

VCI @ 50 Young Writers' Panel

Saturday May 15, 2021 – 5 pm

What is it like to start out on the journey of writing? What drives one to put pen to paper? What are the rewards and challenges? Two young authors speak about their first experiences as writers – what pushed them to write, where they find support and inspiration, how and when they write.



Gianluca Agostinelli is an educator and writer, who currently teaches at McMaster University, Niagara College, Niagara Catholic District School Board, and Brock University, where he is completing a Ph.D. in Educational Studies.



Liana Cusmano, (Luca/BiCurious George) is a writer, spoken word artist and filmmaker. They are the 2018 and 2019 Montreal Slam Champion and runner-up in the 2019 Canadian Individual Poetry Slam Championship. Their work touches on heritage, queerness, relationships and mental health, and their aim is to help others feel both seen and safe. Liana is currently the President of the Green Party of Canada. Their first novel, *Catch & Release*, will be published by Guernica Editions.



Maria Pia Spadafora is a freelance translator, creative writer, a teacher of Italian, English and Spanish. She holds an MA in Modern Languages and Literature, presenting as a final dissertation the translation of Licia Canton's *The Pink House and Other Stories*. In April 2020, she translated from Spanish to Italian the story of the short film nominated for Premio Goya 2020, Laura Zamora's *El árbol de las almas perdidas*. She lives and works in Milan.



Presented by Villa Charities Inc. as part of the celebration of the organization's fiftieth anniversary as part of a series of inclusive programming and initiatives to honour the past, recognize the history and contribution that the Italian Canadian community has made to Canada, and look forward to future growth and opportunities.