

# Mississauga's Poets Laureate



Andrea Jusic  
2024 - 2026



Lisa Shen  
2023- 2025

# Mississauga's 4th Youth Poet Laureate



Lisa Shen Highlights 2023 - 2025

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Lisa Shen Highlights 2023 - 2025

## *Love Letter for the City of Mississauga*

Dear Mississauga,

You contain exactly four things:

elementary schools, middle-aged couples, babies,  
and teenagers complaining about all of the above

There is nothing to do around here

I search karaoke near me Mississauga

and it points me all the way to downtown Toronto

I search gay bar near me and

Google returns me my own address (well-played)

Also, even if there were things to do, there is no way to get there

It takes me an hour and a half & three transfers to bus to a café a 15 minute drive  
away

No one likes living here!

Like most, I have spent my entire life hating on this suburban dream.  
Until I moved away  
To the nightlife of a university town  
And found myself missing the stillness of my second-floor bedroom,  
the maple tree outside my window —  
Human beings love to long for something  
So I am sure that, were I raised someplace else,  
like the blazing metropolis of some major city,  
Then I would surely grow up longing for this suburban sprawl  
hot summer sidewalk, evening sprinkler, picket fence,  
an endless succession of soccer fields, sweat-drenched jersey, plastic jungle gym  
playground sand emptied out of the shoe —  
And maybe, when we say

I wish I lived somewhere else

what we are really saying is

I wish I could be someone else.

As if your lack of gay bars is the only thing holding me back  
from the greenest grass in the neighborhood.

Look to your map to pin the blame of our unhappiness,  
when all you did was give us an imperfect place to call home —

So Sauga —

This is my apology

This is my penance

This is my love letter

Sauga,

You cricket cries across summer grass

You driving past Pearson at sunset

You smoke sky after the fireworks show

There is beauty in what is not here

And now, when I return home

from my trips into the city

and all its blinking lights

And I lie in the same bed I did as a child

And it is just as quiet

And the maple outside my window is perhaps taller now, but rustles just the same

In that moment, I do not long for anywhere but right where I am

Love,

A girl who grew up in your fields

# Mississauga's Youth Poet Laureate



Tahira Rajwani, 2025-2027



# April

It has been a long Winter  
But here, the snow gives way  
The clocks move past this season of grey sky  
April leaves forgiveness on our doorstep  
For all the things we said in the cold

At dawn, sunlight gently wraps her rays  
Against these suburban window panes  
Coats come undone button by button  
And how easy laughter becomes again  
Without the weight of all these layers of uncertainty

Survival is always hardest in the dark  
The night is always longest before the day  
Summer is always a promise we are unsure  
Will be kept another year

But how resilient we are  
How forgiving  
How practiced  
At unfurling into this hope  
At stepping into the light  
Again

It is hard to remember sometimes  
That better days are just a horizon away  
This grief always feels so long  
A winter solstice of ache

But look, we made it another  
Season  
Look, at how the blossoms reemerge  
Look, at how all this doubt  
Melts into the soil  
And leaves only  
Softness in its wake

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Tahira Rajwani, 2025 - 2027

# National Poetry Month



The 6th Annual Poetry Slam, April 24th