

AR Podcast #53-Sharif Khan, DeAndra Davis, Ellis Scott, Brooks Kolb, Meg Richman, Damien Eagle Bear, Hilary Davidson, Wanda Nolan and Ting Ting Chen, also Lying Flat



An Artsy Raven Newsletter



July 2026, Issue #53

Summer is upon us and chaos descends as children leave school. A lot of people I know are travelling to Europe, but I'm staying home and working. The upside is less people fighting for seats on transit, but it would be nice to do a vacation sometime.

Online for the Canadian Authors Association Toronto Branch, I'll be hosting an online book reading on July 16, link is below, free for all to attend.

I'll be setting up a booth July 18 at the [Pretty Heroes convention](#) in Toronto to sell books and fundraising pins. Last year there were a lot of performances and great costumes, so I look forward to this event!

Enjoy the sunshine!

- JF Garrard

President, Dark Helix Press

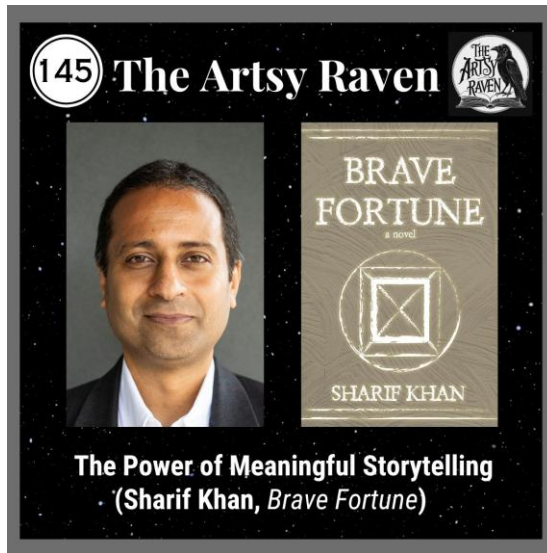
Podcast Host, *The Artsy Raven* Literary Podcast

Latest Artsy Raven Podcast Episodes

JF Garrard (writer, editor and publisher) has frank conversations with writers, editors, publishers, artists, actors, directors and other art professionals about what inspires them to create and what led to their success. Writers on the podcast will showcase their work by reading from their book.

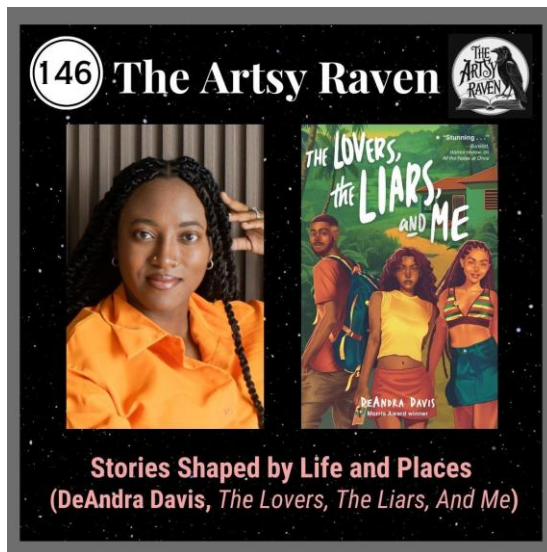
Please visit our website for the latest episodes: <https://artsyraven.com>.

We've lowered the Patreon tiers so it's easier to gain access to the 100+ bonus episodes to help people on their creative journeys! Just pay what you can (\$5-30USD/month) and individual bonus episodes available for \$3USD - <https://www.patreon.com/c/jfgarrard/membership>



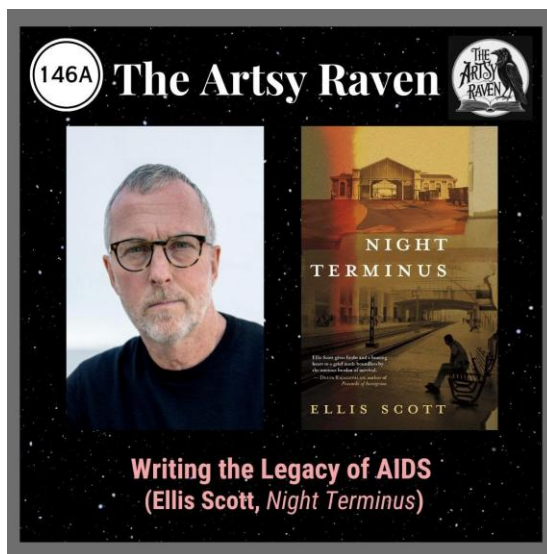
Ep145 The Power of Meaningful Storytelling with Sharif Khan

Sharif Khan reflects on his journey from bookseller to writer, shares why he believes storytelling matters, and reveals the uplifting message he hopes readers will take from his work.



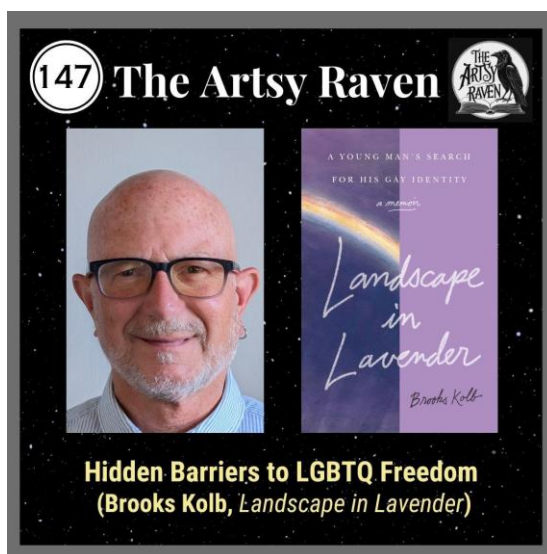
Ep146 Stories Shaped by Life and Places with DeAndrea Davis

DeAndrea Davis shares how the places that shaped her—New York, Florida, and Jamaica— influence her storytelling, why balance matters in writing, and how she manages the creative process while raising a busy household of kids and dogs.



Ep146A Writing the Legacy of AIDS with Ellis Scott

Ellis Scott discusses what inspired him to become a writer, why it is important to tell stories about the AIDS crisis, and how reading across genres can broaden a writer's perspective and strengthen their craft.



Ep147 Hidden Barriers to LGBTQ Freedom with Brooks Kolb

Brooks Kolb reflects on how the AIDS crisis affected his pursuit of gay freedom in San Francisco, explores the invisible impediments people face when coming out, and shares why perseverance matters for new writers.



Ep148 From Brushstrokes to Written Worlds with Meg Richman

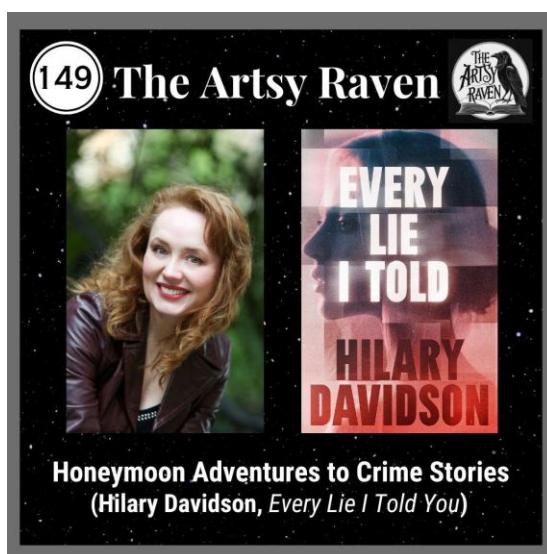
Meg Richman shares how she transitioned from painting to writing, explains the importance of writing groups, and reveals why she approaches storytelling as if she's watching a movie.



Ep148A Changing Canada's Indigenous Narrative with Damien Eagle Bear

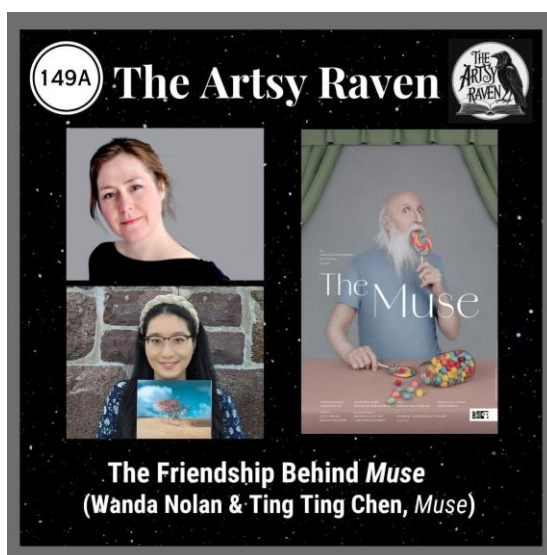
Damien Eagle Bear discusses the journey behind his feature debut *#skoden*, why authentic Indigenous storytelling matters, and how film can help reshape the way Indigenous peoples are portrayed in Canada.

#skoden will be available to watch free on demand on TELUS Optik TV starting on National Indigenous Peoples Day.



Ep149 Honeymoon Adventures to Crime Stories with Hilary Davidson

Hilary Davidson discusses her transition from travel journalism to crime fiction, why she intentionally created an unlikeable protagonist in her latest novel, and the supportive writing community she found through Sisters in Crime, which welcomes both men and women.



Ep149A The Friendship Behind *Muse* with Wanda Nolan and Ting Ting Chen

Wanda Nolan and Ting Ting Chen discuss the making of their award-winning documentary *Muse*, how a meeting with Robert Tilley grew into an extraordinary friendship, and the creative challenges of bringing his story to the screen.

The *Muse* is now streaming free on The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) platforms - <https://www.nfb.ca/film/the-muse/>

The Artsy Raven Podcast Channels

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Event - CAA Online Open Mic!



Spring is upon us and hopefully some of us have had a chance to spend some time on writing! Fiction, non-fiction, and poetry writers are all welcomed to share a published piece or work-in-progress.

All are welcome to attend, and we hope you'll invite friends and family to join the audience.

Click here for free registration and event details: <https://canadianauthors.org/toronto/events/>

Artsy Fun - What is "Lying Flat" 躺平?



In Chinese culture, the term "lying flat" 躺平 refers to people in the new generation who have chosen to not participate in the rat race of life. Instead, they do the bare minimum to get by rather than fulfilling the traditional expectations of working intensely, owning a home, getting married and starting a family.

Some think this will affect the competitiveness of China while others believe people want to strive for more work life balance.

To learn more, there is a good article in Raddi online magazine which explores this topic more: <https://raddi.co/article/china-imd-world-ranking-gen-z-tang-ping>

Story Origin Group Book Promos

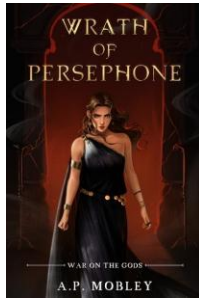


FREE Fast-Paced Fantasy & Sci-Fi - July 2026. Get these books fast! This promotion ends Jul 31, 2026! ([click here](#))

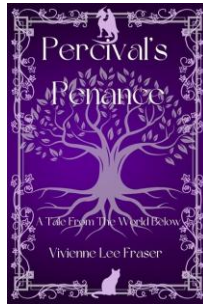


Role Models, Please!: An All-Genre Giveaway for Strong, Noble Heroines Get these books fast! This promotion ends Jul 19, 2026! ([click here](#))

Fellow Indie Author Promos



Wrath of Persephone (War on the Gods, #0) by A. P. Mobley ([click to download](#)). Kore, a daughter of Demeter and Zeus, has never been so happy. She lives on Mount Olympus and has grown into a powerful young spring goddess. She spends her days frolicking through nature with the other immortals her age, and she's even fallen in love with a handsome god of sunlight. Her life is perfect—that is, until the night she catches the eye of Hades, King of the Underworld.



Percival's Penance by Vivienne Lee Fraser ([click to download](#)). Deep in the Wyld Woods the blight is killing magic and, just when she is needed most, Ellie is being sent away to university. As if that isn't bad enough, her friend Percy is not taking the separation well. Then, on one fateful day, a dreadful mistake turns Percy and Ellie's world upside down, and the fallout will have dire consequences for everyone living in the World Below.



Calling All Angels, A Short Story by Sherry Hutchison ([click to download](#)). It's said once touched by an Angel, you will be forever changed. Faith was a very special young lady. She'd been touched by Angels at a very young age, had in fact been rescued from Dark Lurkers along with her older and younger brother at a point in time when there was a war between Angels And Demons in the middle of New York City.



Steam Rising: Tales of steampunk and wondrous inventions (Raconteur Press Anthologies Book 35) by J. Kenton Pierce, Fiona Grey, Leigh Kimmel, & 7 more ([click for preview](#)). Steampunk. It's not just a genre, it is science fiction in its purest form. In this collection, you will read of the ways that technology could both help and harm mankind. Within, you will meet clockmakers and warwidows, steamship captains and airship pilots; you will see wailing engines race and clanking automata strut. Hurry on! The engineer is feeding the coal, and says she's raring to go.



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