

## Alberta Words

*Alberta Arts Days*

*Performances at Government House*

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Readers</b>
Saturday September 18	Noon	Marty Chan Mary Pinkoski Stephanie Bengner
	2 p.m.	Mike Gravel Anna Marie Sewell Alice Major
Sunday September 19	Noon	Bert Almon Shirley Serviss Alice Major
	2 p.m.	Pierrette Requier Tom Wharton Jenna Butler

Emcee for all sessions: Alice Major

## Bios



### **Marty Chan – Makes ‘em laugh**

Playwright, young adult author and radio humorist, Marty Chan is best known for his play *Mom, Dad, I'm Living with a White Girl*, which has been produced across Canada. He is also an award-winning author. His first middle-grade novel, *The Mystery of the Frozen Brains*, won the 2005 City of Edmonton Book Prize and his second book, *The Mystery of the Graffiti Ghoul*, earned the 2008 Diamond Willow Award. Edmonton audiences may remember his CBC humour commentaries, Fringe

Festival plays or Edmonton Journal articles. For more information, please visit [www.martychan.com](http://www.martychan.com).



### **Mary Pinkoski – Slams it home**

Mary Pinkoski is dynamic performer with a unique style of spoken word poetry. She is a member of Edmonton's first Slam Poetry Team and also won the CBC's National Poetry Faceoff in 2008. Mary has performed throughout Alberta, British Columbia, and Washington, and broadcast on CBC, CKUA and Philadelphia's *Spotlight on Jazz and Poetry*. She has published two chapbooks, *Set List: poems for lonely microphones*, and *My Heart & Other Small Gifts*. She can be found at [www.marypinkoskipoetry.com](http://www.marypinkoskipoetry.com).



### **Stephanie Benger – Tale teller**

Stephanie has been telling stories professionally since 2005, when she did her first "gig" at City Hall for Alberta's centennial celebration. Since then she has enjoyed telling for audiences of all ages, at many venues including schools, libraries, cafes and festivals. She specializes in Alberta tall tales but loves to share stories from many other parts of the world as well.



### **Michael Gravel – Poet In Arms**

Mike is a founder and the frontman of Edmonton's Raving Poets. He is also a freelance writer, web designer, professional presenter, and a master of the dance move known as "the typewriter shuffle" He'll give us a sneak preview of the *In Arms* project, which expresses the experience of serving in Canada's military through poetry. Mike's website is [michaelgravel.com](http://michaelgravel.com).



**Anna Marie Sewell – Drums magic**

Anna Marie is a dynamic performer who celebrates her Aboriginal background. Her first book of poetry, *Fifth World Drum*, (2009, Frontenac House) was nominated for City of Edmonton Book Prize and the Alberta Readers' Choice Award, and short-listed for the Stephan G Stephansson Award. She performed at the Talking Stick Festival February 21- 28<sup>th</sup>, part of the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad.



**Alice Major – River valley riff**

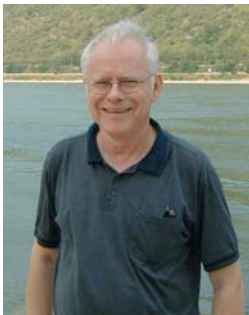
Alice riffs on the river valley, the office towers and the people of this city in award-winning poems that use humour and great imagery. She has published nine highly praised collections of poetry and was Edmonton's first poet laureate. She has been chair if the Edmonton Arts Council and president of the League of Canadian Poets, and is the founder of the Edmonton Poetry Festival



**Shirley A. Serviss – Walking warmth**

Shirley is a much-loved poet at the University of Alberta Hospitals where she shares words with patients and staff. Her warm, engaging readings are enjoyed by audiences across the city. Her three poetry collections have received awards such as Alberta Book of the Year and been shortlisted for the City of Edmonton Book Prize. Shirley has taught writing for many years through the Faculty of Extension, Grant MacEwan, and numerous literacy organizations, seniors agencies and

church groups



**Bert Almon – Wit and insight**

Bert is one of Edmonton's nationally and internationally recognized artists. His poems deliver wit and insight; you enjoy them and they make you think. His tenth book, *Waiting for the Gulf Stream*, is being published this fall. Previous books have been awarded numerous prizes, including two Stephan Stephansson Prizes for Poetry from the Writers' Guild of Alberta and the City of Edmonton Book Prize. He has taught creative writing at the University of Alberta since 1968.



### **Jenna Butler – Reaches across**

Jenna, a lovely poet/teacher/organic gardener, was born in Norwich, England in 1980. Her first full-length collection, *Aphelion*, explores what it's like to belonging to two countries but not quite rooted in either. She has also published three short collections, *Forcing Bloom*, *weather*, and *Winter Ballast*, and teaches Creative Writing at MacEwan University. She also for Rubicon Press.



### **Pierrette Requier – Franco-Albertain**

In Pierrette's memorable story-poems, you hear French and English as partners as she explores her Franco-Albertain heritage. She was born in Donnelly (dans la région de la Rivière la Paix colonisée par ses grands parents Émile et Anne Marie Lucas) . Her first full length book, *details from the edge of the village* was published in 2009 by Frontenac House Press and elle est membre du groupe de performance *4 voix, 4 voies!*



### **Thomas Wharton – Maps out fiction**

Novelist Thomas Wharton's writing puts Alberta on maps – not just the literary map, but also the maps of imaginary countries. His remarkable first book, *Icefields*, set in Jasper, won numerous awards and developed a following of rapt and loyal readers. His second novel, *Salamander*, and his book of short fiction, *Logogryph*, were also shortlisted for major international prizes. Both his novels have been published in other countries, including France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, the U.K., the United States and Japan. He is currently writing a trilogy of fantasy novels for younger readers, *The Perilous Realm*. Thomas was born in Grande Prairie, Alberta and has lived in Jasper and Peace River. He is now an associate professor of English at the U. of A.