

# A New Year at the Lyceum!

January 2008

Issue No. Four

## Opening words...

We are excited to welcome many new registrants to the vibrant community of families that frequent the Lyceum space. We are eager to enter into a new year full of possibility and wonder! All of our programs are in full swing and we have much to share already...

We are working with the Preschool class to demystify the construct of "friend" and friendship. We first started by inviting the children's thoughts and ideas about what it means to be a friend.

"They Play with me."

"Play together."

"Dogs."

"From my school."

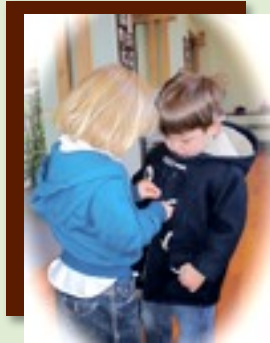
"Love."

"We like each other."

"When you like somebody."

"Friends do things together."

"All of my friends are really nice."



## Documentation as it informs the directions we take in our Practice



Throughout the Lyceum, we have attempted to capture traces of learning that have occurred in our various programs. One can never truly recreate the magic of the learning moment - you just have to be there! As staff, we feel very privileged to witness these extraordinary learning experiences that occur within the Lyceum walls. Documentation is a visual and textual record of our observations and the reflections provoked by these observations.

Reviewing documentation affords us the opportunity to make meaning of what may seem like isolated ideas and events. It is through this reflective process that we uncover the voices and theories of the children and chart new pathways for our learning. This process helps us to choose materials that provoke the children to extend their thinking. It is our objective to share this documentation with parents/families and members of the Lyceum community as a way to create transparency around the journey we travel together.

## Early Childhood

### *Books with Mums/Dads/Tods*

We are happy to welcome new families into our Mums and Tods group and are excited to have Vanessa as a member of the teaching team for this class! Unfortunately, there were not enough registrants for the Story Hour with Rainbow Caterpillar so we have cancelled the program for this term and will look at offering it again in the Spring.



### *Kindergarten*

Our Kindergarten class continues to explore Perspective and are doing so in a way that many older children would find challenging. They have created a collaborative piece called Perspectives in the Rainforest, that we plan to display in one of our west-facing windows. Each paper that was used in this collage piece was created by the children. Please take a moment to view this closely the next time you visit the Lyceum as we are very proud of this particular piece of work.



## Writers' Workshops

The Page Rippers, our senior writers' workshop group, started off the year with a trip to Bowen Island to get their creative juices flowing! The stories that emerged from this trip captured the day and left us inspired to plan a return trip to this little haven on the sea, sometime in the Spring.



## Bookclubs

A number of our Bookclubs are working on manuscripts with authors. The Ravenous Readers, Bibliophiles and the Wormers have been independently working on a manuscript for teenagers by Meg Tilly. Many of the Bookclub members have responded to Meg by saying the book inspired them to be better than they thought they could be. The Book Jackets are also working with Meg Tilly on her newest manuscript for adults.



The Ravenous Readers are working with Cynthia Heinrichs and her Viking historical fiction set on the Orkney Islands.

We have been approached by several other authors who are keen to work with our families as they chart their way through the challenging process of editing their material. Our Bookclubbers are fortunate to have this opportunity to see first hand the stages authors embrace in getting their work published.

The Wormers enjoyed a journey back through time to Anne Boleyn's execution with author Chris Humphreys.

Chris kept both adults and youth fully engaged with his repartee around brigands, mercenaries and ladies of the dark magic.



Chris came to the Lyceum after a day of rehearsing for the Pacific Theatre Production of *A Man for All Seasons*.

He was clearly excited with this opportunity to return to theatre as the colourful villain Cromwell. If you are interested in seeing Chris star in this performance, the show is running from January 24 – February 23. [www.pacifictheatre.org](http://www.pacifictheatre.org)

## Adult Bookclub

### \* Sidura Ludwig \*

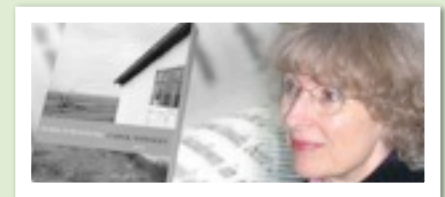
Those who were able to attend our January Adult Bookclub with Sidura Ludwig (virtually) were treated to a warm and honest interview with one of Canada's newest bright lights in the literary arena. When the web cam finally shut down, there was a palpable emptiness as Bookclub members collectively expressed their hunger for more interaction with this talented young woman. We will all be watching closely for her next novel. With the success of this web cam experience, we have invested in a projector and screen to cater to larger groups.

## Upcoming Events

### \* Carol Windley \*

We are looking forward to learning about what inspired the Pacific Coast stories in Carol Windley's book, *Home Schooling*.

Date: Feb.2, 2008  
Time: 7:00 - 10:00 pm  
Place: Lyceum  
Cost: \$35 per person



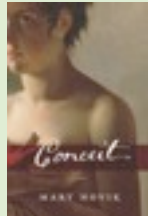
\*\*\* WINNER OF THE 2007 BC BOOK PRIZE! \*\*\*



## Upcoming Events cont...

### \* Mary Novik \*

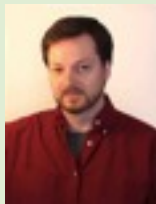
We are delighted that Mary Novik has accepted our invitation to join our Adult Bookclub in a discussion of her new book, *Conceit*. The event will be held on March 1st at 7 pm. Joe Wiebe of the Vancouver Sun puts Mary Novik in the same camp as Tracy Chevalier, author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. We look forward to discussing this engaging novel, set in 17th century London, over wine and cheese.



### Book Launch!

You are invited to join us in welcoming this year's recipient of the Governor General's Literary Award for Children's Illustration, Duncan Weller. Duncan will be launching his book, *The Boy From the Sun*, which is layered with many messages relevant to today's child. Three children sit on the curb of an urban setting, wondering what there is to do. A visitor from above breaks their boredom by introducing them to the magic and diversity of the great outdoors.

This event will be held at the Lyceum on February 16th at 3 pm. Please RSVP if you are interested in attending this event with your family.



### Professional Development Seminars

We are holding an Open House on January 31st from 6:30 - 9:00 pm for teachers and teacher-librarians from Early Childhood through high school settings. Enjoy an evening of collegial camaraderie where you can find out about the latest in Professional Development Seminars offered monthly at the Lyceum. Wine and tasty morsels will be served for your enjoyment while you wander through the Lyceum, taking in the living stories found within its walls.

### New Book Shelves

You will note that we have two brand new book cases near the Lyceum Living Room. One shelf is dedicated for picture books and the other for novels. These books are for Lyceum visitors to peruse freely while waiting for programs to begin.

Christianne's mother has kindly sewn cloth panels for the picture book collection to help prevent damage from sunlight.



### Lost and Found

We have found what you have lost! We are slowly gathering a lovely collection of scarves, sweaters, mittens, water bottles and other miscellaneous items. Please check the box labeled "Lost and Found" that is under the green table by the front door.



### Giving Thanks

Thank you very much to our unsung heroes! At least 30 young people volunteer their time at the Lyceum -- they sacrifice doing their homework and skip their extracurricular activities to support us in making our programs the best they can be! Please remember to help us acknowledge these special people for coming in.

### Hidden Stories Embedded Within the Walls of the Lyceum...

Featured item: *The Bittersweet Vine*



In the Lyceum, you may have noticed a colourful vine of orange petal-like berries. The significance of its presence is rooted in Christianne's deep connection with her grandfather and the farm he lived on near Picton, Ontario.

Stan Blake, Christianne's maternal grandfather, was looking for a place to retire with his wife, for when they would finish their teaching careers. He found a lovely piece of property on the Bay of Quinte on Lake Ontario. It had a waterfront cottage, grazing land back to the North Port Road, an old colonial home with a farmer's garden and grain fields all the way back to the stone quarry, high on the hill.

On the day Stan took his wife to view the property they were in awe of the diverse flora and fauna present everywhere they looked. Anne Blake spotted a vine of Bittersweet and marveled at the irony that the survival of such beauty would bring death to another plant.

The property was purchased and much celebration with friends and family took place that first summer on the shore. Young Anne (she was only 53) was to be diagnosed with terminal breast cancer but a short nine months later. Stan called his children home and Bettianne came all the way from Alberta with two of her children, Christianne and Rob. Anne spent her last months in that beautiful colonial home; on good days, a day bed was lifted onto a trailer so that she could be taken to see the sun set over the bay. After she passed, Stan left the property and grieved alone. Eventually, his grandchildren were to bring him back to his earlier plans of farming the land. When it came time to name the farm, Christianne was the one to paint the vine of Bittersweet on the roadside mailbox to symbolize both the bitter and the sweet co-existing in the history of that land.

### Closing Words From the Lyceum Team...

*I am excited to meet new faces and embrace new challenges as we grow together in this new year. I am thankful for a talented staff who give so unselfishly of their time and energy to make the Lyceum a special place. Life is good.*

~ **Christianne**

*A pause for appreciation to ring in the New Year: I've known most of you (being the wonderful persons and families that come to the Lyceum) for more than a year now. And many of you I'm just getting to know. Some of you have only interacted with me over email or over the phone.*

*Whatever the case may be, you give me motivation to help keep this place in operation! You're lovely people; the relationships that have been forming amongst yourselves and amongst your children in interacting with literature and art has been validating my feelings of meaning in what I'm able to do here. It's true! Thank you -- and here's to a great 2008!*

~ **Susan**

*Truly - how inspiring it is to work alongside your children. They offer me many gifts of insight and awareness. But most of all they continually invite me to experience the moment to moment unfolding that life readily offers. Fully engaged in the present I am awed by this natural way of being in the world.*

~ **Vanessa**

**CHRISTIANNE'S LYCEUM  
OF LITERATURE AND ART**



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