



December 2023  
NEWSLETTER

## WOMEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

Next meeting: **Tuesday, Jan.2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

**Time:** from 9:30 on you can join the meeting and socialize  
10:00 Introduction and Emma's Presentation

**Place:** Zoom meeting -[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

*We acknowledge that we meet on the unceded lands of the  
Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations*

### **JANUARY SPEAKER**

Speaker:  
**Emma Fitzgerald**

Topic:  
**From architect to  
illustrator**



In this session she will tell us and show us how she moved from being an architect to becoming an urban sketcher, illustrator, and author.

Emma FitzGerald was born to Irish parents in Lesotho, a small mountainous kingdom in Southern Africa. She moved to Canada at a young age and spent most of her childhood in Vancouver, BC. These early travels have instilled in her a keen interest in people and places.

Emma has followed a career path that is part architecture, part art, receiving a BFA in Visual Art from the University of British Columbia in 2004, and a Masters in Architecture from Dalhousie University in 2008. She has worked in architecture offices across Canada and with Peter Rich Architects in Johannesburg, South Africa. There she worked on the award winning Mapangubwe Interpretive Centre and Alexandra Heritage Centre.

Her art practice is characterised by on-site drawing, place-based research, and a sense of the poetic. This work has taken her from textile factories in her birth country of Lesotho, to the various houses of Canadian American poet Elizabeth Bishop. She has exhibited widely, and participated in several artist residency programmes including Largo das Artes in Rio de Janeiro, and the Santa Fe Art Institute's thematic residency in New Mexico.

She is the author and illustrator of *Hand Drawn Halifax*, a best-selling book based on her chosen home in Nova Scotia. The *Globe & Mail* describes it as 'part journal, part sketchbook, *Hand Drawn Halifax* is a love letter to Atlantic Canada's largest city.'

Emma has since written and illustrated *Sketch by Sketch Along Nova Scotia's South Shore*, also with Formac Publishing. She has worked with Nimbus Publishing, illustrating the children's books *Everybody's Different on Everybody Street* (words Sheree Fitch) and *A Pocket of Time: The Poetic Childhood of Elizabeth Bishop* (words Rita Wilson), was nominated for IBBY Canada's 2020 Cleaver Award.

In Summer 2020 she released *Hand Drawn Vancouver* with Appetite of Penguin Random House Canada. Emma is currently at work on *Hand Drawn Victoria* with a projected publication date of Spring 2024. Her most recent kid's book release is *When The Ocean Came to Town* written by Sal Sawler, to be published by Nimbus Publishing in October 2023. Her website is <https://emmafitzgerald.ca>

Women's PROBUS of Vancouver:

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## DECEMBER SPEAKER

### Artistic Director of The Arts Club

## Ashlie Corcoran

### “Life Cycle” of a Play”

Ashlie Corcoran gave us the inside scoop on how she came to be the Artistic Director, how she receives & selects plays for the theatre season, and the “life cycle” of a play - how it develops from a playwright’s inspiration to performance on a stage.

Ms. Corcoran (she/her) took over as Artistic Director of the Arts Club from Bill Millerd with his retirement in 2018. Since then, she has spearheaded *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Matchmaker*, *Bed & Breakfast*, *Cost of Living*, *The Sound of Music*, *Redbone Coon-hound*, *Teenage Dick*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, and *Little Shop of Horrors* for the company.

Originally from White Rock, BC, Corcoran directed both theatre and opera, working across Canada and internationally. She was the Artistic Director of the Thousand Islands Playhouse in Gananoque, Ontario, from 2012 to 2017, where she directed 15 productions. She is also the co-founder and Artistic Producer for Theatre Smash in Toronto, a British Foreign and Commonwealth Office Chevening Scholar, and a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab. Every trip home to Vancouver offered her the opportunity to apply to the Arts Club.

Her credits include *The Barber of Seville* (Vancouver Opera); *Me and My Girl* (Shaw Festival); *Mamma Mia!*, *Little Shop of Horrors* & *Cost of Living* (Citadel Theatre); *Das Ding* (*The Thing*) (Theatre Smash/Canadian Stage/TIP); *Kiss* (Theatre Smash/Canadian Stage/ARC); *The Ugly One*, *Durango*, *The Boy Called Newfoundland*, *Tijuana Cure* (Theatre

*Smash*); *The Gay Heritage Project* (*Buddies in Bad Times* Theatre/National Tour); *Bed & Breakfast* (Centaur Theatre/Belfry Theatre); *The Ugly One*, *Mustard* (Tarragon Theatre); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Waiting for the Parade*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Don't Dress for Dinner*, *The Birds & the Bees* (Western Canada Theatre); and 10 projects at the Canadian Opera Company, most recently *The Magic Flute* and *The Magic Victrola*.

The Arts Club started as a private club doing plays to help pay for the bar, & morphed into having the bar help pay for the plays, with a \$16m budget each year with 3 venues & a touring group.

Since Covid, a challenge has been getting audiences back.

Though always on the lookout for possible scripts, planning for a season begins the year before, & choosing plays is done with an eye on



“conscious eclecticism” – including representation of Canadian writers, new scripts, gender balance, BIPOC community, age attraction, & more.

She, with counsel of her team, choose the plays, work on the logistics of scope & scale of budgets, casts, crews, sets, contracts, through to rehearsals & shows.

Ashlie’s talk was enlightening, & very entertaining.

*Wendy Baker introduced; Donna Battye thanked*



## Reminders

### January meeting – by Zoom

10:00 a.m. - [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

### February meeting - we're moving!

As mentioned, PGGC notified us that they will be unable to accommodate us for 6 months this coming year.

Meredyth looked at several locations, & all agreed that **UBC Golf Course** is the best option.

As a bonus, we will be able to offer coffee & tea... details to follow.

This will start for the February meeting; January will be by Zoom.

### Meeting Notes:

Thank you's to the greeters & badge ladies!

**Yes, Volunteers are very much needed!**

*Membership, recording, newsletter content, treasurer.*

- **Management Committee Contacts:**

Women's PROBUS members will find the *confidential* phone numbers and email addresses on the last page of their Newsletter. Please contact Hodie any if you have any questions, or email [probuswomens@gmail.com](mailto:probuswomens@gmail.com).

- **Newsletter:**

Contributions of anything, including stories, poems, jokes and brain teasers are welcome. Please send to the Hodie any time.

- **Update Your Contact Information:**

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? Please update your profile on the Club's website <https://probuswomen.com>  
Or email [womensprobus@gmail.com](mailto:womensprobus@gmail.com)

