AR Podcast #57 Matcha Cookies, V. N. Alexander, Ed Seaward, Judith Kerman, Robin Blackburn McBride, Jane Hamilton, Sonido Reyes, Russell Lee

An Artsy Raven Newsletter



Nov 2026, Issue #57

November is cold and a good time to get started on that book you always wanted to write during National Novel Writing Month!

This year I'm trying out the free ProWriting Aid platform for novel writing month. It looks very pretty and I love the timer function, but sometimes it doesn't save my work. So I have to make sure to transfer my writing into a word doc/google doc if I don't want to lose my writing.

For the first time I have been invited to give a Keynote speech (Canadian Author Association's Fred Kerner Book Award Gala) and I am a bit nervous. My husband tells me that people forget speeches 99% of the time, especially at weddings. Nevertheless, I will try my best so people have a good time while eating a fabulous buffet dinner. No dieting for me that night for sure!

Remembrance Day is upon us as well, and I am grateful for those before us who fought in wars so we can have peace. Recently, Canada Post released a Remembrance Day stamp honouring Chinese Canadians who volunteered for Force 136. Click here to read the Canada Post article about this.

Stay warm as the weather gets cooler!

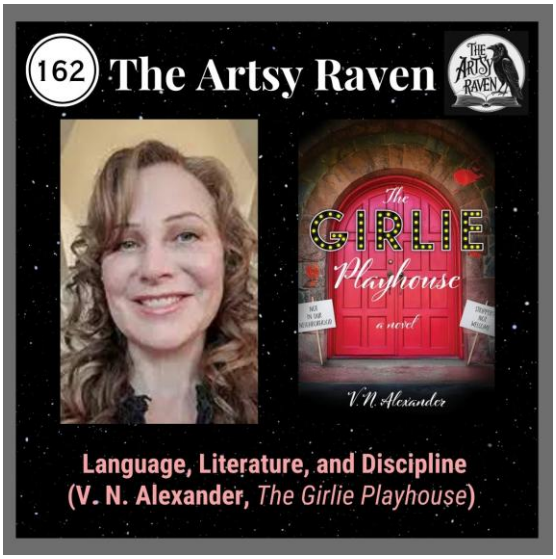
- JF Garrard
President, Dark Helix Press
Podcast Host, *The Artsy Raven* Literary Podcast

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



Ep162 Language, Literature, and Discipline with V. N. Alexander

V. N. Alexander shares how her academic career has enriched her fiction, why language itself fascinates her, and the role discipline plays in sustaining a creative practice.



Ep162A Marketing Mystery and Gothic with Ed Seaward

Ed Seaward discusses the inspiration behind writing a Gothic novel set in London, Ontario, whether marketing at book fairs can help authors reach new readers, and how plot keeps a mystery moving.



Ep163 The Friend and Enemy Within with Judith Kerman

Judith Kerman discusses how writing workshops help authors grow, the inspiration behind *A Hard Frost*—a poetry collection exploring aging, disability, resilience, and spirituality—and why she compares the critical mind to a golden retriever that can become either your best friend or your worst enemy.



Ep163A Creating Characters That Stay with Robin Blackburn McBride

Robin Blackburn McBride talks about the differences between writing novels and poetry, why she chose to set *River of Dreams* in a 1920s mental institution, and what makes a character memorable to readers.



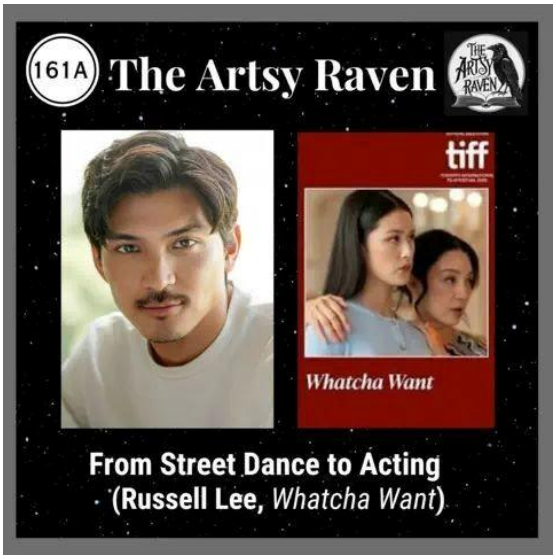
Ep164 Finding the Heart of a Character with Jane Hamilton

Jane Hamilton talks about how an intern at *Harper's* discovered her story and helped launch her writing career, how a novel evolves throughout the writing process, and what makes a character truly memorable.



Ep164A Writing Queer Heroes and Worlds with Sonido Reyes

Sonido Reyes discusses their journey to becoming a writer and advocate for LGBTQ+ creators, how To Our Untamed Core was inspired by The Hunger Games, and the role real-life events play in their worldbuilding process.



Ep162A From Street Dance to Acting with Russell Lee

Russell Lee shares how his journey from street dancing ledhim to acting, what he learned from his acting debut, and why telling stories that inspire and empower others matters.

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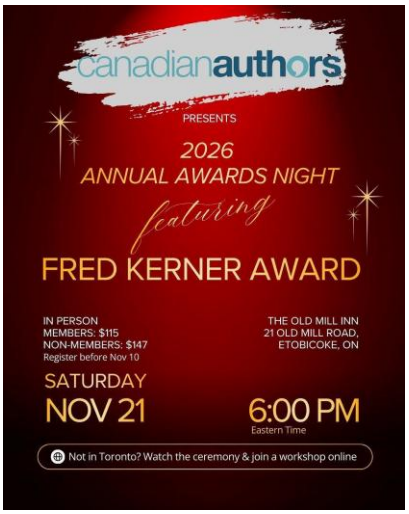
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Podcast merchandise available at our Threadless store: https://darkhelix.threadless. com/designs/the-artsy-raven-logo-v2

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Events - Fred Kerner Award Gala

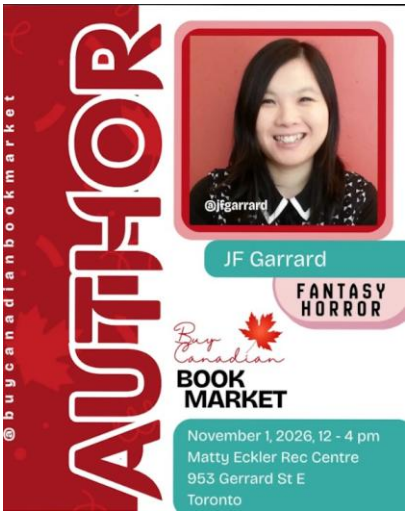


The Fred Kerner Book Award is awarded annually to a Canadian Authors member who has the best overall book published in the previous calendar year.

This year I'll be the Keynote speaker and have been busy trying to figure out what to say! The night before I am going to a Sloan concert, so Saturday morning I will have to have lots of caffeine to get through the day and the event!

More details: https://canadian-authors-association.circle.so/c/national-events/join-us-for-our2026-awards-night

Events - Buy Canadian Book Market



I'll be selling books at the Buy Canadian Book Market this year held downtown Toronto! It's my first year, so I have low expectations. Looking forward to meeting other Canadian authors!

https://www.instagram.com/buycanadianbookmarket/

Artsy Fun - Matcha Cookies



Christmas is coming and this year I will attempt to make cookie boxes.

One cookie recipe that I love is *Just One Cookbook*'s Matcha Cookies (picture from their website as shown here). My cookies ended up rectangular, but it didn't matter, they are really tasty, especially if you use really good matcha.

The dough can be frozen and thawed out later before baking, so they are ideal for making ahead of time. Happy baking!

Recipe and video: https://www.justonecookbook.com/green-tea-whitechocolate-cookies/

Story Origin Group Book Promos



A look into family drama, parent and child, and sibling stories Get these books fast! This promotion ends Nov 12, 2026! (click to download)



Ghostly & Gothic Goodies: An All-Genre Halloween, Magical, Gothic, and Autumn Book Extravaganza 2026 Get these books fast! This promotion ends Nov 20, 2026! (click to download)



Free Science Fiction / Fantasy Stories - November 2026. Get these books fast! This promotion ends Dec 2, 2026! (click to download)

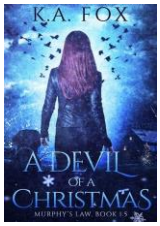


Not on MY Watch!: An All-Genre Giveaway for Characters Who Fight for Justice or Fairness. Get these books fast! This promotion ends Nov 19, 2026! (click to download)

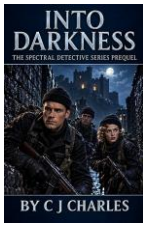


Not-So-Thankful November Reads. Get these books fast! This promotion ends Nov 30, 2026! (click to download)

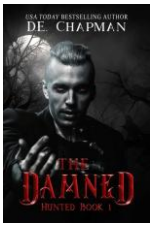
Fellow Indie Author Promos



A Devil of a Christmas by Pelican Literary Services (click to download). On a fateful Christmas Eve, Laney and her companions— including a Hell Hound named Moose—find her family's Texas ranch upended by a lost, pregnant couple. With the unexpected arrival of Laney's father, Angus Murphy, the Devil in human form, it's guaranteed to be a Christmas unlike any other she's experienced. This heartwarming story explores themes of belonging, the bonds of family, and finding a home in the most unusual of circumstances, all while embracing a touch of the supernatural.



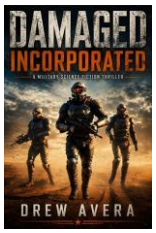
Into Darkness by C J Charles (click to download). April 1945. As the Third Reich crumbles, a covert Allied team is sent deep into the Thuringian mountains on a mission that doesn't officially exist. Their orders: infiltrate a medieval castle seized by the SS and recover a relic hidden within its ancient vaults — an artefact whispered to defy reason. What begins as a desperate race against time becomes something else entirely — a confrontation with forces buried beneath centuries of war, myth, and secrecy. In the final days of the Second World War, they will uncover that not all of history's monsters are human.



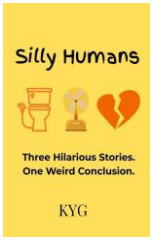
The Damned: A Dark Reverse Harem Vampiric Omegaverse Novella (Hunted Book 1) by D.E. Chapman (click for preview). Theo has never wanted an omega. Becoming addicted to estrous and blood isn't appealing to him in the least. But the choice has been taken from the alpha, and now he's bonded to a wisp of a woman who only reminds him of the invisible chains tying him down. He's determined to keep her at a distance, to treat her like an unwanted pet until he can sever their bond and free his pack from her clutches. Little does he know that Anna doesn't want him either.



VISITOR Preview by Wayne Meyers (click to download). Professor Douglas Keller meets extraterrestrial Aldrea, a beautiful Quenterian scientist stranded on Earth, while hiking in the Adirondack Mountains. Hunted by the FBI and a warring faction of Aldrea's people called the Radicals, she turns to Doug for help. Doug is no hero, but after



Damaged Incorporated by Drew Avera (click to download). War tore them apart. Revenge brought them together. Decades after civil unrest shattered nations, the world has been stitched back together by fragile alliances and corrupt leadership. The wealthy few control the planet's future, while the rest are left to rot in the shadows of broken promises. Rebellion simmers, but the powerful believe



Silly Humans by KYG Author (click to download). Three Hilarious Stories. One Weird Conclusion. A humorous short story collection taking a peak into modern life. In this collection, you'll meet: A man who trusts washrooms more than women, a woman who finds more loyalty in a table fan than her husband, a breakup addict who accidentally enters a threesome with a twist.

Aldrea used her telepathic abilities to heal him from a lethal wound, a psychic bond formed between them that opened their minds to each other in ways Doug cannot understand and Aldrea cannot explain.

suffering will break the will of the people. They're wrong. Roderick Ames was a proud Marine. He fought for his country— what little remained of it— until a missile strike turned his unit to ash. Everyone died. Everyone but him.

It's satire. It's strange. And it's hilarious.



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