



Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies/  
Canadian Association for Postcolonial Studies (CAPS)

**Conference Program:  
Temporal Shifts in Postcolonial Critique  
June 15-June 18, 2022  
Online at KPU via Zoom (all times are MDT)**

This conference is being held virtually at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). CACLALS acknowledges that KPU sits on the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the Kwantlen, Musqueam, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem peoples. KPU takes its name from the Kwantlen First Nation.

**Conference Program Chair:** Asma Sayed (President, CACLALS)

**Conference Secretary-Treasurer:** Jesse Arseneault (Secretary-treasurer, CACLALS)

**Graduate Student Roundtable organized by:** Sara Rozenberg and Shalika Sivathanan

**Graduate Student Prize Adjudication Committee:** Anindo Hazra, Coplen Rose, Sue Spearey

**Tech Support:** Ajaypal Cheema (KPU)

CACLALS acknowledges the generous support of Kwantlen Polytechnic University, *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, and *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*

**Special Events (all times in MDT):**

**June 15, 9:00 to 10:30** – Prayers with KPU’s Elder-in-Residence, Lekeyten

Keynote: “Architectural Kinships” by Julietta Singh

**1:00 to 2:00** – Plenary: Re-placing Literature: Mobilizing Emergent Strategy to Decolonize our Institutional Practices

**June 16, 9:30 to 11:00** - Graduate Student Prize Panel

**June 17, 9:30 to 10:30** – Roundtable 1: “A Shifting Field: The Place of Postcolonial Studies Today”-  
Organized by Graduate Students

**June 18, 11:30 to 12:30** – Roundtable 2: “The Future of the Association”

**1:00 to 02:30** - Annual General Meeting and Elections

**Zoom links for all the events will be emailed to \*registered\* participants. For cyber security reasons, please do not share the links. For registration details, please see: <http://caclals.ca/caclals-conference-registration/>**

**All attendees must be registered. All presenters must be registered and paid members of CACLALS.**

Don’t forget to follow us on twitter @caclals\_ca for conference highlights. Our official hashtag this year is #caclals22.

Abstracts and speaker biographies appear at the end of this program. Full chairing and presentation guidelines can be found on our website.



## Day 1 Wednesday, June 15

9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.: (Zoom Room 1)

**Opening Prayers with KPU's Elder-in-Residence, Lekeyten**

**Keynote: "Architectural Kinships" by Julietta Singh**

10:30 to 11:00 - Break

11:00 to 12:30 Sessions 1 and 2

<p><b>Session 1 – Migration, Refugeeism and Precarious Citizenship</b> (Zoom Room 1)</p> <p>Chair: Asma Sayed</p> <p>Casco-Solis, Sara: "National Security, Resilience and Happiness in Refugee Fiction"</p> <p>Acharya, Pushpa: "Mapping the Nation in the Nepali Adventure Romances"</p>	<p><b>Session 2 – South African Narratives</b> (Zoom Room 2)</p> <p>Chair: Jesse Arseneault</p> <p>Coplen Rose: "Kaleidoscopic Visions of South Africa: A Study of State and Station in Imraan Coovadia's <i>Tales of the Metric System</i>"</p> <p>Gugu Hlongwane: "Seductive Metaphors and 'Cruel Optimism' in Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Writings and Speeches"</p> <p>Jill Planche: "A Particular Present' and the Paradox of Decolonization: Magnet Theatre's <i>Cargo: Stating Slavery at the Cape</i>"</p>
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12:30 to 1:00 – Break

1:00 to 2:00 – Session 3 (Zoom Room 1)

**Session 3 – Plenary: Re-placing Literature: Mobilizing Emergent Strategy to Decolonize our Institutional Practices**

Chair: Asma Sayed

Participants: The Reckoning, Repairing, and Reworlding Research Collective

2:00 to 2:30 – Networking (Zoom Room 1)

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## Day 2: Thursday, June 16

9:30 to 11:00 – Session 4 (Zoom Room 1)

### Session 4 - Graduate Student Prize Panel

Chair: Anindo Hazra

Jumoke Verissimo: The Hate You Spread: Examining Ubuntu Relationship in Festus Iyayi's Heroes

Mariam Mabrouk: "The Moment is a Wound": Perpetual Temporality of War and Occupation in Sinan Antoon's *The Book of Collateral Damage*"

Jonathan Nash: Time Lost in "the Jungle": Reclaiming Time Through Companionship, Solidarity, and Care

Thomas Hanson: "Reading 'The Grammar of Animacy': Robin Wall Kimmerer's Reparative Resistance"

11:00 – 11:30 – Break

11:30 to 12:30 – Sessions 5 and 6

### Session 5 – Rupturing War Mythologies (Zoom Room 1)

Chair: Anna Guttman

Fahey, Alicia: "Tsawalk: Rupturing the Colonial Mythology of the First World War in *Redpatch*"

Shabnam, Shamika: "Women's Testimonies, Activism, and Solidarity: An Alternate Understanding of 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War"

### Session 6 – Pedagogies and Methodologies (Zoom Room 2)

Chair: Jesse Arseneault

Kris Singh: "Mourning and Meaning: Teaching Bessie Head's "Looking for a Rain God" and Lee Maracle's "Charlie""

Jennifer Hardwick: "Embodied Storytelling and Decolonial Methodology in the Work of Virago Nation"

12:30 to 1:00 – Break

1:00 to 2:30 – Sessions 7 and 8

### Session 7: South Asian Postcolonialisms I (Zoom Room 1)

Chair: Ranjini Mendis

Asma Sayed and Jacqueline Walker: "Speaking Truth to Power": Reading Racial Injustice and Othering of Muslims in Uzma Jalaluddin's *Hana Khan Carries On*

Rajendran, Susan: "Anti-Imperialist Aspirations: Responding to the Spectre of the Postcolonial Self"

Kaur, Ramanpreet: "The Politics of Self-Representation and Representation: A Comparative Analysis of Piro's *Kafian* and Swarajbir's *Shairee*"

### Session 8: Rupturing Legal Frameworks (Zoom Room 2)

Chair: Anindo Hazra

Jesse Arseneault: "Interspecies Intimacies in South African Law and Literature"

Arshad Said Khan: "The Stories of Graveyards and Apocalypse: Exploring Hijra Commons in Hindu Nationalist Times"

Rajeshwari Nandkumar: "Examining the Continued Influence of Colonial Legislations in the Framing of Laws that Influence the Social Condition of Sex Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic"

## Day 3: Friday, June 17

9:30 to 10:30 – Session 9: Roundtable 1 (Zoom Room 1)

**“A Shifting Field: The Place of Postcolonial Studies Today” - Roundtable organized by Graduate Students**

**Panelists:** Sadie Barker, Sheetala Bhat, Jennifer Hardwick, Priscilla Jolly, Geoffrey MacDonald  
**Moderators:** Shalika Sivathanan and Sara Rozenberg

10:30 to 11:00 – Break

11:00 to 12:30 – Sessions 10 and 11

**Session 10 – Anthropocentric Imaginaries and Critiques** (Zoom Room 1)

Chair: Jason Sandhar

Handlarski, Denise: “Teaching, learning, and reading during a climate crisis”

Šlapkauskaitė, Rūta: “On the Finny subject(s) of Richard Flanagan’s ‘Gould’s book of Fish’”

McCracken, Brennan: “Tokarczuk’s tender narrator and anthropocentric Critique”

**Session 11– Theoretical Underpinnings** (Zoom Room 2)

Chair: Susie O’Brien

Shlensky, Lincoln: “Messianic postcolonial time? Walter Benjamin, Nadav Lapid and Apocalyptic History”

Sarra-Davis, Alexander: “Dreams of intervention: Reception as rewriting in Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*”

Law, Andrew Harding: “‘Repetition becoming a haunting’: The Poetic Intersection of Hauntology and Conceptualism in *Zong!*”

12:30 to 1:00 Break

1:00 to 2:30 - Sessions 12 and 13

**Session 12: South Asian Postcolonialisms II** (Zoom Room 1)

Chair: Anindo Hazra

Chakraborty, Chandrima: “National History and Public Memory: South Asian Diasporic Literature in a Canadian Classroom”

Joseph, Clara: “Is the Church to Blame for Early Modern Colonialism? A Postcolonial Critique of Travelogues in India”

Sandhar, Jason: “Traumas Remembered, Ruptured Selves in Sunjeev Sahota’s *China Room*”

**Session 13: Literary and Media Narratives** (Zoom Room 2)

Chair: Jennifer Hardwick

Blair, Jennifer: “The Underground Railroad and the Embodiments of Book History”

Wong, Rachel: “Coalitions, Community, and Counter-Histories: (Re)Reading Historical Ruptures Through the *Pender Guy* Broadcast”

Ventimilla, Alex: “(Neo)Colonial Conservation: The Documentary, Endangered Species, and Dehumanized Life”

2:30 to 3:00 – Networking (Zoom Room 1)

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## Day 4: Saturday, June 18

9:30 to 11:00 – Sessions 14 and 15

<p><b>Session 14 – Rupturing Patriarchy and Colonial World Systems</b> (Zoom Room 1)</p> <p>Chair: Coplen Rose</p> <p>Maddi Chan: “Making Meaningful Contact: Close Reading as a Feminist Praxis of Touch”</p> <p>Sheetala Bhat: “Performing Love Songs Against Hungry Listening: On Resistance to Colonial Recognition in <i>Vigil</i> and <i>Draupadi</i>”</p> <p>Alessandra Capperdoni: “Animal Time: On the Temporal Logic of Reminders”</p>	<p><b>Session 15 – Biopolitics, Disease, and Settler-Colonial Violence</b> (Zoom Room 2)</p> <p>Chair: Jason Sandhar</p> <p>Stephanie Oliver: “Rupturing the “Pulmonary Commons”: Toxic Strangulations in Rita Wong’s Poetry”</p> <p>Frances Grace Fyfe: “State Re-Members Itself: On Vaccines, Memory, and the National Archive”</p>
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11:00 to 11:30 – Break

11:30 to 12:30 – Roundtable 2 (Zoom Room 1)

### “The Future of the Association”

Panelists: John C. Ball, Susie O’Brien, Jason Sandhar  
Moderator: Asma Sayed  
Respondent: Jesse Arseneault

12:30 to 1:00 - Break

1:00 to 2:30 – Annual General Meeting and Elections - open to all CACLALS members (Zoom Room 1)

2:30 to 3:00 – Networking (Zoom Room 1)

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# CACLALS 2022 ABSTRACTS

## **Keynote Abstract - Singh, Julietta: “Architectural Kinships”**

How do colonial histories and decolonial legacies inhabit our most intimate dwelling spaces? How are we, in turn, inhabited by them? This keynote takes the form of an extended meditation on the force of settler colonial narratives and the possibilities of decolonial life through attention to where and how we dwell. Turning attention to the spaces that house us as sites of revolutionary possibility, this meditation considers the architectures that shape our lives, studying them as guides toward queer family-making, nonbiological and atemporal kinships, and intimate structures of un-belonging.

## **Roundtable 1: “A Shifting Field: The Place of Postcolonial Studies Today”**

This roundtable explores the shifting significance of postcolonial studies, and what it means to be a postcolonial scholar today. From institutional support to interdisciplinary collaborations, participants and attendees are encouraged to reflect on the promises, limitations, and innovative potential that postcolonial studies offers in and for the current moment, and what continues to draw new students to the field.

## **Roundtable 2: “The Future of the Association”**

Set to coincide with CACLALS formally changing its name to the Canadian Association for Postcolonial Studies (CAPS), this panel inaugurates this change by exploring the history of our association and the possible future directions it may take. Panelists will speak about the changes that have taken place in our association’s nearly five-decade history, and the scholarship that has taken shape over this period. Of particular importance to the panel will be the ways in which CACLALS’ former “Commonwealth” frame generated (for better and for worse) a model of postcolonial studies distinct from the American model, assembling a home for the then-burgeoning field of postcolonial literature. Equally, the panel will consider the importance of moving away from the commonwealth designation for its exclusionary significations. Panelists will speak about how the current movement toward CACLALS’ name change has evolved, with particular attention to our ongoing relationship with ACLALS and its various global associations. Ruminating on CACLALS’ transition to CAPS—a move that has long been called for by members—panelists will also reflect on the possibilities and foreclosures of this new frame as we look toward the future of postcolonial studies in what many call Canada.

## **Plenary Panel: “Re-placing Literature:” Mobilizing Emergent Strategy to Decolonize our Institutional Practices**

This panel explores the in-progress collaboration of a decolonial learning/unlearning circle as we generate a co-edited special issue of an open-source journal through the tenets of adrienne maree brown’s *Emergent Strategy* (2017) and other lineages of abolitionist and liberation praxis, and as we attempt to reshape certain iterative institutional practices that reproduce colonial and capitalist disruptions of connection.

## **PANEL ABSTRACTS:**

### **Acharya, Pushpa Raj: “Mapping the Nation in the Nepali Adventure Romances”**

In the Nepali adventure romances, the wandering protagonists map the Nepali territory—a journey that creates a sense of wonder by mixing the familiar with the strange, traditional with modern, scientific with magical and art, and the British colonial cities with the villages and the shamanic spaces.

### **Arseneault, Jesse: “Interspecies Intimacies in South African Law and Literature”**

This paper explores the legal regulation of interspecies sex in South Africa from the eighteenth century to the present, foregrounding how interspecies sex forms a central part of governing settler sexuality in the region.

### **Bhat, Sheetala: “Performing Love Songs against Hungry Listening: On Resistance to Colonial recognition in Vigil and Draupadi”**

Through a comparative study of two theatrical performances, Rebecca Belmore's (Anishinaabe) *Vigil* from Turtle Island, and Kalakeshtra Manipur's *Draupadi* from India, this paper examines resistance to state recognition in settler colonial and "postcolonial" contexts together to unearth political and aesthetic strategies within decolonization efforts, and new forms of colonial oppressions.

**Blair, Jennifer: "The Underground Railroad and the Embodiments of Book History"**

Featuring archives that document the books that travelled on the underground railroad, this paper asks how a book history approach informed by materialist-oriented critical race theory might critique the "structures of materiality" that, in Kathryn Yusoff's words, "perpetuate antiblackness in its forms of subjugation, as well as ongoing settler colonialism."

**Capperdoni, Alessandra: "Animal Time: On the Temporal Logic of Reminders"**

This paper discusses Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and Lee Maracle's *Ravensong* (1993) as novel which, despite differences in style and thematic preoccupations, address past and present trauma, ecocide, and collision of the local with world systems through a re-signification of memory and history.

**Casco Solís, Sara: "National Security, Resilience and Happiness in Refugee Fiction"**

Resilience has been used by neoliberal governments on behalf of national security to exert power over the forcibly displaced. Through the analysis of Sharon Bala's *The Boat People*, this paper problematizes this use of resilience and its effects on individuals who fantasize about achieving happiness in a country where they are forced to remain imprisoned.

**Chan, Maddi: "Making Meaningful Contact: Close Reading as a Feminist Praxis of Touch"**

If the Western academy is a site of continued colonization, close reading is located within world(s) developed, conditioned, and sustained by colonialism. The practice of close reading is constrained by colonial modes of discipline in the Western academy, reproducing the hierarchization and erasure of bodies for knowledge production.

**Chakraborty, Chandrima: "National History and Public Memory: South Asian Diasporic Literature in a Canadian Classroom"**

Remembrance pedagogy can create openings for conversations on legacies of the 1985 Air India bombings that are being erased by official forms of remembering in Canada. Teaching South Asian history through the lens of a "Canadian tragedy" that resonates with few, helps to historicize the presence of racialized students in the classroom.

**Fahey, Alicia: "Tsawalk: Rupturing the Colonial Mythology of the First World War in *Redpatch*"**

Raes Calvert and Sean Harris Oliver's play *Redpatch* contextualizes the First World War and its ruptures in the broader histories of colonialism in Canada. At Vimy Ridge, Indigenous soldier Private Woodrow experiences a moment of ontological crisis that effectually destabilizes the formative mythology of Vimy Ridge.

**Fyfe, Frances Grace: "State Re-Members Itself: On Vaccines, Memory, and the National Archive"**

This paper aligns the technologies of mass vaccination and national archive production, both of which create in citizens "memories in advance" to consider the disruptive potential of vaccine side effects: the fevers that ascribe agency on the body to vet, analyze, and reconsider the memories it takes for granted.

**Handlarski, Denise: "Teaching, learning, and reading during a climate crisis"**

This paper examines *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline, *Gun Island* by Amitav Ghosh, and the poetry and fiction of Olive Senior, arguing that the practice of reading postcolonial literature helps enact the very antidote to climate change: low carbon work, circles of trust, and an ethic of care.

**Hanson, Thomas: “Reading 'The Grammar of Animacy': Robin Wall Kimmerer's Reparative Resistance”**

This essay explores how the grammatical and taxonomical interventions of Robin Wall Kimmerer’s chapter “Learning the Grammar of Animacy” from *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013) might enact a critical mode that disengages from combative or competitive forms of resistance.

**Hardwick, Jennifer: “Embodied Storytelling and Decolonial Methodology in the work of Virago Nation”**

This presentation will draw on the embodied storytelling of all-Indigenous Burlesque Virago Nation to argue that ethical scholarly engagement with resurgent, decolonial works and stories is not simply about reading, watching, and listening; it about finding ways to mobilize narratives to claim spaces, make silenced histories visible, and challenge colonial structures.

**Hlongwane, Gugu: “Seductive Metaphors and ‘Cruel Optimism’ in Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s Writings and Speeches”**

The paper will explore how the writings and speeches of Archbishop Desmond Tutu perpetuate Lauren Berlant’s “cruel optimism.” Given the intoxicating effects of metaphors like “the rainbow nation,” the following question will be central to the paper’s development: how useful is Berlant’s ambient citizenship for the special case of South Africa?

**Joseph, Clara: “Is the Church to Blame for Early Modern Colonialism?: A Postcolonial Critique of Travelogues on India”**

According to some scholars, the Church cannot be held responsible for colonial injustice. Therefore, a papal apology may be presented on behalf of select erring members, not the Church. This paper studies travelogues of Europe and India from the early modern period to illustrate how such a view is untenable.

**Kaur, Ramanpreet: “The Politics of Self-Representation and Representation: A Comparative Analysis of Piro’s *Kafian* and Swarajbir’s *Shairee*”**

This paper analyzes the politics of self-representation and representation through the lenses of caste and gender in life writings of Piro, a nineteenth-century Punjabi poet, dancing girl, and consort of the head of a marginal religious sect and Swarajbir’s play *Shairee* (2004).

**Khan, Arshad Said: “The Stories of Graveyards and Apocalypse: Exploring Hijra Commons in Hindu Nationalist Times”**

This paper examines literary representations of hijra commons in contemporary India. Hijras are a South Asia specific subaltern transfeminine group. This paper explores how hijra commons as discussed in certain literary works speak back from the margins and construct alternative political frameworks to dissent against Hindu nationalism, besides forging solidarities.

**Law, Andrew Harding: ““Repetition Becoming a Haunting:” The Poetic Intersection of Hauntology and Conceptualism in *Zong!*”**

This paper will argue that conceptualist writing techniques are used in many contemporary poems as a way to engage with the influence of the past on the present and the future. To that end, it will consider the intersection of hauntology and conceptualism within M. NourbeSe Philip’s *Zong!*.

**Mabrouk, Miriam: ““The Moment is a Wound:” Perpetual Temporality of War and Occupation in Sinan Antoon’s *The Book of Collateral Damage*”**

In my paper, I will argue that Sinan Antoon’s novel uses narrative techniques to outline a conception of coloniality that is inextricably linked to temporality, in order to show its effects on Iraqis and how it was weaponized to justify the invasion. He does so by instrumentalizing his narrators, who contend with a perpetual present of violence, affecting their sense of time and history, while chronicling a history of US involvement in the region.

**McCracken, Brennan: “Tokarczuk’s Tender Narrator and Anthropocentric Critique”**

This paper examines the entangled histories of humanitarian and ecological violence in Olga Tokarczuk’s novel *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and asks how Tokarczuk’s narrative technique—which figures narration as both complicit and potentially catalyzing—foregrounds her critique of anthropocentric, instrumentalist relations with the non-human world.

**Nandkumar, Rajeshwari: “Examining the Continued Influence of Colonial Legislations in the Framing of Laws that Influence the Social Condition of Sex Workers during the COVID 19 Pandemic”**

By examining the alienation faced by sex workers in India, during the late nineteenth century, with the enforcement of the Contagious Diseases ACT (CDA) and by comparing it to the marginalization of Indian sex workers during the current COVID 19 pandemic, this paper examines how colonial legislations are instrumental in shaping the existing abolitionist attitudes towards sex work in India.

**Nash, Jonathan: “Time Lost in “the Jungle”: Reclaiming Time Through Companionship, Solidarity and Care”**

A great deal of postcolonial scholarship has emphasised the spatial aspect of enclosures like “the Jungle,” which demarcate a place outside the commons of the nation through walls, fences, and surveillance (Mbembe 2019, Rifkin, Agier 2018, Wheliye 2014, Woolley 2014, Morgensen 2011, Farrier 2011, Rifkin 2009). However, much more can be said about refugees’ relations and experiences with time within these enclosures. Situating this presentation within the stories of “the Jungle,” I argue that its residents alongside volunteers ruptured both the spatial and temporal borders of the enclosure and in doing so imagined alternative ways of being together for the future.

**Oliver, Stephanie: “Rupturing the “Pulmonary Commons”: Toxic Strangulations in Rita Wong’s Poetry”**

Expanding studies of *undercurrent* and “the hydrocommons,” this paper reads Wong’s poetics and ethics in relation to the “pulmonary commons.” Using poetic language and syntax that defamiliarizes the breathing process, Wong exposes the links between micro and macro forms of toxic strangulation, rupturing the often-unconscious realm of breathing to expose the toxicity of Canada’s “settler atmospherics” (Simmons 2017).

**Planche, Jill: “‘A Particular Present’ and the Paradox of Decolonization: Magnet Theatre’s *Cargo*: Staging Slavery at the Cape”**

Seeking to challenge decolonization’s hermeneutic discourse, I engage Fanon’s notion of decolonization, “dialectics of time, life and creation,” and Deleuze’s non-chronological concept of time, dynamic processes of differences and fluctuations, with *Cargo*, Magnet Theatre’s “mnemonic provocations,” where fragments of the past in the present create a “narrative of restitution.”

**Rajendran, Susan: “Anti-Imperialist Aspirations: Responding to the Spectre of the Postcolonial Self”**

Postcolonialism suggests the break with a particularly burdensome “past”, but, at the same time, signals the emergence of something undefined yet haunted by the spectre of that very “past”. It implies a void at both the beginning and “end” of colonialism. I explore the “postcolonial” as conflicted both in theory and in practice

**Rose, J. Coplen: “Kaleidoscopic Visions of South Africa: A Study of State and Station in Imraan Coovadia’s *Tales of the Metric System*”**

This paper discusses the narrative structure of Imraan Coovadia’s *Tales of the Metric System* (2014). Drawing on language employed by Karina Magdalena Szczurek in her review of Coovadia’s novel, this paper argues for the necessity of a kaleidoscopic lens to explore the fissures and fractures created by apartheid violence.

**Sandhar, Jason: “Traumas Remembered, Ruptured Selves in Sunjeev Sahota’s *China Room*”**

Sunjeev Sahota’s 2021 novel, *China Room*, features two stories, set 70 years apart, about a family farm in Punjab. This paper argues that Sahota’s juxtaposition of these two stories rethinks connections and ruptures between memory and trauma, (present) self and (ancestral) other, and origin and return in the Indian diasporic novel.

**Sarra-Davis, Alexander: “Dreams of Intervention: Reception as Rewriting in Ruth Ozeki’s *A Tale for the Time Being*”**

When postcolonial fiction builds narratives out of experience, questions of authenticity and ethics haunt any escape that authors or readers desire from their fiction’s historical context. This paper argues *A Tale for the Time Being* offers readers and writers a path towards radical futures through radical readership.

**Sayed, Asma and Walker, Jacqueline: ““Speaking Truth to Power”: Reading Racial Injustice and Othering of Muslims in Uzma Jalaluddin’s *Hana Khan Carries On*”**

Drawing on postcolonial, critical race, and Islamic feminist theories, this presentation explores the ways in which Uzma Jalaluddin’s romantic comedy novel, *Hana Khan Carries On* (2021), represents empathy-based kinship and social cohesion in the face of Islamophobic hatred. We argue that at a moment in Canadian history when attacks on Muslim women are on the rise, looking closely at anti-Muslim racism as it is represented in the novel allows for a reading that not only critiques the Canadian multicultural model but that also questions the global complacency in not urgently addressing Islamophobia.

**Shabnam, Shamika: “Women’s Testimonies, Activism, and Solidarity: An Alternate Understanding the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War”**

My paper focuses on how women’s testimonies and fictional stories on the 1971 Bangladeshi Liberation War become counter-histories that complicate the nationalist masculine history of the war. I analyze the ways in which women establish imagined forms of solidarity with past places as well as women activists and leaders in order to rupture national territorial demarcations.

**Shlensky, Lincoln Z.: “Messianic Postcolonial Time? Walter Benjamin, Nadav Lapid and Apocalyptic History”**

This paper argues that Walter Benjamin’s messianism, when read alongside a recent film by the Israeli director Nadav Lapid, must be reconsidered for its heuristic value to postcolonialism. Lapid’s film *Ahed’s Knee* actualizes a paradox in Benjamin’s “Theologico-Political Fragment” that suggests the possibility of a messianically postcolonial inflection of history.

**Singh, Kris: “Mourning and Meaning: Teaching Bessie Head’s “Looking for a Rain God” and Lee Maracle’s “Charlie””**

This essay considers the stakes of mourning in the classroom and in response to the latest manifestations of climate change. I argue that Bessie Head’s “Looking for a Rain God” and Lee Maracle’s “Charlie” study loss and act as pedagogical guides to public mourning.

**Šlapkauskaitė, Rūta: “On the Finny Subject(s) of Richard Flanagan’s “Gould’s Book of Fish””**

The paper examines the use of the fish trope in Richard Flanagan’s historical novel “Gould’s Book of Fish” in relation to the narrative agency of the comic and the fantastic as modes of epistemic intrusion into colonial ecologies of space and time.

**Ventimilla, Alex: “(Neo)Colonial Conservation: The Documentary, Endangered Species, and Dehumanized Life”**

This paper analyzes human-animal relations in documentaries positing the plight of an endangered species as ecological emergencies through a close analysis of *The Ivory Game*. It argues this narrative framing of

conservationist efforts dehumanizes the people that inhabit and contest these environments, most of whom are citizens of postcolonial states.

**Verissimo, Jumoke: “*The Hate You Spread: Examining Ubuntu Relationality in Festus Iyayi’s Heroes*”**

My presentation draws on the entangled representation of transmitted animosity in Festus Iyayi’s *Heroes*, within the broader narrative of the War, to explore how the inability to confront negative emotions from the traumatic event amount to social distrust and continued discontent in the present. I draw attention to ways unrecognised, yet existing negative emotions from the past distort the temporal. I argue that war narratives capture a fragmented ubuntu through the deployment of negative emotions in their characters, implying that concerns of reconciliation and forgiveness are entangled in the social contradictions of unresolved emotions embodying how we remember the past.

**Wong, Rachel: “Coalitions, Community, and Counter-Histories: (Re)Reading Historical Ruptures Through the Pender Guy Broadcast”**

This paper explores conversations currently taking place within Asian Canadian studies as it relates to coalitional spaces and community building. Specifically, I look at a coop radio program from Vancouver called Pender Guy. This paper argues for the ways in which Pender Guy utilized a coalitional space to foster initiatives and activities that actively resisted censorship from mainstream media, and attempted to rewrite hegemonic, settler colonial historical narratives from within a settler state.

## CACLALS 2022 PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

**Keynote Speaker: Julietta Singh** – Julietta Singh is a decolonial scholar and nonfiction writer whose work engages the enduring global effects of colonization through attention to ecology, inheritance, race, gender, sexuality, and disability. She works and teaches across postcolonial and decolonial studies, queer studies, the ecological humanities, and experimental feminisms. Singh is the author of three books: *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism & Decolonial Entanglements*, *No Archive Will Restore You*, and most recently, *The Breaks*.

### **Bios of Presenters**

**Acharya, Pushpa Raj:** Pushpa Raj Acharya is a doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature and South Asian Studies at the University of Toronto.

**Arseneault, Jesse:** Jesse Arseneault is an Assistant Professor of global Anglophone literatures at Concordia University in Montreal and co-director of SPAM—the Society, Politics, Animals, and Materialities Centre, cohosted by Concordia and Simon Fraser University. His work primarily looks at South African literature and culture through the lenses of animal studies, the environmental humanities, queer theory, and decolonial thought. His latest research involves an FRQ-funded research project on pests in contemporary African literature, as well as a collaborative project on the legal prosecution and punishment of animals.

**Ball, John C.:** John C. Ball has been attending CACLALS conferences since 1991 and ACLALS since 1992, when he was a PhD student at the University of Toronto. He is now professor and chair of English at the University of New Brunswick, where he has written or edited three books, including *Imagining London: Postcolonial Fiction and the Transnational Metropolis* (UTP 2004), as well as many articles and book chapters. He served as editor or co-editor of *Studies in Canadian Literature* for 17 years and on the CACLALS executive for 11.

**Barker, Sadie:** Sadie Barker is a PhD student at Concordia University, working at the intersections of postcolonial studies, cultural studies, and aesthetic theory. With Priscilla Jolly, she co-founded and currently co-

edits *Refractions: A Journal of Postcolonial Cultural Criticism*. Her work can be found (or is forthcoming) in *Canadian Literature*, *Postcolonial Interventions*, and elsewhere.

**Bhat, Sheetala:** Sheetala Bhat is a doctoral candidate at Western University. She is from India and is the author of *Performing Self, Performing Gender*. She won the 2020 Helsinki Prize from the International Federation of Theatre Research, and the 2019 David G. Hartwell Emerging Scholar Award from the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts.

**Blair, Jennifer:** Jennifer Blair is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Ottawa. Her fields of specialty include nineteenth-century Canadian literature, critical theory, and queer studies. She has published articles in *Studies in Canadian Literature*, *GLQ*, and *Screen*.

**Capperdoni, Alessandra:** Alessandra Capperdoni is a Lecturer in the Department of Humanities at Simon Fraser University. She has published articles on modern and contemporary literature, poetics, psychoanalysis, animal studies, and translation. She is currently working on a manuscript on Canadian literature.

**Casco Solís, Sara:** Sara Casco Solís is a research fellow at the Department of English Studies of the University of Salamanca, Spain, where she is currently working on her PhD thesis in Canadian literature. She holds an FPU grant, funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation, and Universities. She is a member of the research project “Narrating Resilience, Achieving Happiness? Toward a Cultural Narratology” (PID2020-113190GB-C22), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. Her main research interests range from trauma and memory studies to resilience, vulnerability, space, and transnational studies.

**Chakraborty, Chandrima:** Chandrima Chakraborty is Professor in the Department of English and Cultural Studies and Director of the Centre for Peace Studies at McMaster University. Her research is on public memory, nationalist history, masculinity, and religion, with a focus on the literatures and cultures of South Asia and the South Asian diaspora. Her publications include, *Masculinity, Asceticism, Hinduism: Past and Present Imaginings of India* (2011), *Mapping South Asian Masculinities: Men and Political Crises* (2015), and *Remembering Air India: The Art of Public Mourning*” (co-edited 2017). She is currently working on a co-edited book on COVID-19 and anti-Asian racism in Canada.

**Chan, Maddi:** Maddi Chan (she/her/hers) is a PhD candidate in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University. Her research interrogates the masculinization and institutionalization of nineteenth-century Western medicine and explores how women’s writing and testimony across the transatlantic subvert medical knowledge production by refiguring her self-embodied knowledge as the essential point of reference. She understands her position as a scholar always in relation to her role as a daughter and learner to her familial matriarchs and, as such, prioritizes Caribbean feminist epistemologies in and beyond her academic work.

**Fahey, Alicia:** Alicia Fahey (she/her) is a settler-scholar and interdisciplinary instructor whose research and teaching interests involve Canadian literatures, cultures, and visual arts and Indigenous arts and literatures of Turtle Island.

**Fyfe, Frances Grace:** Frances Grace Fyfe is a Master’s student in English at Concordia University. She is interested in culture, and language, and people, and things.

**Handlarski, Denise:** Denise Handlarski is an Assistant Professor at the School of Education, Trent University. She holds a PhD in Postcolonial literature from York University. Denise researches and teaches at the nexus of critical race theory, gender studies, pedagogy, and literary study. Her work centres on community and education, including spirituality and education, sex education, literacy education, social justice education, and well-being in education. She is also a practicing rabbi.

**Hanson, Thomas:** Thomas Hanson is currently a Writing, Rhetoric and Discourse studies major at Brock University hoping to graduate in 2023 and pursue an MA in English. He is interested in researching the ways the capacity to name objects places ethical demands on speakers and participates in subject formation.

**Hardwick, Jennifer:** Dr. Jennifer Hardwick settler scholar and teacher who currently resides on the unceded territories of the Kwantlen, Katzie, Semiahmoo, and Tsawwassen peoples. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on settler colonial policy and Indigenous literary, media, and performance arts on the territories currently known as Canada. She is Chair of the Policy Studies Program and a faculty member in the Department of English at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

**Hazra, Anindo:** Anindo Hazra is a contract faculty member at York University and has taught courses in several departments (DLLL; English; Humanities). Anindo completed his PhD at the Department of English, York University in 2015. His dissertation, and monograph-in-progress, analyses selected works of two queer Indian writers: Mahesh Dattani and R. Raj Rao. With Theodore W. Goossen, he is editor of *Human Rights and the Arts in Global Asia: An Anthology* (Lexington Books). Born and raised in Calcutta, India, Anindo received his undergraduate degree in English Literature from the University of Bristol, UK, and his Master's degree in English Literature from Queen's University in Kingston. Anindo's ongoing work extends the critical discourse on queer Indian subjectivities, tracing the shifting contours of "queer India" in the contemporary period.

**Hlongwane, Gugu:** Gugu Hlongwane is an Associate Professor of English at Saint Mary's University, Halifax. Her collection, *Electric Fences and Other Stories*, was published by Mawenzi House in 2016. She is currently working on a novel. Her articles, in the field of postcolonial theory and literatures, appear in *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, *African Identities*, *Journal of Black Studies*, *Alternation*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Studies in Canadian Literature*, *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, *Postcolonial Text* and the *Journal of Literary Studies*. She is a Research Associate at the University of the Free State in South Africa.

**Jolly, Priscilla:** Priscilla Jolly is a PhD student at Concordia University. Her research combines approaches from environmental humanities, critical landscape studies, and postcolonial studies. She is interested in tropes of placemaking and subject formations associated with specific places. Her creative and academic work can be found in different venues including *The Conversation Canada*, *The Goose*, *Postcolonial Text*, and *eTropic*. With Sadie Barker, she works as a co-editor and co-founder of *Refractions: A Journal of Postcolonial Cultural Criticism*.

**Joseph, Clara:** Clara A.B. Joseph is the author of *The Agent in the Margin* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier UP 2008), *The Face of the Other (A Long Poem)* (Brisbane: Interactive Press 2016), *Dandelions for Bhabha* (Brisbane: Interactive Press 2018), and *Christianity in India: The Anti-Colonial Turn* (London and New York; Routledge 2019). Her current research, on the freedom struggle of the Thomas Christians of India during Portuguese and Dutch colonization, is supported by a SSHRC Insight Grant.

**Kaur, Ramanpreet:** Ramanpreet Kaur is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Comparative Literature, Western University. She is writing her dissertation on gender politics in the androcentric historiography of Punjabi theatre. Her research interests are Postcolonial literature and theory, Indian theatre, and history of Punjab. In addition to her research, she develops tools, games, and interactive methods for teaching Hindi and Punjabi.

**Khan, Arshad Said:** Arshad Said Khan is a PhD candidate at the department of English and Film Studies, University of Alberta. He is currently writing his dissertation of the representations and self-representations of the Indian hijra subject. Khan previously attended Yale University as a Fulbright scholar. He is interested in how Southern gender variant identities challenge and reimagine ideas of citizenship and nationalism

**Law, Andrew Harding:** Andrew Law is a doctoral candidate in the Department of English at Queen's University. His research interests centre on contemporary conceptual poetry, with a particular interest in the use of found language and erasure poetry as a way to respond to colonial and historical texts.

**Mabrouk, Miriam:** Miriam Mabrouk is a PhD candidate from Tunisia, currently completing her doctoral degree in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta. Her research focuses on Iraqi post 2003 literary narratives and the ways they challenge the US dominant narrative about the invasion. She co-authored a manuscript entitled "This Part of the Country: Teaching Archives of Black Prairie Freedom and Futures." She is a recipient of the Sarah Nettie Christie Graduate Award and a two-time recipient of the Dr. Ahmed Qureshi Graduate Scholarship.

**MacDonald, Geoffrey:** Geoffrey MacDonald (he/him) teaches postcolonial literary studies and academic writing. His current research project, *Not So Distant*, theorizes the use of intersectionality to analyze cross-identity representations in Caribbean novels. He holds a PhD from York University. His scholarly work focuses on the connections between social justice and literature, and has appeared in *Modern Drama*, *Radical Americas*, and the collection *Practices of Resistance* (2018). He is an associate editor at *Caribbean Conjunctions*, the journal of the Caribbean Studies Association. His teaching emphasizes effective communications, active reading, and the appreciation of literary form. His interests include decolonial thinking, gender and sexuality studies, and indigenous critical theory.

**McCracken, Brennan:** Brennan McCracken is a PhD student in English at Concordia University in Tiohtià:ke / Montréal, QC.

#### **Nandkumar, Rajeshwari**

Rajeshwari is a second year PhD student in the Department of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University. Her research interests are focussed in the areas of postcolonial, subaltern and sexuality studies. She plans on writing a dissertation that would explore how the figure of the sex worker has been constructed by popular Indian media post globalization.

#### **Nash, Jonathan**

I am a PhD candidate of English at the University of Victoria on the unceded territories of the Lək̓ʷəŋən peoples and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. My dissertation project investigates how refugees utilize a multitude of conventional and non-conventional storytelling mediums to express their experiences and to tell their stories.

**O'Brien, Susie:** Susie O'Brien is a Professor in the Department of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University, where her teaching and research focus on postcolonial environmental humanities. In addition to co-authoring, with Imre Szeman, *Popular Culture: A User's Guide*, she has published work on slow and local food movements, scenario planning, environmental futurity, resilience, and the temporality of globalization. She is currently completing a monograph tentatively titled "Unsettling resilience stories".

**Oliver, Stephanie:** Dr. Stephanie Oliver is an Assistant Professor of English specializing in contemporary Canadian and diasporic literature at the University of Alberta's Augustana campus. Her research interests include literary representations of smell and diaspora, sensory encounters with oil, and the poetics and ethics of breathing in settler atmospheres.

**Planche, Jill:** Jill Planche is an academic with a professional background in the arts in Canada. Education: PhD English Literature (York U, 2007) and PhD, Interdisciplinary Humanities (Brock U, 2020) – focused on the space of theatre and its role in South Africa's social-political-economic discourse explored through Deleuze's minoritarian conceptualization, feminist decolonial geography and primary research of contemporary theatre practice in South Africa. Currently, Jill is an independent scholar and sessional instructor (Toronto Metropolitan

U and Brock U). Research interests include postcolonial/decolonial literature; ‘minor’ theatre’s role in contemporary discourse in South Africa and Canada; decolonizing knowledges; posthumanism; the Anthropocene, and social justice.

**Rajendran, Susan:** Susan is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Humanities at York University. She holds an MA in Humanities and a BA in English Literature also from York University. Her research focuses on the intersections of modernity, Buddhism and literature situated within the broader context of nation building in Sri Lanka. She examines Buddhist humanism as an important element in the writings of Martin Wickramasinghe and Ediriweera Sarachchandra and women's roles within the domestic sphere in the novels of Punyakante Wijenaikē. Other themes in Susan’s doctoral research highlight the relationship between aesthetics and identity, in their range and potential, as alternatives to nationalist discourse.

**Rose, J. Coplen:** Dr. J. Coplen Rose teaches courses in postcolonial literature and critical reading and writing at McMaster University and the University of Toronto. He completed his Ph.D. in English and Film Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University and his M.A. at Lakehead University. His other research interests include geography, speculative fiction, and cultural studies. His current research extends from archival research and interviews collected at the 2018 National Arts Festival in Makhanda, South Africa. This research trip was supported by an Acadia University Research Fund grant.

**Rozenberg, Sara:** Sara Rozenberg is a PhD candidate and SSHRC Doctoral Fellow in the Department of English at York University. She holds an MA from the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto, as well as an Honours BA in English. Sara’s research interests are in the fields of postcolonial and diaspora studies, Indigenous critical theory, visual and cultural studies, queer theory, transnational feminism, and poetry and poetics, with a focus on aesthetics, subjectivity, and decolonization.

**Sandhar, Jason:** Jason Sandhar teaches postcolonial literature and critical race theory at Western University in London, Ontario. Recent articles have appeared in *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature and Interventions*.

**Sarra-Davis, Alexander:** Alexander Sarra-Davis is a 6th-year PhD candidate at the University of Toronto who is interested in the intersection of agency within fiction and the ethics of literary representation. His dissertation investigates the role of self-representation in novels, and specifically what postcolonial authors have to gain from including versions of themselves as characters in their own work. He has previously presented on topics including parallels between authorship and surveillance as well as the responsibility of author in contemporary, postcolonial fiction.

**Sayed, Asma:** Asma Sayed is Canada Research Chair in South Asian Literary and Cultural Studies in the Department of English at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on Indian Ocean Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and South Asian diaspora in Canada. Her publications include five co-/edited books and numerous articles in a range of periodicals, anthologies, and academic journals. She is the President of CACLALS/CAPS (2019-22).

**Shabnam, Shamika:** Shamika Shabnam is a PhD Candidate in the English and Cultural Studies Department at McMaster University. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on the issues of masculinity and nationalism during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. Shamika has publications, both academic and creative, and has taught courses on Critical Race Studies, Postcolonialism, Human Rights and Social Justice. She is committed to working with the community and engaging in future community-led work. During the pandemic, she has been teaching and working to finish up her dissertation.

**Shlensky, Lincoln Z.:** Dr. Lincoln Z. Shlensky is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Victoria. He researches, teaches, and supervises graduate students in the fields of postcolonial literature and theory, Jewish and diaspora studies, and media studies. He has published in *The Routledge*

*Companion to Caribbean Literatures in English; Literature for Our Times: Postcolonial Studies in the Twenty First Century; La Habana Elegante; The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World; Essays and Studies: Slavery and the Cultures of Abolition; Shofar; Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History; and Qui Parle.*

**Singh, Kris:** Kris Singh is a faculty member in the English Department at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. His scholarly and creative attention spans the legacy of indentureship, the relationships among writers of the Caribbean diaspora, and the ways in which social media and popular culture shape each other.

**Sivathasan, Shalika:** Shalika is a doctoral candidate in the Department of English at York University. She holds an MA in Contemporary Literature, Culture, and Theory from King's College London, and a BA in History from the University of Toronto. Her SSHRC-funded dissertation explores relations of affect and solidarity in contemporary refugee and migrant texts.

**Šlapkauskaitė, Rūta:** I am an Associate Professor of English literature at Vilnius University, Lithuania, where I teach a number of courses on literary theory, the new materialism, multiculturalism, and (neo-)Victorian literature. My research interests include Canadian and Australian literature, memory, and material visuality, animal studies, and material ecocriticism.

**Spearey, Sue:** Sue Spearey teaches in the English Department, the Social Justice and Equity Studies MA program and the Interdisciplinary Humanities PhD Program at Brock University.

**Strauss, Helene:** Helene Strauss teaches, and is past Chair of the English Department at the University of the Free State in South Africa. Her forthcoming book, *Wayward Feeling: Audio-Visual Culture and Aesthetic Activism in Post-Rainbow South Africa* (U of Toronto Press, 2022) is to be published in May.

**Ventimilla, Alex:** Alex Ventimilla is a Mexican Ph.D. student in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta. His research draws from ecological, posthumanist, and postcolonial theory to study media representations of interspecies narrative entanglements with a focus on the Global South.

**Verissimo, Jumoke:** Jumoke Verissimo is completing her PhD in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. She is an award-winning author of three books, *I Am Memory*, *The Birth of Illusion*, and *A Small Silence* (Novel). Her writing has appeared in various magazines and anthologies, and it has been translated into Italian, French, Norwegian, and Macedonian.

**Walker Jacqueline:** Jacqueline Walker is completing her dual major in English and political science at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

### **Wong, Rachel**

Rachel Wong is a Doctoral Candidate in the English department at York University. Her research investigates the trajectory of Asian Canadian literature and its intersections with community-based organizing and the diasporic experience. She holds an MA in Comparative Literature from Western University and a BA in English and History from Simon Fraser University.

