

DVBIA launches the Poetry Phone, a free hotline featuring poems from local writers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2021, Vancouver BC - The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) announced today that its latest project, The Poetry Phone, has officially launched and is ready for the public to enjoy. The Poetry Phone is Vancouver's first free poetry hotline and can be called from any cellular device or landline, 24 hours a day, throughout 2021.

Callers should dial 1-833-POEMS-4-U (1-833-763-6748) to listen to poetry recordings from ten local writers. Callers will have the option to listen to different poems by pressing '0' - '9'. The Poetry Phone is suitable for all ages, but the project is especially intended for those less comfortable or unfamiliar with newer forms of technology. This project aims to bring a new and accessible format of uplifting entertainment to anyone who has felt the effects of social isolation that this past year has brought.

The DVBIA has partnered with Renee Saklikar Sanjari, who curated the poems and whose work is also featured. Renée has won many awards for her literature, including her ground-breaking poetry book about the bombing of Air India Flight 182, "*children of air india*," which won the Canadian Authors Association Poetry Prize and was shortlisted for the Dorothy Livesay Prize.

"2020 has been a challenging year for many people, and it's the small things that can bring joy to someone's day," says Charles Gauthier, President and CEO of the DVBIA. "The Poetry Phone is a simple way to bring a smile to people's faces and celebrate the work of local artists."

Below is a list of poems that are featured on the phone line:

1. Rise – Christine Bissonnette
2. Ode to Chopsticks, Ode to the Potatoe, Omelet - Fiona Tinwei Lam
3. And the Dance Most of All - Renee Saklikar Sanjari
4. Best Friend, What Not to Say - Charles Demers
5. When you clean the aquarium - Jennica Harper
6. Gauntlet - Otoniya Juliane Okot Bitek
7. Falling - Jonina Kirton
8. Hold - Joanne Arnott
9. Feast - Rachel Rose
10. Celebrity Otter:Nyac, and Celebrity Otter: Milo - Dina Del Bucchia

About the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association:

The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) supports, promotes and represents the shared interests of 7,000 businesses and property owners in the central 90-block area of Vancouver's downtown core. We focus on priorities voiced by our members: programs and services in the areas of advocacy, accessibility, cleanliness, beautification, business support, marketing and mobility. For more information on the DVBIA, please visit www.dtvancouver.ca.

To learn more about this project and to listen to the featured poems, please visit, www.dtvancouver.ca/poetryphone

For more information on this release, or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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