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Denman Island Writers' Festival builds on success

Comox Valley Echo July 3, 2009

The Denman Island Readers and Writers Festival, this year on July 16 to July 19, has the growing reputation as one of the West Coast's premiere literary events. What's not to like? Some of the best writers around come to a beautiful setting to mingle with readers in intimate and friendly venues. Add to that the fact of Denman Island's legendary hospitality and you are guaranteed a great experience.

This year the festival will build on the successes of the past several years. There will be more writers to begin with. Thirteen authors will be in attendance over a three-day weekend. And true to form there has been no let down in quality. Any time you can gather the likes of Ronald Wright, Afua Cooper, Deborah Campbell, Gabor Mate you are sure to shed light on where we have come as a people as well as helping us to understand where we are going in this complex world we live in today. Then there is Eden Robinson, Steven Galloway, Sarah Dunant, Mary Novik and William Deverell whose works of Fiction will take us over the gamut of human experience first bringing us to tears then have us roaring with laughter. As always the poets will be heard when Heidi Greco, Matt Rader and Harold Rhenisch speak their heightened word into our

consciousness. The graceful and incisive guidance of Jack Hodgins' in his second appearance as writer-in-residence will nurture creative spirit of those lucky souls who will partake of his weeklong workshop. With so many talented writers in one place you are certainly doing something right.

The real strength of this festival has always been its intimacy. Readers and writers mingle freely over the course of the event. It is entirely likely that you will find yourself sharing a dinner or lunch table with one or more of your favourite authors. Or you might find one in attendance at another writer's solo session. Denman Island is a small oasis of a place where rubbing shoulders is a way of life.

Once again this year the Festival offers the opportunity to attend a variety of events - intimate solo Sessions, themed readings with two writers and Main Stage Events with panels of four writers. This year we are pleased to announce that Mark Forsythe, of CBC's Almanac will moderate the main stage events.

The festival runs from July 16 to 19, 9:30 am to 10:00 pm (or so) and it all happens within easy walking distance of the ferry terminal. That makes it easy to foot-passenger over and save ferry fares. The last performance will be over in plenty of time to catch the last sailing off the island.

For full details and registration forms either pick up a brochure at Laughing Oyster or Second Page in Courtenay, Blue Heron in Comox or Abraxas on Denman. You can also do it on line at www.denmanislandwritersfestival.com.

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