



Wildflower

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- Writers Take Aim
- Circle of Poetry
- In Conversation with Poets Across the GTA

Research Tip
Complete with phases of the moon, holidays and Canadian national observances, find calendars for past years at www.timeanddate.com

How to Write Like an Archer

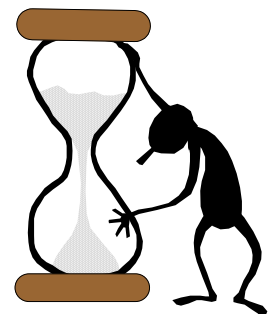
About a year ago one of my critiquing partners took an online course with Margie Lawson. Now she's a seasoned Margie veteran and possibly her biggest cheerleader. In fact, when reviewing the course outline for Margie Lawson's Deep Editing: The EDITS System, Rhetorical Devices and More, I could hear Sharon's voice echo in my ear, loudest when I read the paragraph about visceral responses. So when Defeat Self-Defeating Behaviour, Allow Writing Productivity and Creativity to Soar came available on WriterUniv.com, I signed up. Think about it: defeating your Self-Defeating Behaviour (SDB in Margie-speak). What a great way to start the New Year.

published across Canada, the States, the UK and even Australia, I logged on for my first official slap upside the head. It didn't take long to get caught up in Margie's easy going, yet no-nonsense, style. Before I could say *defeating self defeating behaviours* I'd shared a long list of them with people I'd never met. A short time later I had a change coach, or CC for short. Once accountable to my CC, Carole, a romance writer in South Carolina, I found myself stretching, making lists, setting goals, prioritizing tasks and—wait for it—writing!

A few days later I was shooting pointed arrows from a bow with unbelievable velocity, very little aim and little to no technique. My second archery class was even worse, but on the drive home I realized how very much alike my two classes were. Here are a few of the lessons I learned:

- Keep your eye on your target.
- Focus. Concentrate. Stay on task. If you let your mind or eye wander, you will not hit your target.

- Don't give in to distractions.
- Pay attention to your technique. Be specific. Be precise.
- Find what works then keep doing it the same day, every day. Why? Because it works.
- Stretch.
- Relax.
- Keep at it. Practice, practice, practice.
- Be realistic, pace yourself.
- Don't set unrealistic goals. Success takes time.
- Know your strengths, develop your weaknesses.
- Failure stings. (In archery, it also leaves a bruise in a shade of magenta that would make a stunning eye shadow.)
- Visualize. Believe in yourself, stay positive. Reward yourself.
- Listen to your coach.
- Look to the examples set for you by the experts.
- Excuses are not progress.



Mismanagement of time is a common SDB among writers

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A few weeks earlier, in a move I thought completely unrelated to writing, I signed up for a series of six archery lessons at a club northwest of Toronto. Both courses started the same week.

On January 4th, with a host of writers ranging from beginner to multi-

Poetry Alive & Well in Oakville

There's nothing quite like sitting in a circle of poets. The air is charged with something akin to electricity as their voices rise and fall, full of emotion, each in their turn. Although not a poet myself, the Oakville Chapter of the Canadian Federation of Poets welcomed me with open arms. As I sat adrift in their circle of talent I wondered, where does poetry, these infinite chords of life and love*, come from?

Over the one evening that I shared with them, the Oakville poets took their inspiration from many sources: the moon, the vast depth of a mother's love, heart-break, teenage angst, winter landscapes, dementia, survival, dreams, purpose, the passage of time, and other poets, and even sawdust. Each poem read raises the stakes, sets the bar higher, turns up the heat another notch or two. And on a cold evening in

January, that's a very good thing.

The Oakville Chapter of the CFP meets the third Thursday of every month. For more information contact Saskia Maddock, Chair, at vantetering@yahoo.ca



*These infinite chords of life and love taken from *Etude in Memory Sharp* by Saskia Maddock

"There's a feeling that you get when you write something and know that it has meaning."

Cassie McDaniel



But Tonight

poems by
CJ Martin

CJ Martin
Photograph by Joe Iannandrea

In Conversation with... Poets Across the GTA

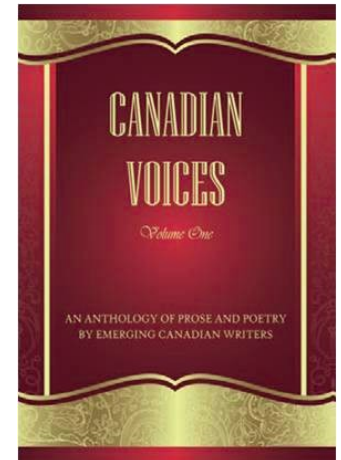
I wrote a poem once, in the late night throes of a PMS fit after a tiff with my husband. It wasn't very good, but I've always wondered where that seed, that tiny pellet of inspiration, came from. So when the opportunity to interview poets came my way, these questions were high on my list: How did you know you were a poet? When did you know? How did your gift evolve?

"As a child I had the idea that [poems] came from somewhere," Patricia Armstrong holds her hands over her head, indicating the ceiling, clouds, or perhaps heaven, then lets them cascade into her lap, "and that it was my job to write them down."

For Cassie McDaniel whose collection, *Polar Molecules*, awaits publication, poetry has

always been a part of her life. Born in Texas, her father is also a poet. She comes from a family of voracious readers, and reads the classics as a form of self-education. Cassie draws on family history, memories, and even the isolated landscape of her native state as inspiration. The rhythm of words is something she has always been attracted to; poetry is not something she can separate from self.

Maria Pia Marchelletta (*Nocturnal Laments*, Beret Days Press, 2008 and *On The Wings of Dawn, In Our Words*, 2009) would agree. "A part of yourself comes out in the writing, your angle, your view. You're not isolated from your writing. Poetry and short stories bring the abstract into the concrete," and that is where you



connect with the reader. Cassie goes on to say, "There's a feeling that you get when you write something and know it's good, that it has meaning."

When asked how long she'd been a poet, "Prenatally," popped out of CJ Martin's (*But Tonight*, Mosaic Press, 2007) mouth before I had time to poise my pen.

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