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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tickets now on sale for October STARFest author festival

ST. ALBERT — Tickets are now on sale for the 2023 STARFest Readers Festival, featuring an exciting range of authors whose books offer something for book lovers of all reading interests. The festival runs September 24 through November 1 with eleven authors across twelve events, including a special musical evening at the Arden Theatre.

“We have a truly fantastic lineup for the festival this year, with stories for everyone,” says Festival Director Michelle Steinhusen. “We’re bringing back a number of festival favourites who have terrific new books out. And, as always, we are excited to introduce festival goers to a number of amazing new voices.”

Ann-Marie MacDonald | Sunday, Sept. 24 | 7 PM

Hosted by Diana Davidson

Bestselling and award-winning author Ann-Marie MacDonald is back with a new tale of science, magic, love and identity. *Fayne* traces the story of Charlotte Bell, who suffers from a mysterious condition on a lonely estate straddling the border between England and Scotland. When she and her tutor discover something unexpected in the bog, her father announces he has arranged for a cure for her, and her world is upended.

Michael Crummey | Tuesday, Oct. 10 | 7 PM

Hosted by Jacqueline Baker

Award-winning, critically acclaimed author Michael Crummey joins us with *The Adversary*. Abe Strapp is about to marry the daughter of a rival merchant to cement his hold on the shore when the Widow Caines arrives to throw Abe’s plans into chaos – the opening salvo in a battle that spirals into violence and divides their isolated Newfoundland outpost, with devastating consequences.

Amy Jones | Thursday, Oct. 12 | 7 PM

Hosted by Matthew Stepanic

Amy Jones returns to STARFest with the rollicking *Pebble and Dove*, a novel of family secrets and dysfunction. Lauren, anxious to escape a mountain of debt, runs with her teenage daughter, Dove, to her late mother’s rundown trailer in Florida. As she untangles the truth about her estranged mother, Dove finds an abandoned aquarium, home of Pebble, a former star attraction and the oldest manatee in captivity.

Jessica Johns | Friday, Oct. 13 | 7 PM

Hosted by Jason Purcell

Jessica Johns’ *Bad Cree* is a haunting and fierce horror-laced debut. Mackenzie, a Cree millennial, has begun to bring back items from her dreams. As her life spirals into a living nightmare—crows are following her and

she's getting texts from her dead sister—she returns to her family and her small Alberta hometown to discover what is haunting her before something irrevocable happens.

Rowan Jetté Knox | Monday, Oct. 16 | 7 PM

Hosted by our event partners at Outloud St. Albert

For award-winning journalist, writer and human rights advocate Rowan Jetté Knox (formerly Amanda Jetté Knox), the publication of his bestselling memoir *Love Lives Here*, when both his child and partner came out as transgender, was the hopeful beginning to their new lives. Then Rowan experienced such intense and targeted attacks on social media that he began to contemplate suicide. Instead, one sunny afternoon he went to the hospital to seek help.

Deanna Durbin, Judy Garland & The Golden Age of Hollywood featuring Melanie Gall | Tuesday, Oct. 17 | 7:30 PM | Arden Theatre

Melanie Gall is an internationally acclaimed performer and music historian from St. Albert. In this one-woman show, Gall tells the true forgotten tale of a lifelong friendship—and rivalry—of two great stars of Old Hollywood: Deanna Durbin and Judy Garland. The show includes 12 of Durbin's greatest hits, as well as songs made famous by Garland. This 5-Star hit has won hearts and awards around the world, and had an off-Broadway run at the SoHo Theatre in New York City.

Melanie Gall | Thursday, Oct. 19 | 7 PM

Hosted by Michelle Steinhusen

Building on her one-woman show featuring the story and songs of Deanna Durbin and Judy Garland, Melanie Gall's nonfiction book *Deanna Durbin, Judy Garland and the Golden Age of Hollywood* resurrects the largely forgotten story of how a 13 year old Canadian girl transformed moviemaking – and how her early friendship with fellow ingenue Judy Garland soon turned into a lifelong rivalry.

Michael Christie | Saturday, Oct. 21 | 7 PM

Hosted by Thomas Trofimuk

Bestselling author Michael Christie joins STARFest with *Greenwood*, which was a 2023 CBC Canada Reads finalist, won St. Albert Reads the same year, and was longlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize. *Greenwood* threads the stories of generations of Greenwood family members to reveal their conflicted relationship with the source of their fortune—trees—and the knot of lies and omissions at the root of their family's origin story.

Sharon Butala | Monday, Oct. 23 | 7 PM

Hosted by Fran Kimmel

Multi-award-winning author Sharon Butala joins us with her new novel, *Leaving Wisdom*. When retiring social worker Judith falls on the ice, the debilitating concussion that follows shakes loose a confusing whirl of memories. She moves back to a town near her family's Saskatchewan farm to unravel the unsolved mysteries in her own life, but small town bigotry and what looks like a serious crime unfolding in the house next door make her return even more difficult.

Emi Sasagawa | Friday, Oct. 27 | 7 PM

Hosted by Sandra SG Wong

Emi Sasagawa has created an unforgettable character in her debut novel, *Atomweight*, with good girl, good student, and good daughter, Aki, who has always done what her loving but demanding multiracial family expects. Everything changes when Aki moves from Vancouver to London for university: studies, friends and a relationship with a wealthy but closeted Asian woman. When Aki discovers that brutal bar-fighting

relieves her stress, she begins a dangerous dual existence – obedient and accommodating by day and brawling by night.

Bianca Marais | Sunday, Oct. 29 | 2 PM

Hosted by Senator Paula Simons

In Marais' bestselling new novel, *The Witches of Moonshyne Manor*, five octogenarian witches gather as an angry mob threatens to demolish Moonshyne Manor. The witches' aging powers are no match for increasingly malicious threats, but help arrives in the form of Persephone, a feisty TikTokker eager to smash the patriarchy. Funny, tender and uplifting, Marais's prose delves into feminism and power dynamics while stirring up drama through secrets, lies and sex.

Waubgeshig Rice | Wednesday, Nov. 1 | 7 PM

Hosted by Celina Loyer

Waubgeshig Rice wowed our 2019 audience with his breakout bestseller *Moon of the Crusted Snow* – now he takes us back to that world in *Moon of the Turning Leaves*. It's been over a decade since a mysterious cataclysm thrust the world into anarchy and Evan Whitesky led his community in remote northern Ontario off the rez and into the bush. But resources are drying up, and Evan and his teenage daughter must lead a scouting party to discover what kind of life—and what dangers—still exist in the lands to the south.

Visit STARFest.ca for all the details and to purchase event tickets.

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