

# Shelf life

Toronto Public Library News & Views

April 2008

## Space vampires, a half-demon tabloid journalist and a woman named Calamity

Spring Canada Council Heritage Series targets speculative fiction

A TALE OF two teenagers who become dangerously entangled in a love triangle among mythic figures from the distant past; a dark epic about alien communication and the nature of consciousness, with space vampires; the sexy, action-packed story of a half-demon tabloid journalist and her adventures in crime; the story of a woman named Calamity whose hot flashes give her the power to recover lost objects.

All of this – and much more – is part of Toronto Public Library's spring Canada Council Heritage Series, *Foresight*, an exploration of Canadian speculative fiction and how it is influenced by Canada's unique position in the world.

"We want to let people in the city know just how many world-class writers of speculative fiction are living right here in their midst – likely a startling revelation for the average Torontonian," explains author Terrence Green when questioned about his excitement at being a participant in the library's Canada Council Heritage

Series. "And our books are available in the public library system," adds Green, who will be reading from *Sailing Time's Ocean* at Cedarbrae Branch on May 7 and at Centennial Branch on May 15.

The Canada Council Heritage Series is just one of the many literary series and events that the library offers where established and emerging authors can meet with their fans, read from their works and offer insights into their writing and the writing process. As part of the library's commitment to helping Torontonians access and participate in culture in the city – and to help promote Canadian literature and its authors – varied author readings and discussions are held at library branches across the city and throughout the year.

"Having writers read from their work is a wonderful way to highlight the great range and depth of talent in contemporary

## Fantastic Pulp Show and Sale put on by collection of fantastic fiction



THE MERRIL COLLECTION OF Science Fiction, Speculation and Fantasy's 12th Annual Fantastic Pulp Show and Sale will take place in the

lower level of the Lillian H. Smith Branch of the Toronto Public Library on Saturday, May 10, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Rare and collectable science fiction from pre-1975, pulp magazines and more will be featured in a select dealers' room.

"Pulp magazines reigned supreme on the newsstands from the early part of the last century up until their eventual demise in the mid 1950s," says Merrill Collection head Lorna Toolis. "There were stories and titles of every kind, from tough detective to westerns; hero to romance; as well

as horror, aviation, war, sports, science fiction, adventure and much more."

Named after the cheap pulpwood paper on which they were printed, the pulps enjoyed an era of success for decades as the leading form of reading entertainment for the common people. The stories of many prominent authors of the century were first featured in their pages.

Merril Collection staff will offer tours of Canada's pre-eminent public collection of speculative literature throughout the day.

In addition to its collections of

SEE CANADA COUNCIL HERITAGE SERIES, PAGE 2...

CANADA COUNCIL HERITAGE SERIES

Canadian writing," says head of programming at Toronto Public Library, Tina Srebotnjak.

"From a reader's point of view, hearing the words as the author intended them adds immensely to the pleasure of a story," says author Julie E. Czerneda, who will be reading from *Reap the Wild Wind* at

SEE CANADA COUNCIL HERITAGE SERIES, PAGE 2...

[www.torontopubliclibrary.ca](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca)

TORONTO  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

## Canada Council Heritage Series

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Beaches Branch on May 14. “From a writer’s point of view, nothing satisfies like watching readers react to what was, until that very moment, mere lines of text.

“I hadn’t read any of my work aloud before my first novel was published,” continues Czerneda. “My

most of the time. But reading to a group gives writers some of the feedback that we need to ensure we’re doing this right.

“For some of my audience, I am the first person they have ever met who works in the arts,” continues Johanson. “It’s hard to believe that someone might have no sister who’s a

**“Opportunities such as these also continue to demonstrate that the library is more than a repository but also an active and responsive forum for the entire community.”**

initial experience before an audience taught me two things. First, it’s absolutely incredible the rush you get as other people are sucked into your story and gasp or laugh at the right places. Second? Don’t write names you can’t say out loud without spitting.”

“Readings are enjoyable because of the audience’s involvement and participation,” says author Paula Johanson, who will be reading from *The Tower in the Crooked Wood* at Centennial Branch on May 15 and at Oakwood Village Branch on May 26. “Writing is a solitary thing,

dancer, no cousin who acts in fringe theatre, no friend who sings at folk music festivals – but that’s true for many people. The dialogues we enter at that time are humbling, and very grounding for me, and I try to help others feel enabled and empowered.”

The *Foresight* kickoff, on April 21 at Lillian H. Smith Branch, highlighted works by some of Canada’s best science fiction, fantasy and horror authors. Michael Skeet hosted an engaging discussion on the quest for foresight in Canadian science fiction. Authors Karl

Schroeder, James Alan Gardner and Peter Watts discussed Canadian science fiction, and how it helps Canadians understand their

identity.

Following the kickoff, *Foresight* is featuring six weeks of related city-wide readings and discussions, with 26 authors taking part in 20 events at six Toronto Public Library branches.

“I’m a sucker for a bedtime story, or anything read aloud to me,” says Cory Doctorow, who will be launching his new book *Little Brother* at Merril Collection on May 1. “I’ve been going to libraries to hear writers read since I was old enough to toddle into the section where the board books were. Reading aloud to an audience makes writing into performance – it’s exhilarating, a direct connection that’s rare for a writer who’s normally distanced from his audience by time and space.”

“I’m happy to have an opportunity to give back in a small way to further enrich the role of the library,” says author Paul Hong, who participated in a discussion about writing genre fiction at Eatonville Branch on April 29. “Opportunities such as these also continue to demonstrate that the library is more than a repository but also an active and responsive forum for the entire community.”

“Usually I’m getting in trouble at the library – late returns, hefty fines and too much giggling in the youth section,” says author Kristyn Dunnion, who was also part of the genre fiction panel at Eatonville on April 29. “Toronto Public Library’s reading series changed all that for me. Now I’m sitting in one chair, on a panel, commiserating with other trouble-maker writers!”

Cory Doctorow launches his novel *Little Brother* at the Merril Collection on May 1.

### FORESIGHT: CANADA COUNCIL HERITAGE SERIES

#### Cory Doctorow book launch

Science fiction author and [boingboing.net](http://boingboing.net) coeditor Doctorow launches his new novel, *Little Brother*. Thursday, May 1, 7 p.m. Merril Collection, Lillian H. Smith Branch

#### Terence Green and Phyllis Gotlieb

Green reads from his dazzling, philosophical time-travel novel, *Sailing Time’s Ocean*, and Gotlieb reads from her thought-provoking space opera, *Birthingstones*. Wednesday, May 7, 7 p.m. Cedarbrae Branch

#### Emily Pohl-Weary and Willow Dawson – for teens and young adults

The co-creators of *Violet Miranda: Girl Pirate* present their graphic novel. Thursday, May 8, 5 p.m. Centennial Branch

#### Brett Savory, Sandra Kasturi and Sèphera Girón

An evening of gothic delights Monday, May 12, 7 p.m. Oakwood Village Branch

#### Dave Duncan and Nalo Hopkinson

Two of Canada’s top fantasy authors read from their recent work. Wednesday, May 21, 7 p.m. Lillian H. Smith Branch

For complete Canada Council Heritage Series listings, visit the library website [torontopubliclibrary.ca/foresight/](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/foresight/)





Strolling magician Stephen Elvay wows kids at Cliffcrest reopening.

## Cliffcrest Branch reopens

More than 1,000 visitors check out the library's first browsing branch on its first day

AFTER A BRIEF closure for relocation within the Cliffcrest Plaza, Cliffcrest Branch of Toronto Public Library reopened on Thursday, April 3, welcoming more than 1,000 visitors on its first day back in business. In keeping with the library's continued efforts to create relevant, accessible and "browsable" branch experiences, the Cliffcrest Branch features recent, popular reading and audio visual materials (including bestsellers, CDs, magazines and DVDs) in attractive retail-style face-out shelving.

The new location features almost double the space, wireless Internet access, additional computer workstations, new public meeting room space and reading lounges for teens, children and adults.

The relocation of Cliffcrest Branch is part of the library's ongoing building revitalization plan. During the remainder of 2008, Torontonians will benefit from the reopening of five branches, including S. Walter Stewart, Dufferin/St. Clair, Bloor/Gladstone, Jane/Sheppard and Kennedy/Eglinton.



## Foundation endowment fund to support annual Callwood lecture

Annual lecture celebrates the life of June Callwood and her dedication to social justice

THE TORONTO PUBLIC Library Foundation's June Callwood endowment fund is growing, thanks to the help of friends and admirers of Callwood. This year the endowment helped defray

costs associated with bringing defender of the wrongfully convicted, lawyer James Lockyer, to the library, for the annual Callwood Lecture.

"We established the endowment, much to June's

delight, to enable the library to invite advocates of social justice from around the world to participate in the annual lecture," explains Library Foundation president Heather Rumball.

Thanks to those who have already contributed to the endowment, including Murray

Frum, Nancy Lockhart, Shelley Ambrose, Louise Singer and TD Bank Financial Group, all Founding Members of the Endowment Fund whose generosity has led the way.

To support the June Callwood Endowment Fund, please call 416-397-5924.

JUNE *Callwood* LECTURE

# Library Board Highlights

April 21, 2008

## The best thing a library can be is open

With the goal of improving access to library services by increasing branch open hours across the city, the library's Open Hours Vision will be incorporated into the library's budget request beginning in 2009. The vision seeks to increase hours by 25 percent in branches across the city, with more Sunday hours, longer open periods on weekdays, and the introduction of late-night hours to midnight at some locations. The library is pursuing a two-pronged approach to achieving the vision: self-service checkouts will be implemented at more branches as part of capital improvement programs to increase operating efficiency; and additional staff for longer hours will be added. As well as providing access to books and information, public libraries provide computers, quiet study space, safe and welcoming community space, and opportunities to excel and enjoy cultural and literary life for all residents.

## Fundraising policy reviewed

The board heard presentations regarding the library's fundraising and sponsorship policy framework, and put forward a motion requesting that the city librarian report to the board with options for providing opportunities for board input on the appropriateness

of sponsorships, naming opportunities and donor recognition, within the existing policies or through amendments to existing policies, and that the report address issues related to children's programs in particular, and the role of the naming committee. The board put forward a second motion requesting that the Toronto Public Library Foundation provide the board with an overview of their overall approach to fundraising. The board also heard deputations from two Toronto residents on the subject of fundraising and corporate sponsorship.

## Audited financial statements approved

The board approved the audited 2007 financial statements and received for information the audit results for the year ended December 31, 2007.

## Cleaning services contract extended

The board approved a month-to-month extension of the existing cleaning contract for the library with National Cleaning Contractor, not to exceed six months, at a cost of \$101,832.45 per month.

## Fantastic Pulp

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

speculative fiction, author biographies and research materials, the Merrill offers expert reference services for students, writers and other professionals involved in the field of speculative fiction.

Most Merrill Collections are held in closed stacks, accessible

by request, but a selection of the most recent science fiction and fantasy novels and periodicals are displayed on self-serve shelving in the reading room.

For more information about the Merrill Collection, follow the "Collections" link on the library's website [torontopubliclibrary.ca](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca).

## Calendar of Events — May 2008

### From Hanga to Manga: The Graphic Art of Japanese Storytelling

April 19 - June 28, 2008  
TD Gallery exhibit, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

### The Man who made 'The Great Wave'

Award-winning novelist Katherine Govier discusses her research into the little known life and mysterious works of woodblock print artist Katsushika Hokusai. A program to complement the From Hanga to Manga exhibit (see above).  
Thursday, May 22, 7 p.m.  
Toronto Reference Library  
789 Yonge St.

### Downtown Author Series Elizabeth Hay

Elizabeth Hay reads from and discusses her new book *Late Nights on Air*.  
Thursday, May 29, 7 p.m.  
Toronto Reference Library,  
789 Yonge St.

### Uptown Author Series Jan Wong

Jan Wong reads from *Beijing Confidential*.  
Tuesday, May 6, 7 p.m.  
North York Central Library,  
5120 Yonge St.

### Asian Heritage Month Kickoff Event

Author readings moderated by CBC television host **Suhana Meharchand**, with entertainment by **Mi Young Kim Dance Company**.  
Thursday, May 8, 7-9 p.m.  
Palmerston Branch

For hundreds of programs and events all over the city, visit [torontopubliclibrary.ca](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca).

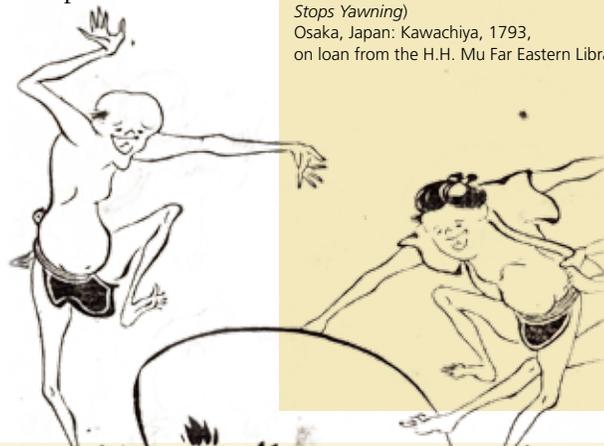


Image (detail) credit: Takehara Shunchosai  
*Tobae Akubidome (A Book of Pictures That Stops Yawning)*  
Osaka, Japan: Kawachiya, 1793,  
on loan from the H.H. Mu Far Eastern Library

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Next Board Meeting:  
May 20, 2008.

The Toronto Public Library Board meets monthly at 6 p.m., September through June at Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto. Meetings are open to the public. Board Contact: Nancy Marshall 416-393-7215.

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