



# Brickyard for Educators

The Brickyard Spoken Word Showcase on YouTube provides educators with a powerful online tool to introduce students to the best of Canadian spoken word, storytelling, and performance poetry. In particular, educators of literature or the humanities and social sciences can find supplementary learning material to suit a variety of needs and encourage engagement amongst high school and post-secondary students. Drop by the Brickyard YouTube channel to:

- Prepare for an upcoming poetry section in your course.
- Introduce students to work that celebrates the intersection of art, social justice, and activism.
- Explore our interview series for discussions on craft, community, and the art of performance.
- Spotlight local artists by selecting the playlist that highlights your target region of Canada.
- Use our "Classroom-Friendly" playlist with peace of mind to find moving content appropriate for use in a school setting.
- Share pieces from our Mental Health playlist as a catalyst for discussions on subjects like emotional well-being and bullying.
- Celebrate Black History Month, National Indigenous History Month, and Asian Heritage Month with spoken word pieces by some of the country's most celebrated artists.

## Keep in touch

**Sign up for our monthly newsletter** to stay current on Brickyard initiatives.

**Subscribe to our YouTube channel** to support our roster of talented Canadian artists.

Brickyard is proud to be a program produced by award-winning poetry publisher, **Brick Books**, which offers a profit sharing policy to artists should their videos go viral.

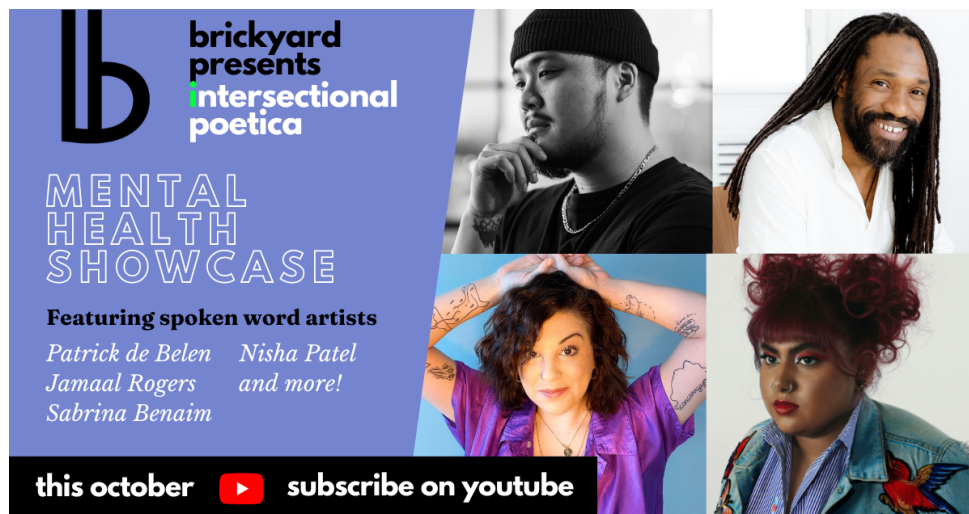
# Intersectional Poetica

## A Celebration of Voice and Verse

Brickyard is pleased to announce Intersectional Poetica, a program designed to give extended time and exposure to artists from a diversity of backgrounds, presenting work that is timely, urgent, and focused on giving voice to traditionally marginalized communities. Read below for our scheduled timeline:

- **Mental Health Showcase:** Begins World Mental Health Day on October 10, 2022
- **Black History Month Showcase:** February 2023
- **Asian Heritage Month:** May 2023
- **National Indigenous History Month:** June 2023

## Mental Health Showcase



This October 2022, Brickyard presents our Mental Health Showcase—a series of performance videos and interviews by renowned Canadian spoken word artists. The mental health playlist will feature appearances from artists such as:

- **Patrick de Belen** – a celebrated Filipino-Canadian storyteller most known for his collaborations with the Toronto Raptors, the NFL and CBC.
- **Jamaal Jackson Rogers** – an award-winning poet, arts educator, and former Poet Laureate of Ottawa.
- **Nisha Patel** – a venerated queer, disabled spoken word poet and the City of Edmonton's 8th Poet Laureate.
- **Sabrina Benaim** – one of the most-viewed spoken word poets of all time whose videos have reached over 100 million people around the world.

## Featured Artists



**Patrick de Belen** is a Filipino-Canadian storyteller, arts educator, spoken word poet, writer, and director. He is most known for his collaborations with the Toronto Raptors, the NFL, CBC, his 3 spoken word EPs and multiple cine-poems he wrote and directed himself.

He was the youngest poet to win a national poetry slam championship, awarded both the national poet of honour and youth poet of honour title, and a few more storytelling accolades throughout his career.

When he is not writing or sharing, he is an educator and youth mentor, partnering with many institutions like addiction centres, mental health focused organizations, libraries, schools, jails and more—advocating for storytelling opportunities in as many spaces as possible.

**Website:** [www.patrickdebelen.com](http://www.patrickdebelen.com)



**Sabrina Benaim** is a 34-year-old poet, performer, and workshop facilitator. She is one of the most-viewed spoken word poets of all time and is the author of the best-selling collection of poetry, *Depression and Other Magic Tricks*. Her videos have reached over 100 million people. Sabrina has toured Australia, the UK, Canada, and the USA with her live shows, which are poetry readings gone electric. While the subject matter can veer into difficult territory, it is with truth and from experience that Sabrina is able to navigate through

her mental illness journey with a wild sense of humour and frank discussion to leave her audience feeling comforted and uplifted. She has been a guest on CBC's *q* with Tom Power, has written for SONY, ESPNW, and made her television debut writing and voicing a National Commercial for the 2016 Olympics. Sabrina believes in breaking down stigma around mental illness, women helping women, and ghosts. She will accept any invitation to dance.

**Website:** [www.sabrinabenaim.net](http://www.sabrinabenaim.net)



**Jamaal Jackson Rogers** is an award-winning poet, arts educator, creative entrepreneur, and performance artist. As a poet, he was selected to be Ottawa's first English Poet Laureate after 27 years in which the position had gone unfilled, while his career in arts education has earned him 2016's Ontario Arts Educator Award. He has brought his practice to audiences locally and internationally and his defining moments are when he makes intimate connections with his participants during workshop exchanges and

performance sets.

His topics range from emotional maturity to social justice, from parenting to the human condition, and has been highlighted in festivals, documentaries and educational institutions across the world. He resides in Ottawa, Canada, with his wife and six children, using the national capital region and his performance studio, THE ORIGIN ARTS & COMMUNITY CENTRE, as his launch pad to teach, mentor and advocate for the arts.

You can follow him on Instagram **[@justjamaalthe poet](#)**



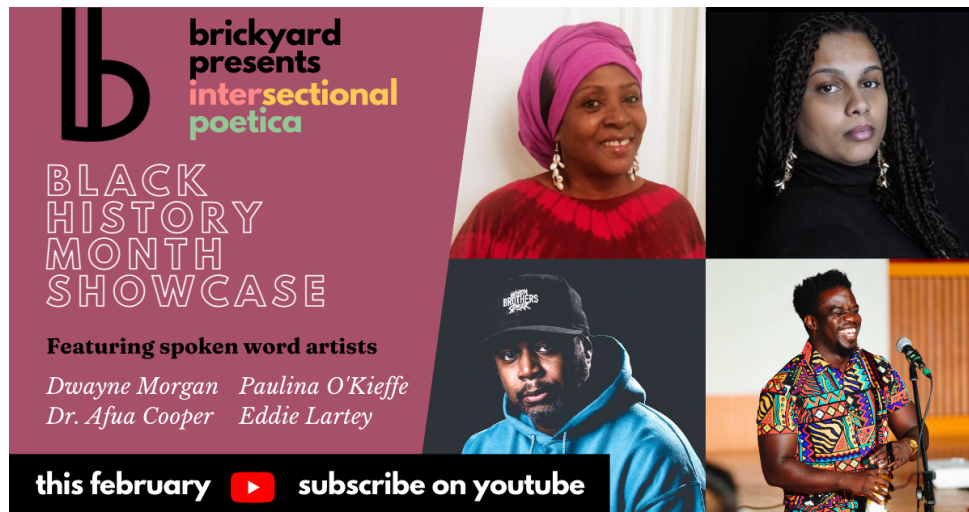
**Nisha Patel** is an award-winning disabled queer spoken word poet & multimedia artist. She was the City of Edmonton's 8th Poet Laureate, and is a Canadian Poetry Slam Champion. Her debut poetry collection, *COCONUT* (NeWest Press), speaks to her experiences as a Gujarati daughter, and was a finalist of the Alberta Book Publishers Association Regional Book of the Year. She is an educator, mentor, and public speaker.

Nisha's latest works include multimodal inquiries into disabled life. She showcased her first exhibit of disability art in 2022, titled *A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH*, and published her disability poetics chapbook, *NOT A DISORDER* (Gap Riot Press). She has an MA in Cultural Studies from Queen's University, and is an MFA candidate at the University of British Columbia.

**Website:** [www.nishapatel.ca](http://www.nishapatel.ca)



# Black History Month Showcase



This February 2023, Brickyard presents our Black History Month Showcase—a series of performance videos and interviews by renowned Canadian spoken word artists. The Black History Month showcase will feature appearances from artists such as:

- **Dwayne Morgan** – the Godfather of Canadian spoken word.
- **Dr. Afua Cooper** – esteemed scholar and co-founder of the Dub Poetry movement in Canada.
- **Paulina O'Kieffe** – award-winning artist and cultural worker.
- **Eddie Lartey** – internationally acclaimed spoken word superstar.

## Featured Artists



**Dwayne Morgan** began his career in the spoken word in 1993. Affectionately called the Godfather of Canadian spoken word by his peers, Morgan is the author of 14 published and 10 audio collections of his work. Morgan is a 2022 winner of the Toronto Arts Foundation Celebration of Cultural Life award, 2016 finalist for the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Arts and a 2013 inductee into the Scarborough Walk of Fame. To date Morgan has shared his work in 19 countries internationally.

**Website:** [www.dwaynemorgan.ca](http://www.dwaynemorgan.ca)



**Dr. Afua Cooper** is a celebrated poet, spoken word icon, author, scholar, and historian. Her many books range across such genres as poetry, history, fiction, and children's literature. She served as the Poet Laureate of Halifax Regional Municipality for the 2018-2020 term. She is a founder of the Canadian Dub Poetry Movement, and a recipient of numerous prizes and awards, including the Portia White Prize (Nova Scotia's most distinguished artistic award), the J.M. Abraham Atlantic Poetry prize, the Bob Marley Award, and was a

finalist for the Governor General's Literary Prize. Her poems have been included in numerous literary anthologies and recorded on three CDs. Afua Cooper holds a Ph.D. in history and is the foremost expert on Black Canadian history. She is a full professor at Dalhousie University where she holds a Killam Research Chair. Further, Dr. Cooper is the principal investigator for *A Black People's History of Canada*, a project that engages in new research on Black history, accompanied by a new Black history curriculum. Recently, for her work on Black Canadian history, Dr. Cooper was awarded the Royal Society of Canada's J.B. Tyrrell Historical Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Canadian history. Recently, this trail-blazing scholar was honoured by *Maclean's Magazine* as one of the 50 most influential Canadians.

**Website:** [www.afuacooper.com](http://www.afuacooper.com)



**Paulina O'Kieffe-Anthony** is an award winning artist, curator, arts educator and creative consultant. Her high level accomplishments include being featured in *When Sisters Speak*, co-curating *Scarborough: The Backbone* as part of Toronto's Year of Public Art, co-producing the Spoken Soul Festival, and representing Toronto as a 2x national team finalist in the Canadian Festival Of Spoken Word. In 2019 she was a TEDx speaker and in 2020 an excerpt of her play *How Jab*

*Jab Saved the Pretty Mas* was featured as part of Piece of Mine's Black Women in Theatre Festival.

Her work and leadership in the community sector was recognized as she was the recipient of the Toronto Community Foundation Vital People Award and again when she was recognized as one of 150 Black Women Making Herstory (as featured on CBC) for her contribution to building the arts scene in Toronto.

**Website:** [www.paulinaokieffe.com](http://www.paulinaokieffe.com)



**Eddie Lartey** is a Hamiltonian wordsmith, poet, and spoken word artist who uses his gifts to address love, devastation and triumph within the Black experience. Using words to create a better life for all, Lartey is dedicated to the poetics of world-making and world-breaking. Through his collective, Hamilton You Poets, Lartey also conducts writing and performance workshops for a community of all ages and stages. His work has been performed on national and international stages for almost a decade. He is the

2019 Toronto International Poet Slam Champion, the 2021 Human Rights Festival Poetry Slam Champion, the 2022 Top 40 Under 40 recipient, and the 2022 Canadian Individual Poetry Champion, and has just won the 2022 Copa "Americas" de Poetry Slam, in Brazil.

You can follow him on Instagram [\*\*etupacshakespeare\*\*](https://www.instagram.com/etupacshakespeare)

# About Brickyard

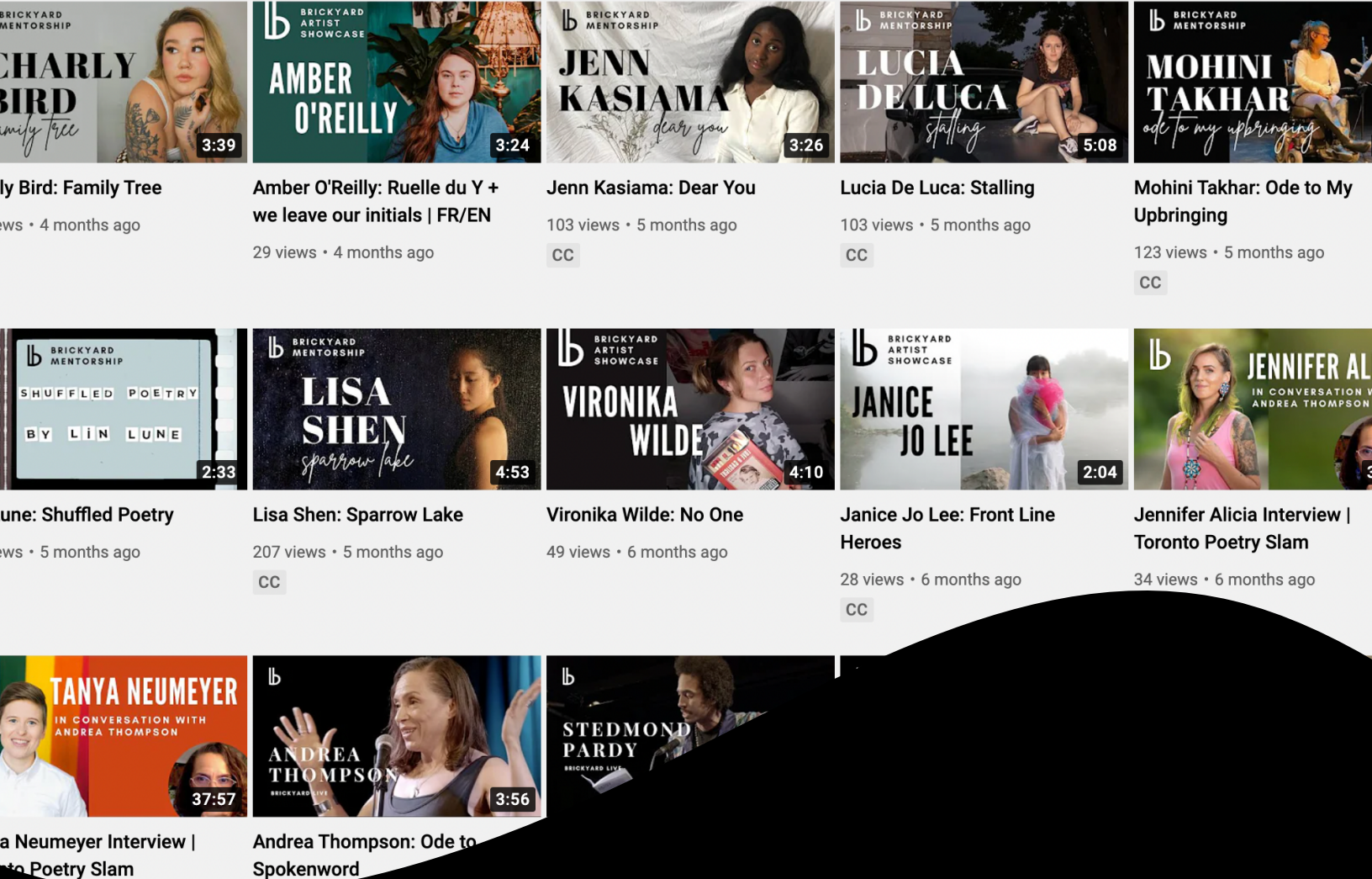
## Showcasing Excellence in Canadian Spoken Word & Orature

Brickyard is an audio/visual hub where Brick Books is proud to showcase excellence in Canadian spoken word and orature. Our YouTube channel offers a growing collection of interviews and performances from Canada's top spoken word artists, as well as a centralized hub for teachers and professors looking to introduce their students to the art of spoken word—an orature that emerged from grassroots culture, informed by BIPOC oral literary traditions. From Indigenous storytelling to hip-hop-infused slam poems, spoken word is the poetic of marginalized voices. With this new initiative, Brickyard will be taking time to celebrate, elevate, and amplify traditionally underrepresented artists through a series of showcases, interspersed throughout the year, featuring 15-minute performance sets and 30-minute interviews with 20 spoken word artists.

Over the past few years, Brickyard has featured some of the most captivating writing, poetry, storytelling, dub poetry, jazz poetry, sound poetry, performance poetry, slam poetry and acapella rap this country has to offer. Past Brickyard features include Griffin Poetry Prize winner: Kaie Kellough, Governor General's Award winner: George Elliot Clarke, Juno Award winner: Lillian Allen, Order of Canada recipient: Sheri-D Wilson, Canadian Screen Awards winner: Wendy Motion Brathwaite, Slam Champion: Ian Keteku, Pavlick Poetry Prize winner: Andrea Thompson, international best-selling author: Jesse Thistle and other highly acclaimed artists such as Catherine Kidd, Mahlikah Awe:ri, and Brick Books author, Charlie Petch.

Spoken word is a continually changing art form of voice, passion and poetic expression. Before there were books, there was spoken word; it is where the story of literature begins. Spoken word proclaims the importance of speaking out—using captivating oratory and skillful linguistics to share our perspective and our lived experience. It is how we proclaim our identities, how we share both our pain and our victories. It is how we speak truth to power. It is how we change the world.





# You're invited

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Brickyard. Please join us in exploring, elevating, and celebrating the power of the spoken word by liking and sharing our videos and **subscribing to our YouTube channel!**

With thanks,  
The Brickyard Team

Andrea Thompson, *Artistic Director*  
Rayzel Bermudez, *Digital Marketing Coordinator*

Have questions? E-mail us at **[brickyard@brickbooks.ca](mailto:brickyard@brickbooks.ca)**