

Malahat *lite*

Virtual Newsletter of *The Malahat Review*

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FRIENDS EDITION

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www.malahatreview.ca

1. Meet a Friend: Diane Cliffe

Diane Cliffe has been a Friend of *The Malahat* since the group began in January, 2010. *Malahat* volunteer Vanessa Herman interviewed her for this edition of *Malahat lite*.

Vanessa Herman: Diane, Susan [Sanford Blades, *The Malahat Review's* Marketing Manager] has told me that you were one of the first to become a friend of *The Malahat*.

Diane Cliffe: Really?

VH: Yes. Why did you decide to become a Friend of *The Malahat*?

DC: Lots of reasons. I like literature, I'm a bit of a book fiend, and I like journals like *The Malahat Review* because of the variety that's in them and the up and coming talent that gets showcased and all that kind of stuff. So when I decided to get a subscription to *The Malahat* I saw this deal with the Friends and I thought I'd like to give the extra support because I also think that writing programs need to be supported or we're not going to have any new writers.

VH: In your past year as Friend of *The Malahat* can you recall any story or issue that was one of your favourites, or one that stands out to you the most?

DC: You know if I had my back issues, instead of giving them away because I pass them on to people, I'd be able to answer that question more easily. When I first started [my subscription to *The Malahat*] it was the big P. K. Page issue [#117, Winter 1996], and I still have that issue. It was a fabulous issue and I got all sorts of extras with it. There is a broadside hanging by the front door, *Deaf Mute in the Pear Tree*, and other little goodies. And it's signed! But you know there have been some really good short stories—I'm a short story freak—in the last few issues. There was one, I can't quite remember... but it involved a guy who collected penis bones, animal penis bones, and had them all up on his wall and stuff, and he also did taxidermy ["Natural Bone" by Elizabeth Philips, #170, Spring 2010]. I think it was just a look at his little slice of life. It was very well done, very absorbing... and there was one that involved the vid-cam girl ["Girl on the Fire Escape" by Kris Bertin, #173, Winter 2010]. The story was fabulous!

VH: Are you only interested in reading or have you done any writing yourself?

DC: Yeah I used to fancy myself a writer. I used to write a lot of poetry and then I married a writer, who was also an alcoholic. He was devastating to my writing because he used to take everything and turn it into his voice and take my voice right out of it and I got so discouraged I just stopped writing. But one thing I did learn, when I was with him, was that I am a fabulous editor. After I'd been away from him for a while I took the editing certificate course through Continuing Studies at SFU. Since then I've done a fair bit of editing, which I really REALLY enjoy. I enjoy monkeying with other people's stuff more than I enjoy writing, actually.

VH: What about all the little extras you get as a Friend, like the 10% discount at Renaissance Books or the membership to Open Space Arts Society, have you taken advantage of any of those?

DC: Renaissance books, I have, it's one of my haunts. [Diane waves her hand behind her to indicate the wall covered in bookshelves, on the far right beside the shelves is her "to-be-read" pile and along the floor bags of books are lined, ready for the *Times Colonist* book sale this spring.]

VH: And do you attend the issue launches throughout the year?

DC: I went to one [the Winter 2009, issue and Friends of *The Malahat* launch in January 2010]. I don't do very well with crowds, so I stayed for a little while upstairs and then when I had enough I went downstairs. It was in a church, an ex-church probably, and downstairs they had a silent auction. So I wandered around and bid on things. It was fun and I actually won a couple of back issues of *The Malahat*. They were quite old with some of my ex-husband's work in it, which was nice.

VH: Had you edited any of that work?

DC: No. The only thing I edited of his was the last book, that I'm aware, he did—he may have published since—which was a supposedly a memoir but was actually creative non-fiction. That's where I got my foot in the door. The editor at McClelland & Stewart, also named Diane, really trained me on the ground and taught me to do some of the grunt work before it was sent off to her. That's where I learned all the special archaic symbols.



VH: Has editing become your main job now?

DC: It's really freelance. I've got one client who has broken into the romance/sci-fi genre. She sends me work once in a while and I go through it for her. The last big project I did was the textbook for palliative care for Canada written by Dr. Doyle here at Victoria hospice.

VH: That reminds me of a CNF piece I read in *The Malahat's* last issue, ["Intimate Strangers" by Eve Joeseeph, #173, Winter 2010], about working in hospice. It was beautifully written. There were some really memorable passages in it.

DC: The thing with short prose is that, when it's good, it is all the best of poetry and novel writing put together. So you have a narrative flow but because you only have so much space, the language is much crisper like in a poem.

VH: It's been a pleasure speaking with you, Diane. Thank you for your time, and for being a Friend!

2. Malahat- sponsored Panel

To Tell The Truth: The Many Faces (and Controversies) of Creative Nonfiction

Saturday, May 28, 2011

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Central Meeting Room

Greater Victoria Public Library

735 Broughton

Admission:

\$10 general

\$5 students

FREE for Friends of *The Malahat*

With Panelists:

David Leach
M. A. C. Farrant
George Sipos
Christin Geall

The rising popularity of creative nonfiction has opened new doors for readers and writers of stories based in fact. Enhanced by dramatic scenes, dialogue, and characterization, contemporary creative nonfiction can include the personal essay, memoir, travel writing, historical accounts, and biography. It can enlighten and educate through vivid storytelling and fresh insight. But do some authors bend the truth? How “creative” can nonfiction be?

Join authors David Leach, M. A. C. Farrant, George Sipos, and Christin Geall as they reveal the best (and the worst) of this misunderstood genre.

There will be plenty of opportunity for questions, comments, and debate.



David Leach is an associate professor of creative nonfiction in the University of Victoria's Department of Writing and the president of the Creative Nonfiction Collective, a national writers' organization. His magazine features and travel memoirs have appeared in dozens of national and international publications. His first book, *Fatal Tide: When the Race of a Lifetime Goes Wrong* (Viking Canada), was published in 2008 and won a Banff Mountain Book Award. He is working on a new book about kibbutz life in Israel.** Photo credit Ben Moore**

M.A.C. Farrant is the author of ten collections of satirical and philosophical short fiction, a novel-length memoir, *My Turquoise Years*, a book of essays/humour, *The Secret Lives of Litterbugs*, and the stage adaptation of *My Turquoise Years*. A full-time writer currently residing in North Saanich, her work has been nominated for many awards, including the Commonwealth Writers Prize, The Van City Book Prize, the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize, and the National Magazine Awards.



George Sipos is the former owner of Mosquito Books in Prince George and now lives on Salt Spring Island where he manages a visual and performing arts centre. He is the author of *Anything But the Moon*, which was shortlisted for the Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize in 2006, and of a second collection of poetry, *The Glassblowers*, published in 2010. His most recent book, *The Geography of Arrival: A Memoir*, was shortlisted for this year's Charles Taylor Prize.



Christin Geall worked as a newspaper columnist, magazine editor, and communications director before completing the Stonecoast M.F.A in creative nonfiction. Her columns, reviews, and essays have appeared on *Literary Mama*, in *Galleries West*, *The Red Berry Review*, *Slow*, *Motherwords*, *Monday*, and recently in *Walk Myself Home* (Caitlin Press). Her work is forthcoming in *Hotel Amerika*, *Women Writing on Family: Tips on Writing, Teaching and Publishing* (Key Publishing), *Becoming: Women's Stories* (Nebraska), and *21st Century Motherhood* (Demeter Press). She teaches creative nonfiction at the University of Victoria.

3. Become a Friend of *The Malahat*

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Friends of *The Malahat*
The University of Victoria
PO Box 1700, Stn CSC
Victoria BC V8W 2Y2

As a Friend of *The Malahat*
you will receive:

- 1-year subscription to *The Malahat Review*
- 10% discount at Renaissance Books (14 Bastion Square in Victoria)
- Invitations to four issue launches per year
- Free admission to all ticketed *Malahat* events
- Special offers at issue launches, such as free books, or entry for door prizes
- Free admission to two Malahat-sponsored workshops or panels per year
- Discounted subscriptions to select Canadian literary magazines: *The Fiddlehead*, *Arc Poetry*, and *EVENT*
- Malahat *lite* delivered monthly to your inbox
- A free coffee, tea, or cookie at Overleaf Café and Bookshop's Saturday salons (1105 Pandora Ave. at Cook)
- Discounted membership to Open Space Arts Society in Victoria (openspace.ca)

A one-year membership
costs \$45

4. Upcoming *Malahat* Contests



2011 Creative Nonfiction Prize

Deadline: **August 1, 2011**

Prize: \$1000

Entry fee: \$35 (includes a one-year subscription)

Enter one piece of creative nonfiction between 2000 and 3000 words in length. No restrictions as to subject matter or approach apply.

2012 Open Season Awards

Deadline: **November 1, 2011**

Prize: \$1000 awarded in each of three genres

Entry fee: \$35 (includes a one-year subscription)

Enter either:

- up to three poems max 100 lines each
- one short story up to 2500 words in length
- one creative nonfiction story up to 2500 words

2012 Novella Prize

Deadline: **February 1, 2012**

Prize: \$1500

Entry fee: \$35 (includes a one-year subscription)

Enter a single work of fiction between 10, 000 and 20, 000 words in length. No restrictions as to subject matter or approach apply.

2012 Far Horizons Award for Poetry

Deadline: **May 1, 2012**

Prize: \$1000

Entry fee: \$25 (includes a one-year subscription)

Writers whose poetry has yet to be published in book form (book = 48 pages or more) are encouraged to enter up to three poems of 60 lines or less.

More info on all contests:

http://www.malahatreview.ca/contests/contests_info.html