

# Mississauga's Poets Laureate



Qurat Dar  
2021 - 2023



Ayomide Bayowa  
2021 - 2024



# Mississauga's 3rd Youth Poet Laureate



Qurat Dar Highlights 2021 – 2023

# Mississauga's 3<sup>rd</sup> Youth Poet Laureate



Qurat Dar, 2021 - 2023



## Antidotes to Apathy

Despair is easy. I slip into it like a second skin whenever I think of the few who would condemn the many. But hope is hard-won. Fierce. Unflinching. Hope tells me to think not of the few, but the many. Think of the small kindness multiplied by 8 billion. Think of the selfless. Of the volunteer firefighter, running into the burning building instead of away to pull a child from the flames. Of the organ donor, giving up a piece of themselves so another may live. Of the journalist risking everything for the truth. But if that is too much,



think of the receptionist who gives up her weekends to cook at the soup kitchen.

The teacher who changed your life by believing in you. Think of the community garden, the library, the animal shelter, think of all the good that is done without any expectation or reward,

and tell me the world is doomed.

Grief has its place, yes, but do not let it break you. It is in your nature to care, to give, to love. After all, you are one of the many.

# Mississauga's Youth Poet Laureate



Lisa Shen, 2023 - 2025

## A Girl's Favourite Colour

When I was a kid, I was told that a girl's favourite colour is *pink*.  
Cherry blossom skirt. Ballerina shoes. A kiss and a curtsy.  
But the truth is that

A girl's favourite colour is *red*.  
Poppies on the lips. Hot coals in the stomach. Bleed the rivers  
scarlet.  
Strike a match on our cheekbone; set the sky on fire – forget that;

A girl's favourite color is *black*.  
Eyeliner sharpened to kill. Leather gloves and bootstraps.  
The night we take back from them – actually;



A girl's favourite color is *orange*.  
Soft, like the sunset. Firefly caught in the lampshade.  
Marmalade toast.  
Melted butter tongue. Just a hint of zest and peel – forget  
that too;

A girl's favourite color is *blue*.  
Bruises on the knuckles. Fist swelled shut,  
still hitting out of turn – here's the thing;

A girl's favourite colour is *yellow*.  
Bikini strap. Summer sun.  
All of us sprawling out on our porches – nevermind;

A girl's favourite color is *white*.  
Powdered icing. First snow. Coat the town in sugar –





No, you know what?

A girl's favourite color is *pink* after all.  
Bubble gum pop. Strawberry ice. Basket of roses. Mini skirt.

Hair tied in a bow all cute and pretty for you –

You want to know the truth?

A girl's favourite color is the one she laughs in.  
It's her best friend's lipstick. Her mothers' curls.

A girl's favourite color is the one she clutches in the dark.

It's every dream she's ever had: *Astronaut. Lawyer. Engineer. Mother. Doctor. President. Housewife.*



Paint the room whatever shade you want to.  
Give me rainbow. Give me prism.  
Give me a shower of kaleidoscopic dust –

Because here, I'll tell you the secret at last:

a girl's favourite color is  
whatever she wants it to be.

# Mississauga's Youth Poet Laureate



Photo Credit: Gabriel George

Lisa Shen, 2023 - 2025

# National Poetry Month



### Online Poetry Workshop

Virtual/online

Wednesday, April 5, 2023  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.



### In-Person Author Led Haiku Program with Anna Yin

Malton Library

Wednesday, April 12, 2023  
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.



### Collaborative Poetry Workshop

Living Arts Centre

Saturday, April 15, 2023  
11:30 a.m – 2:30 p.m.



### Mississauga's 4th Annual Poetry Slam

Living Arts Centre

Wednesday, April 19, 2023  
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.



### Online Author Talk with Madhur Anand

Virtual/online

Wednesday, April 19, 2023  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.



### Online Author Led Haiku Program with Anna Yin

Virtual/online

Wednesday, April 26, 2023  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.