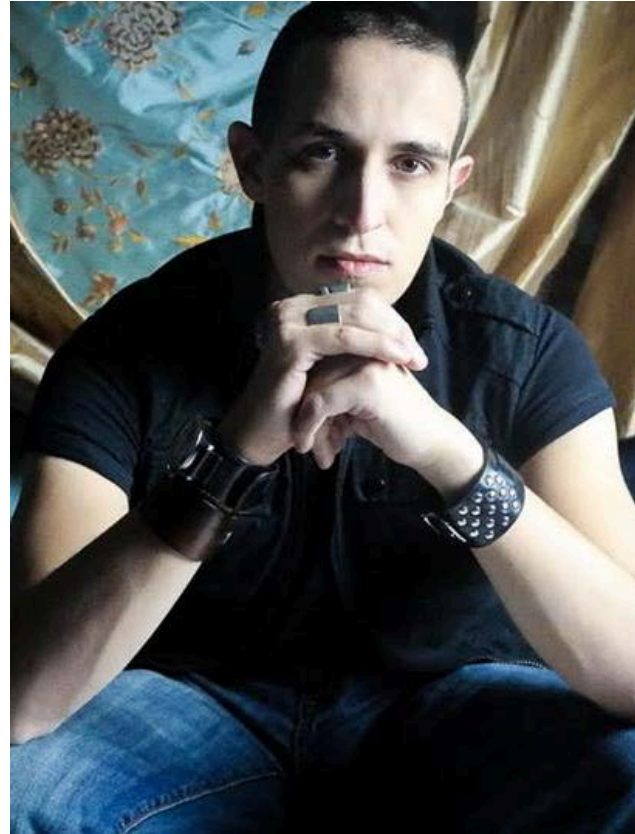


Mississauga's Poets Laureate



Qurat Dar
2021-2023



Paul Edward Costa
2019-2021

Mississauga's 3rd Poet Laureate



Paul Edward Costa Highlights 2019 – 2021

Mississauga's 3rd Poet Laureate

Paul Edward Costa
2019 – 2021



The Underground Chamber

The paradox of any achievement
is that the road there
isn't as brightly lit

as the finish line;
believe it or not

I never thought my content
made me a likely candidate
for something like "Poet Laureate",
the images in my imaginings
aren't attached to patriotism

without question
or reassurance

without awareness,
I'm not engaging in Vitamin C's school nostalgia
or chaining lines together for chain restaurants
because my words don't mix
with tea or coffee in a cup
held by two hands at once.

I conjure fantasy images
of vain demons and indifferent beasts
alongside a dark god's dry humour
and stories of the abyss,
but I think it's a point of national pride
that David Cronenberg made such a monstrous fly,
that Streetsville cultivated
hellish imagery for "Hannibal"
and that the winter of '74 in Toronto
gave birth to the first "Black Christmas",
in fact,
it was the bone chilling power
of that slasher movie that made me see
how a story can leave you speechless
when I was fifteen and saw it on TV.

The point is
that I do what I do to make the city a place
where people can rediscover their singular voice,
the one fate's path and the status quo
file down,
by embracing my strange perspective,
by making spaces where people can be who they are
in one-on-one conversations,
and by pointing poets towards the doorways
I thought only opened in dreams
because too many of those who step through
cover up the passages they use
to preserve egos built on the illusion
that achievements lose value if they inspire
anyone to fly higher than them.

Mississauga's Poet Laureate



Ayomide Bayowa, 2021 – 2024

Fallen Walls, Mere Floating Portions

For Ejaz Choudry

Summer window fractures with an open-ended pestilence:
of kamikaze flies settling on black blood fresh from carbon cycle;

of that life which matters—traveling back from offering itself
to the firmament—to relive a placard reason for (re-)incarnation;

of Regis—a Toronto hybrid ladybird somersaulting her balcony;
deck-neck; causing a degauss effect—homely, like a toddler's innocence

when sharing a carelessly placed piece of magnet with its household's
intolerant LCD TV screen. Or diasporic, like the arrival of immigrants:
ready to stay, as color-works of upset streams.

My grandpa's neckbeard is ostrich-scarce. His bruise—
red as a plagued pool, fresh from an out-bathroom fall,

is the foremost warning to the holders of his body.
He dries up at every glance, his collar bones melt his breathing.

& his orbs are goals of slow blindness. However, responsibility recycles.
In the room of the living, I am coffee ready.

To add his whiteness jumble: "Salt or sugar?"
He can't pick two words at a time, not even his favorite fruits—

(*lemon & Lebanon*) from a browser tray.

I school his daily Montessori—
"These are no pills. Repeat after me, they are not felons *on-the-run* in my throat,"
before shutting down everything. Everywhere—

including the convenience store, he gambles in his head.

91.1, correct decimal place of Canada's Jazz FM, & no one's listening—

[this is how humans suspect a god is using them without consent]—

witnessing armed spiders crawling a high-rise building
for gunpoint mental checks & balances; a piece of bloody music that catches

Grandpa's reflexes where its instrumental could see them.

Clearly, apart from his refraining panic pulse.

Frontpage—*bulletin columns*: a flower vase shrills the street//

because forensics can't tell the root// of the fire that deforested Horeb(ly)//

at Moses' eavesdropping sandals.

Following page: "...as always, the world remains a snooker board
with Zuma masks emitting nuclear balls."

Summer window welcomes ghoulish appearances on a Morningstar sunset.
& of things pictorial under the orange safe light,

unread fine print *Father's Day* letter(s) litter my heart.
& you're not alone, Kinetic dolls freak me out! But as Grandpa once said,

"...until you start creasing into linens of goatee wrinkles,
as yards' Halloween emblem,

into something so spooky but cool as hell."

Mississauga's Poet Laureate



Ayomide Bayowa, 2021 – 2024