



## **Cultural Tuesdays: A Conversation with Author Monica Meneghetti**

Villa Charities, in collaboration with The National Public Readings Program, is pleased to invite you to free readings of selected works by Italian-Canadian queer authors Monica Meneghetti and Liana Cusmano. Part II of the live virtual readings is on Wednesday, October 6 at 7:00pm. We asked Monica Meneghetti to answer a few questions about herself and the importance of Italian-Canadian queer literature.

### **Q: Tell us about yourself.**

A: I'm an author, literary translator, writing coach, and meditation guide. My first short story scrolled out of a manual Olivetti 44 years ago. Meditation began spontaneously at around the same age (10), although I didn't know what meditation was yet. It's an integral part of my creative process and my approach to teaching and mentoring writers.

I come from fossils. Meaning the petroleum industry paid for my sustenance, from parents to polenta. My dad's ancestors were fishmongers who fished the Venice waters. On my mother's side, my northern blood is spiked with Sicilian and saffron.

I'm an empath, an iconoclast, and a very unsettled settler. My birthplace is in the Treaty 7 region (Calgary), and I'm now on the unceded, traditional lands of the Coast Salish people (Vancouver).

### **Q. Where does the inspiration for your writing come from?**

A: From anywhere and everywhere! Often from listening, either inwardly or outwardly. A misheard sentence can spark a story. Or a dream. Or words may simply appear in my awareness as I meditate. Emotions compel me to write. Grief. Love. Lately, outrage is a catalyst. Beauty also.

### **Q. Why is Queer representation, especially in literature and writing, important?**

A: This would require an essay to answer properly. Short answer? It saves lives. Creates understanding and connection and combats stereotypes, and a whole lot more. Queer publishers are also important for many reasons. For one, they know how to navigate the unique challenges of putting queer words out into the world.

### **Q. Where can we find more of your writing?**

A: I'll be reading selected excerpts from published works at the October 6 event. Any of them can be bought in hard copy or e-book through [Mountaineers Books](#) and [Caitlin Press](#). Your local independent bookshop can get books in for you, as can your local library.

Memoir: "What the Mouth Wants: A Memoir of Food, Love and Belonging"

Literary Translation: "The Fifth: A Love(s) Story" by MP Boisvert, and "The Call of the Ice: Climbing 8000-meter Peaks in Winter" by Simone Moro.

Poetry: "Sustenance: Writers from BC and Beyond on the Subject of Food"

Anthology: "Here And Now: An Anthology of Queer Italian Canadian Writing"

Personal Essay: "Love Me True: Writers Reflect on the Ins, Outs, Ups and Downs of Marriage"

**Q. What projects do you have coming up in the future?**

A: I'm currently creating new work and don't want to give any spoilers! Following [my social media](#) or [subscribing to my author newsletter](#) is a good way to get updates on any forthcoming publications.

Through my new online school, [Wildivine Meditation](#), I'll be offering hybrid writing/meditation courses. One of them will be for folks who'd like to explore their relationship to food and will draw from my experience of writing What the Mouth Wants. Again, visiting the school and subscribing to my Wildivine newsletter is a good way to find out about course launches.