

*“When I make things, I know they are taken to be quiet and small. I know there may be no place for them. I know no one is waiting for them. I know it may be that no one wants them. But I must make them. I must. I learn that you must make your art, wherever you are, whoever you are, whatever you have. You must. This is something no one can ever teach a writer. She must find this for herself alone. Over and over. This must.”*

—Souvankham Thammavongsa



## ***Honouring our resistance, celebrating our stories: Asian Heritage Month, 2019***

Souvankham Thammavongsa is the author of four poetry books, *Cluster* (M&S, 2019), *Light* (2013), winner of the Trillium Book Award for Poetry, *Found* (2007) and *Small Arguments* (2003), winner of the ReLit prize. She was born in the Lao refugee camp in Nong Khai, Thailand, and grew up in Toronto.

Hana Shafi aka Frizz Kid is a writer and artist. Known on Instagram for her weekly affirmation series, she is also the recipient of the Women Who Inspire Award, from the Canadian Council for Muslim Women. Her first book, *It Begins With The Body* was recently selected by CBC books as one of the best poetry books of 2018.





## MATERIALS\*

*Growing up, I  
did not have books*

*The only reading material  
there was*

*were old newspapers laid out  
on the floor*

*to dry  
our winter boots*

*or wrap  
things of glass*

*When I learned to read,  
the winter boots*

*lay dripping  
in the hallway;*

*the glass, broken  
and uncovered*

*because I knew this  
this*

*would be my way in*

—Souvankham Thammavongsa

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**Ness Lee** is an award-winning illustrator and internationally-exhibiting artist based in Toronto. She is a graduate of OCAD University with a Bachelors of Design in Illustration, and continues to explore her practice using a wide range of mediums such as ceramics, drawing, painting and mixed media sculpture.





A SPIDER\*

made  
this  
It hadn't been  
damaged  
and if it had been,  
it was built back  
over night  
Over and over  
from some small  
dark pit,  
it spun out  
a whole world  
for itself  
Nothing  
could come close  
and even in its brevity  
it will outlast  
our dim little buildings

—Souvankham Thammavongsa

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**Beena Mistry** an illustrator and designer living and working in the Toronto area. By playing with shapes and colours, they like to create work that explores intersectionality. They hold a bachelor's degree in illustration from Sheridan College and are the web art director for *Shameless* magazine.







## POEM FOR THE RAIN\*

*Rubber boots, umbrellas, windows,  
doors, a roof, the gutter —  
we invent so much to keep  
from you  
You have been talking to us  
through wreck, through clutter;  
saying the same thing  
we've never listened to  
What arms, what hands  
there are  
have never held, have never been held  
Wherever your mouth is, it's  
never been kissed  
And if there is a heart attached  
to any of this, it is  
as boundless as the rest;  
beating  
always against everything*

—Souvankham Thammavongsa



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**Erin Taniguchi** is an illustrator and printmaker living in Vancouver, BC. Her work is influenced by spirituality, animals, yoga, handmade items and printmaking methods, particularly relief printing. Erin works primarily in a combination of linocut prints and digital. Her illustration work has been featured in magazines in Canada and the USA.

