, *Rusty Toque*, *harlequin creature*, and others. Earlier this year her multi-channel sound and text installation *Surrey City Centre née Whalley* exhibited during the Surrey Art Gallery's OpenSound program. Her chapbook *RE:* was published in 2014 by dancing girl press, and she is currently working on her first full-length poetry manuscript. She lives in Surrey, B.C.

Tom Konyves

Tom Konyves is a writer, poet and videopoetry theorist. His career began in Montreal in the late 1970s, when he joined one of Canada's first artist-run centres, Vehicule Art, where he was instrumental in

forming the Vehicule Poets collective. Having coined the term videopoetry in 1978, Konyves is considered one of the pioneers of the form. In 2011, he published *Videopoetry: A Manifesto*, which has been read online across the world. He is the author of six books of poetry and a surrealist novella. A South Surrey resident, he teaches Creative Writing at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford.

Judy MacInnes Jr.

Judy MacInnes Jr. is the author of the short prose and poetry collection, *Snatch* (Anvil Press, 2000). She lived in Surrey for close to twenty years, and both rural Surrey and suburbia are central to her work. Judy is working on her second book, *Lightning Round*, with the assistance from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Cecily Nicholson

Cecily Nicholson is administrator of the artist-run centre Gallery Gachet, and has worked since 2000 in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood of Vancouver, X^wməθkwəy̓əm, Sḵwxwú7mesh and Səlílwətaʔ territories. She is the author of *Triage* (Talon Books, 2011) and *From the Poplars* (Talon Books, 2014), and won the 2015 Dorothy Livesay prize for poetry. She is currently facilitating the Surrey Teacher's Association-supported teacher writing group, and is a member of Joint Effort and No One is Illegal.

Fauzia Rafique

A novelist, poet, and blogger, Fauzia Rafique was recognized in 2012 by Writers International Network Canada as a Distinguished Poet & Novelist for her first novel *Skeena* (Libros Libertad, 2011) and chapbook of English and Punjabi poems *Passion Fruit/Tahnget Phal* (Uddari Books, 2011). An ebook of her English poems *Holier Than Life* was published in June 2013 by Purple Poppy Press. She has also edited an anthology of writings of women of South Asian origin, *Aurat durbar: The Court of Women* (Three O Clock Press, 1995).

Renée Sarojini Saklikar

Renée Sarojini Saklikar, Surrey's Poet Laureate, writes *thecanadaproject*, a life-long poem chronicle. Work from the project is widely published in journals, anthologies and chapbooks. The first completed book from *thecanadaproject* is *children of air india, un/authorized exhibits and interjections*, (Nightwood Editions, 2013) winner of the 2014 Canadian Authors Association Award for poetry and

a finalist for the 2014 Dorothy Livesay Poetry Award. Saklikar is currently a mentor and instructor for Simon Fraser University, and co-founder of the poetry reading series, *Lunch Poems at SFU*. With acclaimed author Wayde Compton, Renée co-edited *The Revolving City: 51 Poems and the Stories Behind Them* (Anvil Press, 2015).

Kevin Spenst

Kevin Spenst is the author of *Jabbering with Bing Bong* (Anvil Press, 2015) and ten chapbooks including the collaboratively written *Pocket Museum* (with Raoul Fernandes), *Retractable* (serif of Nottingham, 2013), and *Surrey Sonnets* (JackPine Press, 2014). His work has won the Lush Triumphant Award for Poetry and has appeared in dozens of publications including *Prairie Fire*, *BafterC*, *Lemon Hound*, *Poetry is Dead*, and the anthology *Best Canadian Poetry 2014*. He lives and works in Vancouver, B.C. where he's an enthusiastic participant in a number of writing communities. A second collection of poetry, *Ignite*, is forthcoming with Anvil Press in 2016.

Rup Sidhu

Rup Sidhu is an interdisciplinary artist, musician, producer and composer. Specializing in vocal percussion and live looping, his sound blends the rhythms of poetry and spoken word with cultural hybridity. Rup has facilitated and taught musical programs in universities, public schools, youth prisons, and communities throughout Canada, USA, UK, and India. He has produced fourteen albums with emerging artists, including *American Pie*, Shane Koyzan's debut release. Current collaborative projects include: *Lapis*, *Blue God and the Serpents*, *Language of Rhythm*, and *Metaphor*. Rup's solo live looping show, *RupLoops*, has toured over 200 locations across Canada.

Sound Thinking 2015

Conveners

Phinder Dulai

Phinder Dulai is a Surrey-based author of the critically acclaimed poetry collection *dream / arteries* (Talonbooks) and two previous books of poetry. He recently collaborated on a sound project entitled *The Grove – A Spatial Narrative* with artists Carmen Papalia and Andrew Lee, currently installed at the Surrey Art Gallery. His most recent work has been published in *Canada and Beyond*, *Canadian Literature* and *Cue Books Anthology*, with new poems forthcoming in e-magazine *Dusie*. He is currently touring *dream / arteries*, with scheduled appearances in Austin, Texas, Toronto, Windsor, and New York City. Dulai is a co-founder of the Surrey-based interdisciplinary contemporary arts group South of Fraser Inter Arts Collective (SOFIA/c).

Jordan Strom

As Curator of Exhibitions and Collections at the Surrey Art Gallery, Jordan Strom has curated solo exhibitions by Cao Fei, Sarindar Dhaliwal, Brendan Fernandes, Ryoji Ikeda, among others. Recent group exhibitions have addressed immigration and contemporary art (*Ruptures in Arrival: Art in the Wake of the Komagata Maru*, 2014), contemporary artist self-portraiture (*Scenes of Selves, Occasions for Ruses*, 2012), and the proto-cinematic (*Vision Machine*, 2012). Jordan has worked on previous curatorial exhibitions and projects for the Vancouver Art Gallery, Kamloops Art Gallery, Presentation House Gallery, Republic Gallery and Dadabase. From 2004 to 2008, Jordan worked as editor at *Fillip*, a journal of contemporary art.

NOTES



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Information 604.501.5566

www.surrey.ca/artgallery | www.surreytechlab.ca

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