



The Stroll Scroll

September 1996

Polish your lines, it's Stroll time

By Ivan Sundal

Festival time is here again. The sixth annual Stroll of Poets! It's time to get into the spirit. It's time to loosen up your voice and polish your lines. Hey, polish your shoes too. The community of Edmonton wants to come out and sample our wares. A hundred and ten poets have registered to go on stage and showcase their stuff. What fun! What chaos!

You'll probably notice a difference in this year's program. Instead of a Sunday morning brunch, we're having a very special event the night before the Stroll: a reading by **Merle Collins**, music, dance, and revelry (see article by Doug Elves, elsewhere in this newsletter.) This event will be wonderful; don't miss it. It's also a fund raiser for the Stroll. Please buy a table of tickets (it's

cheap), and support your local poetry society — there's no other like it.

This year, we're returning to the tradition of having some live music at the No Bards Barred Bar wrap-up party at the Strathcona Legion after the Stroll. **Poets Unplugged** — a Stroll house band — will perform an acoustic set during the traditional poetry sweatshop. While some poets are sweating over the lines they're trying to pen, others will pull the plug and let music pour forth. Hey, these guys are good, and they're rehearsing.

If you know any poets who didn't get on the schedule but want to perform, please tell them about the **open stage**. They may register at 2:30 at Misty Mountain Gourmet Coffee Co. It's first come first served.

Please check the enclosed schedule. Each group

performs twice. Please check the back of the schedule for **performer instructions, host instructions and anthology submission guidelines**.

Pray for good weather, and bring all your family and friends out regardless of the weather.

Happy Strolls,
Ivan Sundal
(standing in for Jocelyne Verret, who is out of town for a little while)

On a much sadder note . . .

The Stroll of Poets was saddened to learn of the death of member Moncrieff Williamson in August.

Moncrieff's son Tim contacted us to say that his father enjoyed his contact with the Stroll very much.

We will miss the unique voice and presence of this poet in our midst.

How Doug found Merle

By Doug Elves

Three years ago, I attended the 1993 Toronto International Harbourfront Poetry Festival. Through the six days, I heard the readings of all two dozen poets, including Al Purdy, Irving Layton, Patricia Young, Philip Levine and Denise Levertov. Quite an august group from around the world.

Barely five minutes into the performance by Merle Collins, a poet originally from Grenada, I realized that here was someone who carried remarkable connection to her audience. She recited entirely from memory, but there was more: animation and lilt, yet a dignified reserve, a certain bardic quality. Her poems spoke largely of the concerns of all her people: Grenadians, Caribbeans, even all of us. She has strictly personal lyrics, but also speaks of the broad, world-wide community.

The next day, I asked her if she might sometime give a performance in Edmonton if I could wangle the support and funding. She said she would like to do that. At the time she lived and taught in London, England: a distance which made the air fare almost prohibitive. Still, I kept her address in the hope that some day it might be possible.

Last January, I decided that now was as good a time as any to try the venture. It turned out that she had moved, but the University of North London refused to give out her current address. World Wide Web to the rescue. Through an on-line search, I found her e-mail address at the University of Maryland. Within hours, she had returned my message. She remembered my request of 1993 and would like to do a performance in Edmonton.

I have to thank the Board of the Stroll of Poets for its faith in my recommendation. The members endorsed the project. A few sponsors helped out a bit, too (see schedule). Probably the most generous of all, however, is Merle Collins, herself. She agreed to spend the Stroll weekend in Edmonton for a much smaller fee than she normally receives. That she is willing to do so speaks volumes for the work and contributions of all Strollers in building a festival and organization which is of interest to poets in other cities.

I hope to see Stroll members and supporters at the Merle Collins event on Saturday, October 5. Her performance will give you renewed faith in your poetic calling.

Biography: Merle Collins

Merle Collins was born on the Caribbean island of Grenada. She absorbed her culture's oral tradition from the people around her, especially the women, as she grew up. She became a school teacher of history and Spanish, and later the Co-ordinator of Research on Latin America and the Caribbean for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Grenada, until 1984.

She moved to England, where she did a couple of stints as Writer-in-Residence with two London boroughs, became a member of The African Dawn (a group that performs dramatized poetry fused with African music), and lecturer at the University of North London.

*In 1995, she was appointed Professor in Creative Writing and Caribbean Literature at the University of Maryland. Her most recent book is a novel, **The Color of Forgetting**, and her most recent book of poetry is **Rotten Pomerack**.*

Writers' Circle Tuesdays & Thursdays

Sept. 17	Sept. 19
Oct. 15	Oct. 17
Nov. 19	Nov. 21
Dec. 17	Dec. 19

For information about Thursday's group, call Sandra at 459-4669.

For information about Tuesday's group, call Toni at 426-6320.

The Writers' Circle is pleased to welcome **Toni Owen** as host of the Tuesday night group. Toni is also instructing "Laugh-in: Writing Humour" at the University of Alberta beginning October 10 (8 Thursdays from 7 to 9 pm.) For more information, call Liberal Studies at 492-3033.

Wanted: 12 Days Coordinator

If you would like to coordinate the 12 Days of Poetry reading series, please send the Board a one-page letter explaining why you would be a good person for the job. It is likely that the Stroll will secure funding to offer an honorarium for the work.

The job involves contacting and instructing the 12 Days jury, calling the lucky poets, finding venues and hosts, setting the schedule, coordinating volunteers, and promotion promotion promotion. Work will begin October 4.

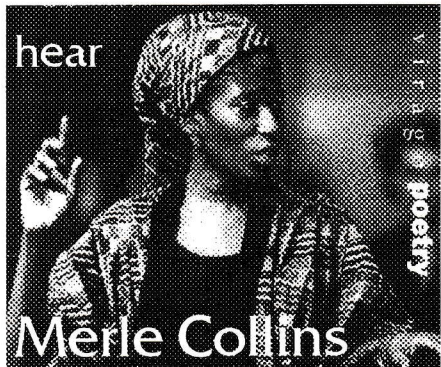
Send your letter to 12 Days, Stroll of Poets, Box 35082, Oliver P.O., T5K 2R8. It must be received by October 1.

The 6th Annual Stroll of Poets

October 5 & 6, 1996

A wide range of poets perform short readings in popular Strathcona venues.

The night before the Stroll, on **Saturday, October 5 at 8 p.m.,**



"the highlight of the 1993 Toronto Harbourfront International Poetry Festival" Skylight Room, Strathcona Legion, 10416 - 81 Ave.

Tickets \$6 at Orlando Books, \$7 at door

Also: Friday, October 4:

free lecture by Merle Collins:

"Drama & Story: Caribbean Women in Writing and Performance"

4 p.m., Humanities Lecture 3, U of A

Then on

Sunday, October 6

starting at 1 p.m. (schedule at right):

"The Stroll of Poets"

Admission to Oct. 6 performances is free, but please observe a reasonable minimum charge in the bistros.

Then at 5 p.m. at the Strathcona Legion **"The No Bards Barred Bar"**

Meet the poets at play & rest and join or watch our famous Poetry Sweatshop and hear the acoustic music of "Poets Unplugged"



THE CITY OF **Edmonton** Parks & Recreation

The U of A Department of English

Mas Productions

The Writers Guild of Alberta

The Centre for International Alternatives



Visit the Stroll at <http://www.ccinet.ab.ca/stroll>

Breadstick Cafe	Alhambra Books	Princess Theatre	Greenwoods' Bookshope	The Bagel Tree	Strathcona Books	Black Dog Freehouse	Misty Mountain Coffee	Athabasca Books	Mama's Bistro	Blarne's Books	Orlando Books
10159 Whyte Ave	10309 Whyte Ave	10337 Whyte	10347 Whyte	10354 Whyte	8217 - 104 St.	10425 Whyte	10458B Whyte	8228 - 105 St.	10507 Whyte	10533 Whyte	10640 Whyte

SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER 6

1 P.M.											
Jocko	Myra Garanis	Michael Walters	Adrienne Campbell	Richard Davies	Anna Marie Sewell	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	Jocelyne Verret	Marilyn Dumont
Mary Woodbury	Vanna Tessier	Michael Walters	Susan Walsh	Lorna Huff	Ivan Sundal	Mary Howes	Sally Ito	Mary Howes	Ivan Sundal	Jean Carmichael	Tom Emmens
Linda Jennings	Nigel Darbasie	Michael Vaughan	Russell Johnston	Theresa Shea	Ellen Wells	John King-Farrow	Tracy Murray	John King-Farrow	Ellen Wells	Theresa Shea	Joe Rizzuto
Katherine McKee	Virginia Gillesse	Ruth A. Donovan	Ian Birse	Marcia O'Connor	Kim Sedgewick	Peter Cole	Margaret Marriott	Kim Sedgewick	Peter Cole	Marcia O'Connor	David Huggett
Al Demeule	Brian O'Reel	Henry Elliott	Faye Francis	Margaret Marriott	Sandra Mooney-Elberbeck	Gina Varty		Sandra Mooney-Elberbeck	Gina Varty	Margaret Marriott	Jacqueline Williams
2 P.M.											
Jocelyne Verret	Marilyn Dumont	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	Geraldine Matus	William Nichols	Toni Owen	Jocelyne Verret	William Nichols	Toni Owen	Richard Davies	Jocelyne Verret
Jean Carmichael	McKenzie	George Metcalf Jr.	Sally Ito	Sophia Gee	George Metcalf Jr.	Taras Toroshenko	Jean Carmichael	George Metcalf Jr.	Taras Toroshenko	Lorna Huff	Jean Carmichael
Anna Moduchowska	Pierrette Requier	Wendy McGrath	Tracy Murray	Sandy Sprinkle	Louis Munan	Martina Laboucane	Anna Moduchowska	Wendy McGrath	Louis Munan	Theresa Shea	Anna Moduchowska
Marilyn Dumont		Joyce Pinckney	Rawn Sidor	Anita Meek	Wendy McGrath	Dennis Cooper	Anna Moduchowska	Joyce Pinckney	Peter Cole	Marcia O'Connor	Pierrette Requier
			Jacqueline Bell	Lyle Weis	Joyce Pinckney	Jenine Dumont			Gina Varty	Margaret Marriott	Marilyn Dumont
3 P.M.											
Beckie Garber-Conrad	Winnie Lai	Michael Walters	Adrienne Campbell	Richard Davies	Anna Marie Sewell	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	William Lysak	Toni Owen	Richard Davies	Jocelyne Verret
Pritam Atwal	Myriam Hempstock	Michael Vaughan	Susan Walsh	Lorna Huff	Ivan Sundal	Mary Howes	Sally Ito	Mary Howes	Taras Toroshenko	Lorna Huff	Jean Carmichael
Mary McDonald	Julia Mamolo	Ruth A. Donovan	Russell Johnston	Theresa Shea	Ellen Wells	John King-Farrow	Tracy Murray	John King-Farrow	Shirley Saviss	Theresa Shea	McKenzie
Annamay Ryane	Harold Cashman	Debra Shymoniak	Ian Birse	Marcia O'Connor	Kim Sedgewick	Peter Cole	Rawn Sidor	Peter Cole	Dennis Cooper	Marcia O'Connor	Anna Moduchowska
Jo-Anne Godfrey	Maria Meneghetti	Henry Elliott	Faye Francis	Margaret Marriott	Sandra Mooney-Elberbeck	Gina Varty	Jacqueline Bell	Gina Varty	Jenine Dumont	Margaret Marriott	Pierrette Requier
4 P.M.											
Valdis Gislason	Winnie Lai	Michael Walters	Adrienne Campbell	Richard Davies	Anna Marie Sewell	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	William Lysak	Toni Owen	Richard Davies	Jocelyne Verret
John Paul Flynn	Myriam Hempstock	Michael Vaughan	Susan Walsh	Lorna Huff	Ivan Sundal	Mary Howes	Sally Ito	Mary Howes	Taras Toroshenko	Lorna Huff	Jean Carmichael
Terence Harding	Julia Mamolo	Ruth A. Donovan	Russell Johnston	Theresa Shea	Ellen Wells	John King-Farrow	Tracy Murray	John King-Farrow	Shirley Saviss	Theresa Shea	McKenzie
Annette Cannell	Harold Cashman	Debra Shymoniak	Ian Birse	Marcia O'Connor	Kim Sedgewick	Peter Cole	Rawn Sidor	Peter Cole	Dennis Cooper	Marcia O'Connor	Anna Moduchowska
Paul Pearson	Maria Meneghetti	Henry Elliott	Faye Francis	Margaret Marriott	Sandra Mooney-Elberbeck	Gina Varty	Jacqueline Bell	Gina Varty	Jenine Dumont	Margaret Marriott	Pierrette Requier
EACH GROUP PERFORMS TWICE											
Michael Walters	Myra Garanis	Michael Walters	Adrienne Campbell	Richard Davies	Anna Marie Sewell	William Lysak	Barbara Fraser	William Lysak	Toni Owen	Richard Davies	Jocelyne Verret
Michael Vaughan	Vanna Tessier	Michael Vaughan	Susan Walsh	Lorna Huff	Ivan Sundal	Mary Howes	Sally Ito	Mary Howes	Taras Toroshenko	Lorna Huff	Jean Carmichael
Ruth A. Donovan	Nigel Darbasie	Ruth A. Donovan	Russell Johnston	Theresa Shea	Ellen Wells	John King-Farrow	Tracy Murray	John King-Farrow	Shirley Saviss	Theresa Shea	McKenzie
Debra Shymoniak	Virginia Gillesse	Debra Shymoniak	Ian Birse	Marcia O'Connor	Kim Sedgewick	Peter Cole	Rawn Sidor	Peter Cole	Dennis Cooper	Marcia O'Connor	Anna Moduchowska
Henry Elliott	Brian O'Reel	Henry Elliott	Faye Francis	Margaret Marriott	Sandra Mooney-Elberbeck	Gina Varty	Jacqueline Bell	Gina Varty	Jenine Dumont	Margaret Marriott	Pierrette Requier
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Instructions and Suggestions for Stroll Performers and Hosts

Performers

- Find your name on the **schedule**. Your group reads at two different venues over the afternoon.
- The host of your poetry group should call you about a week before the Stroll. If he or she doesn't manage to reach you, **show up anyway**. Go to your venue about five or ten minutes before show time.
- **Bring with you:** poems to read, material to submit to the anthology (see guidelines), and a **brief** bio on a card to give to your host so he or she can introduce you.
- You will have **five minutes** of reading time at each venue. If you like to introduce your poems, take that into account. You may read the same poems at each show if you wish.
- **Read slowly and clearly.** You might begin by asking if people can hear you. The audience is there because they want to hear and understand you. They don't want you to rush away. They like you. Make your pauses count in a dramatic way. Read your lines like you mean them.
- **Look at people** in the audience. Since there is no hurry, you have time to look up from your pages. It helps immensely in getting people's undivided attention.
- In selecting material to read, keep in mind that people of all ages may be in the audience.
- **Try to relax and have a good time.** It's a festival.

Hosts

- **Contact each member of your group** about a week before the Stroll. Go over times, places, reading order, and introductions. Check whether any poets have any special plans for

their performances.

- Remind poets that they have **five minutes** of performance time at each venue.
- Each poet receives a **\$10 honorarium**. You are responsible for distributing the honoraria and having the poets sign for it.
- **Please pick up the honoraria** from Doug Elves at the Renford Inn on Whyte at 11:00 a.m. on the day of the Stroll, October 6. You might want to invite your group to join you there for brunch.
- **Return the signature sheets** to Doug Elves at the No Bards Barred Bar wrap up party at the Strathcona Legion after the Stroll.
- **Collect the anthology submissions** from the poets.
- **Deliver the anthology submissions** to Ivan Sundal at the No Bards Barred Bar.
- **At each venue**, the host asks the staff where to set up the reading space. In cafés, bistros, and pubs, special arrangements may need to be struck with the staff to minimize noise during the readings. Try to give a "five-minute warning" to the audience so they can place orders, and so the staff can finish whatever they're doing with the cappuccino machines before the readings start.
- **Introduce each poet.** Brevity is of the essence.
- **Thank the venue and staff.**
- **Announce the No Bards Barred Bar.** (See elsewhere in the newsletter for details.)
- Enjoy yourself. Get into the festival spirit.

Questions? Call Marilyn, 464-0575

Anthology Information and Submission Guidelines

- If you are a member of the Stroll of Poets, and if you read at the Stroll, you may submit to the *Stroll Anthology*.
- Please submit **one poem and a bio**

to your poetry group host at the Stroll on October 6 — the only day that submissions will be accepted.

- Please put your **name, bio, and phone number** on the back of your poem. Do NOT write your name on the front of your poem.
- Please indicate **on the back** of your poem whether you want to enter your poem in the **12 Days of Poetry selection contest**. You will be entered in the contest unless you ask not to be. (Poems will be photocopied and distributed to a jury of well-known Edmontonians from different walks of life, shortly after the Stroll. 44 poets will be selected to read in the 12 Days series just after Christmas.)
- **No handwritten poems.** (Though you may write your name and bio on the back of the poem in a neat hand.)
- **Maximum length** of poem: 28 lines, including stanza breaks, but excluding a one-line title.
- **Maximum width** of poem: 65 spaces.
- **Your autobiographical sketch** should not exceed 75 words. If it does, the last part will be cut.
- The editor will correct what appear to be unintentional nonstandard spellings. He will also change U.S. spellings to Canadian. Please indicate if you wish to be excepted from either of these processes.
- If your poem involves elaborate architecture of tabs and spaces (and the editor sincerely hopes it doesn't, since it's more work for the editor than the poet), please ensure that you use Times New Roman as your font.
- In making your selection, please keep in mind that the Stroll readers include the young and the old.
- **If your poem does not conform to the guidelines, the editor may reject it.**
- It will not be possible to return your poem.
- The anthology will be launched on December 1 (to be confirmed). Contributors may pick up their complimentary copy at the launch.