

14:03:58 » GENEVIEVE: Welcome everybody. I want to take up any airtime but if you do not know who I am I am Genevieve the Associate Dean of the College of the associate Dean of the school of humanities and creativity. It is my very great privilege to welcome our writer in residence for their first official engagement with our community Dr. Adam Pottle. Without further ado, let me pass on the microphone to Owen Percy, our program coordinator.

14:04:38 » OWEN PERCY: Hi everybody. Nice to see you. Happy Friday afternoon. I hope you're having a dandy day so far; welcome to our very informal meet and greet with this year's writer in residence Adam Pottle. We are grateful to have him here with us today and for the whole year. This is the first time of many you will be seeing Adam on your screen and hopefully early next year in person. Before we get started because Adam is not in the GTA, he is in Saskatoon at the moment as I understand it, obviously most of us in and around the Sheridan area we want to acknowledge that all of our campuses reside on land which was the traditional territory of the Mississauga's of the credit first Nations, the Huron-Wendat, and Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We consider it our collective responsibility to honor and respect those who have gone before us, those who are here now and those who have yet to come. We are grateful for the opportunity to be working on this land. We are grateful for the opportunity to be here today with everybody. I'm going to talk a little bit about what the writer residence is. I know some of you are first-year students so you might not be familiar with the whole idea of a writer in residence. I will tell you a little bit about what the program is about and then I will hand it over to Adam and Adam will introduce himself and tell you a little bit about what he does and what he has done and what he hopes to do during his time here at Sheridan. We will wrap up today with a Q&A and I will give you some explicit directions about how to get in touch with Adam if you would like to book time with him for his weekly office hours which will happen on Friday afternoons. You will also be seeing him in some of your classes. I expect that he will be in high demand as a guest speaker to come in and talk about various aspects because of the nature of his profile. He has done a lot of writing in different genres and has had interesting publishing experiences. I am sure he can elaborate on for us over the year. So the writer in residence program is an eight month residency. Basically we hire somebody to join us in our program, normally on campus and now virtually for this semester at least who is a professional, who we consider a professional writer. It is an eight month residency, partial residency in this case. It is awarded to a writer who embodies in our estimation the ampersand that is the hinge in our program and the heart of our program. Somebody with vast writing experience but also publishing knowledge or experience that they are able to share. We also like to bring in writers who are for the lack of a better term Zeitgeist-y; People were doing cool things that we think are cool and who are students will think are pretty cool. We like to bring them in and get their mentorship and their leadership and their guidance for our students and on behalf of our faculty as well. So what the writer in residence does in our program at least is that they have a number of responsibilities. The first is that they need to be working on their own creative project. This is a great gig that you aspiring writers and to which you should aspire to at some point real soon. This is a gig that you get paid and part of your responsibility is to create your own work. Very rarely do people pay you to do your own creative work like this. That is a small part of what Adam is here to help us with. The other thing Adam will be doing is providing creative leadership for us. A bit of mentoring and guidance for our students and faculty and doing public outreach on behalf of faculty of humanities and social sciences and of Sheridan more broadly. Adam will basically be a nonteaching member of our faculty team. When you meet with Adam and spend time in office hours and consult on your writing, you do not need to be worried that you will get a grade. Adam is here to offer support and guidance and life experience based on his own writing career and publishing

experiences. The writer in residence, their job is to be a writer. To be here and around in a resource and a guide for you the students and for us the faculty . We launched this program in 2019 2020 in our first writer residence was the poet Liz Howard. Last year we had the multitalented Gary Barwin and this year we are thrilled to welcome Doctor Adam Pottle who is multitalented, and focuses on several different genres. I don't know how he keeps it all straight. I will let Adam speak for himself and stop talking for a little while. We will let Adam introduce himself a little bit and talk about what he does, how he does it and what he hopes to do over the next few months with you. We will have a question and answer period after. If you have questions that pop up, literally any question you can come up with that you think you want an answer to that other people might find interesting as well please do pop it into the public chat on the right-hand side of your screen. At least it is on the right hand of my screen. At the end of our session today I will give you some instructions on how to get in touch with Adam from how to sign up for a session where you can talk one-on-one about your writing or just get in a space with them where you can actually chat about his experience as a writer with the publishing process, the writing process in different genres, across media etc. So without further ado, welcome to Adam Pottle. I'll ask him to take over now. Thank you.

14:11:07 » ADAM POTTLE: Thank you so much Owen. Thank you all for taking the time to join us today and to tune in today. I would also like to thank the Department of creative writing and publishing for selecting me for this position. It is a great privilege. I am very much looking forward to working with you all this year. I want to talk a little bit about myself and my creative practice . Also some of the goals that I have for this year. A little bit about myself: I was born and raised in British Columbia but have lived in Saskatoon for the last 12 years. I came here to go to school to get my PhD and I stayed here after I finish my degree. I taught English, creative writing and communications for 15 years. I have written, published and produced in a variety of different genres. Owen was wondering how do I keep all of these genres in my head the short answer is that I don't. I don't keep them straight. I'm like a dog chasing cars. I just go in whatever direction that my creative impulse takes me. In addition to essays, articles and short stories, I published four books. A novel, poetry book, and memoir. I have also had two plays produced. The first was done in 2016 and that was called Ultrasound. The second in 2019 was called The Black Drum. Particularly I was proud of The Black Drum because that was the world's first all deaf musical . All the dialogue and music was done entirely in sign language and in sign music. I am particularly proud of that play -It has won a couple of festival awards. I've not had any film scripts produced yet but that is the goal that I am working towards. I'm also hoping to one day work in a TV writer's room one day. A few goals that I have for myself. About my creative practice, all of my work focuses on disabled characters. Especially deaf characters because I myself am deaf . I grew up in a hearing family so that is why I am able to speak as well as I do. I was put through speech therapy as a kid. Not the best experience, I don't recommend it. One of my goals as a writer is to explore the imaginative possibilities that arise when they tell stories from disabled perspectives. Having disabled perspectives change the way that we see certain situations. If you have a romance story and your main character is disabled, how does the relationship unfold? Things like that. Disabled people have been stereotyped or completely ignored in literature , sound, television and theater. That is something that unfortunately continues today. There is really no excuse for it anymore. We have the capacity to do better. As one of my colleagues David Robertson once wrote, when you know better then do better. In my work I have a habit of genre hopping—going from one to another. Moving around like that keeps things fresh for me. I enjoy the challenge of taking on a new genre. At the moment they currently have a few projects. I finished the first draft of my new novel earlier this year and am currently attracting a publisher. I have a

new children's book coming out in 2023 sometimes I do that it's for that. I am working on the script for a new deaf musical that I hope will be produced next spring . Covid permitting. My main project though and the same main project, is the thing that takes up most of my headspace it is a project that I can trace back to when I was a teenager. When I was a teenager, I aspired to be a comic book artist. I had planned to and finished high school ironically go to a school in New York that specialized in comic book art. Unfortunately I was not able to go. So instead I went to university in BC and became an English major . As a result of all these different things, my interest in comics sank beneath the surface. It lay dormant. It was still there but it was sleeping. Recently and probably as a result of the pandemic , my interest in comics woke up and woke up hungry. Over the last few months I have been reading a lot of graphic novels. My ambition is to create one myself. I've been working on the script for a graphic novel . That is my main project right now. It's been a wonderful and exciting challenge to do that. That is going to be my main project going forward. As a reader, I read of wide variety of materials. My bookshelves have no sense to them whatsoever. There is no rhyme or reason to them. I have non-fiction and comics next to my poetry collections. It is quite disorganized. At the moment, my current favorite reading materials are horror stories and comic books. One of the things that I have been reading lately is Jack Ketchum. This is his book that I'm reading right now called off-season. I have also been re-reading Stephen King and earlier this summer I read William Peter the exorcist. I also read the entire lock and key series, I read it in a week and a half because it was so fantastic and good. I've also been reading other comic series. I have been reading the shine man and a number of other things. One thing you should know about me is that I have been a horror fan all my life . One of the great things about horror is how Open and imaginative it is. You can take virtually any other genre and mix it up with horror and create something special. It is often disconcerting for me to see that people often dismiss horror, sci-fi fantasy, people often dismiss these dramatic genres. Especially in Canada because in Canada we focus on the realistic stories. The idea is slowly starting to change. As writers we need to open ourselves up to different kinds of stories. They offer us a normal enormous playground for us to plan . Writing in residence is something I produced to encourage you all to encourage different ways of seeing things. My main duty as a writer in residence that I see is to act as a cheerleader. Especially for the students. Being a writer is also lonely. Having somebody who cheer you on gives you more backbone. A little more bravery as you write. I hope to help you all with that during this year. When you email me, you can call me Adam by the way , that is totally cool , when I read your work this term I will lead with two questions a month. One, what is the best craft advice that I can give ? And two, what is the best way that I can encourage this person? This is the two values that I will lead with. That is my little spiel. Thank you all for listening to me and I look forward to working with you all this year.

» 14:22:37 OWEN PERCY: Thank you very much Adam. I will invite everybody who might have a question, I put Adam's email address in the chat there for you to record. I will put a bit more information there in just a second. I would like to invite questions if people have questions, I will give them a second to formulate them and take them in. In the meantime Adam, because this is a question that I'm asking myself of my students right now, especially my first year students who are coming in and are now starting to think of themselves as writers, when and how did you know or realize or resign yourself to the fact that you were a writer?

» 14:23:39 ADAM POTTLE: I am just reading the transcript which is why it is taking a moment. That is a good question. I started writing seriously when I was 16 years old. I was in my high school English class and I had this teacher. He was this big, burly bald guy with these small really bright darting eyes. He was

one of the most captivating storytellers you have ever seen. On the first day of class, it was clear that he was different from other teachers. He will not just stick to the curriculum. He would also bring on his own life experiences. He grew up in Germany after the second world war. He had great empathy to just about everybody. The energy with which he told stories , it was just like a blast of Stardust. One of the first stories that he told in class was Edgar Allan Poe's the telltale heart. After he told that story, I knew that I had to try and capture or generate some of that magic myself. I started trying to write my own stories and my own poems. Since then, that is what I have continued to do. I am 37 now . That was 21 years ago. I am 37 now.

14:26:09 OWEN PERCY: That is not so bad. I remember being 37 . There are questions starting to come in, I hope you can see them in the chat. This first one is from Hannah who says thank you so much, I am excited to work with you. I was wondering with genre hopping, how do you manage to create so much content to completion? Are there any strategies that you would recommend for a fellow genre hopper who struggles with the mass production sort of thing?

14:26:56 OWEN PERCY: You are on mute Adam . I think you are muted .

» ADAM POTTLE: Sorry there you go. Thank you for your question Hannah. It is an excellent question. I think the reason why I am able to complete a project is because I hate loose ends. I'm going to back up a second and take you to my writing process. Once I start a project, whether it is novel whether it is a graphic novel, I don't stop writing it until the first draft is finished. I work on the project every single day. Even if it's just 15 minutes to half an hour. Even I just take one part of the end of the sentence and put it at the beginning, I have to be there and occupy that headspace at least once a day. I will keep doing that until the project is done no matter what the project is. I know if I don't finish it then it is just going to rattle me. It's going to rattle in my head. Things are always rattling in my head. It's just a matter of tying up loose ends and keeping things clean in my head. That may not be the answer that you are looking for but that is the best that I can give right now. It's possible that in five minutes I will come up with a better answer .

»14:29:17 OWEN PERCY: A revision. There is a question from Eva who says hey Adam, I wonder what is your writing process? Do you like to procrastinate for an hour like the rest of us before writing something down?

14:29:39 » ADAM POTTLE: I like to think of procrastination as a necessity in the writing life. Yes of course I procrastinate. It feels like procrastination as part of the writing routine . I always have a few things that I do in the document that I'm working on. A few of those things include looking out and answering emails. Sometimes, especially with the project I am working on, they sometimes involve watching videos or footage from the time period in which my story is set. I will give you an example. When a graphic novel I am working on a set into different time period. One part of the story takes place in 1980 in Washington D.C. and the other part of the story takes place in Boston in 1913. I was lucky enough to find footage from both of those eras and both of those places. That allows me to get into their headspace and get into the rhythms of what life was like in those time period. Because I am deaf, I respond quicker to visual stimuli. I am seeing the way people move, their facial expressions and all of the different things. It's very beneficial to my writing process. Opening the document and getting to work

14:31:45 . » OWEN PERCY: Thank you. We have a question from Emily that is more of a question about writer in residence overall. Is Adam going to be here to help us out with writing pieces for classes only

or can I bring personal stuff? Let me be clear, Adam does not know what your assignments are in your classes. His job is to help you with whatever writing you bring to him. He is not aware of the assignments themselves in our classes. His job is to work with whatever you bring to him. Even though he is at Sheridan, he is working with us we are not discussing work or particular assignment or anything like that. It is if you are meeting with him as a professional writer even though Sheridan is allowing this meeting to happen. Please bring him whatever you are working on and interested in. Genevieve has put in a link to Adam's memoir and his journey towards becoming a writer and thinking of himself as a writer. There's a question from Lauren: do you have any advice to disabled writers?

14:33:13 » ADAM POTTLE: First of all thank you Lauren for your question. It's a very good question and is very close to my heart because I myself am a disabled writer. Just one second. You can probably hear chattering in the background, that is the dog chewing on her big bone. I will take it away from her so there is no interference. One moment .

» GENEVIEVE: 14:33:52 I am hoping everyone gets a moment to meet Valkyrie at some point who is a big lab or doodle.

» ADAM POTTLE: I am sure that you will. You can meet her right now if

you would like. There she is. And she is quite young, she is only 17 months old, a goldendoodle. To get back to Lauren's question, let me tell you a story. About three years ago, I was scheduled to appear on the word on the street festival. About a couple of months before the festival, I found out that there was going to be no captioning or sign language interpretation, none of that stuff. That whatever the limited my ability to participate. I would've not have been able to understand any of the audience questions, I would have not been able to understand what my fellow writers were saying because I would've been on a panel. So email the festival and I asked, can we please bring some accommodations and these accessibility to this panel? They said that is not something we can really afford right now. I said okay, I would be willing to waive my appearance fee to pay for the accessibility. The board made the mystifying decision to drop me from the festival altogether. It was quite a discouraging thing that they would so plainly tell me that there is no room for a deaf person here. They're basically saying we do not welcome disabled people. I was really discouraged. I made a small mention of it in a conversation that I had maybe a couple of weeks later on social media and a couple of hours later my twitter message was completely blown up. So many members of the disability community were supporting me and saying that is not right. They should be providing accessibility for you. What happened was the public pressure continued to mount. They were emailing the festival, it really became a whole thing. Eventually the festival reinstated me with full accessibility supports. That would not happen if I do not have the support of the disability community. As a disabled writer, having the community I cannot understate the value of being a part of the community. I mentioned earlier how important it is to have support and someone in your corner because it gives you the additional bravery. Being able to find the community and connect with like-minded creative people makes a tremendous amount of difference. If you are a disabled writer I would suggest sticking up for other disabled writers depending on where you live . You could probably find a disabled creative community or disabled writers workshop or things like that. Here there is a disabled creative community. This applies to everybody. Finding a community of people that supports your work makes a tremendous amount of difference. I hope as you go forward in your writing journey that you are with your communities.

14:39:41 » OWEN PERCY: Thank you very much for that story. That is a horror story in and

of itself. I am glad that it had a happy ending. There is a message of support for you Adam from Tammy who said I am 35 so please do not feel distraught. she is also sharing her particular perspective as well and says that it makes her feel much more attuned to her issue of a visual-spatial things. She chooses to look at the struggle as a gift because it makes her more attuned to words and tone. So if there are any other questions...looks like Valkyrie is getting lots of traction which is not a huge surprise. I was wondering about your turn to graphic novels. Are you doing the art of conceptualizing alongside the actual text? How are you navigating that relationship?

14:40:59 . » ADAM POTTLE: That's a good question. Unfortunately my drawing skills have heavily deteriorated. I am not doing the art but one of the things that I am doing out a small little one on the page to look like. That will help me decide what to put on the page is something that Neil Gaiman does. I thought it was a really good idea. You probably already heard that great writers steal - - that is something that I am stealing from him and incorporating specifically for this project.

14:42:20 » OWEN PERCY: Great, thank you. There is another question from Eva who asked as a writer, is it important to specialize in a genre or write in several genres?

14:42:45 » ADAM POTTLE: Great question. Thank you Eva. This is something that I wrestle with a lot. I know that it is difficult to build an audience unless you focus on one particular genre. Like for example if you are a novelist you stay and novelist. That is what you need to do....That is a challenging questionYou could probably see the different paths in my head sprouting up... For me personally, I just enjoy exploring different things. That's what keeps the creative process. Each of the books that have published, there is a novel and the memoir and each one was different. That is my personal process that some writers, they tend to think, how can I put this better? The work that they produce is reflective of how they think. Some writers think solely novelist or sometimes short fiction, but for me if I get an idea for a story that my question is how do I write this? Do I write it as a film or write it as a prose fiction? I can spend several weeks wrestling with the question. You should choose, when an idea comes to you, choose the genre you feel most comfortable with . If you open to experimenting then go for it. That's what real writing is for. Just choose your path and go forward with it .

14:46:04 » OWEN PERCY: I will blend a couple of messages from writers or disabilities that are super excited to have you here with us Adam. Which is great, we all are. There are a couple of questions about genre again. Emily asked have you ever blended genres? One of our senior-level workshop courses is about blending to genres in work. Hannah had a question, do you have a genre that comes most naturally to you?

14:46:43 » ADAM POTTLE: Have I ever blended genres? Yes I have. I have blended fiction and poetry and in the graphic novel that I have right now I have excerpts from letter that are fictional but I'm including in there, fictional novel that I'm incorporating into a graphic novel. I definitely play with genres. It's fun to play with genre. I would probably say prose fiction. I say that because that is the very first genre that I engaged with back I was 16 years old. It's the one that I had the most history with that one is probably the one that comes most naturally to me. I will leave it at that.

14:48:00 » OWEN PERCY: Is there a genre Adam that you have not tried yet that you are willing to try or maybe scared to try or excited to try that you have not done yet?

14:48:30 » ADAM POTTLE: I'd like to write a romance one day. I am very hesitant because I'm afraid that I would fall into clichés right away. I've been created is that as it appeared to me that drives me towards that genre. That is something that I would like to try one day. I have a writer friend who said that if it does not scare you then it is not worth writing. As I start to get older and go in different directions with different genres, I find it becomes truer and truer as time goes on

14:49:52 » OWEN PERCY: Thank you very much. I will give anyone who has a lingering question that they have not had the courage to ask yet just another minute to plug it into the chat. Otherwise I will draw your attention to the chat itself. I posted some details about how to get in touch with Adam. I emailed everybody yesterday and today, I don't remember. Recently I emailed everybody the same information. It's also available in the virtual community under the writer residence tab page and I expect the you will be seeing in your courses as well as your faculty members share the information and ways to access a meeting with Adam. The short version is Adam will be holding office hours on Friday afternoon from 3:00 to 5:00 on a weekly basis. You will see Adam elsewhere in classes and at events that every Friday from 3:00 to 5:00 he will be hosting office hours are you are welcome and you are encouraged to sign up for a timeslot to go and meet with him virtually on GoogleMeet. A couple of rules: One meeting per student per week. If you want to discuss a specific chunk of text or piece of work or short story or poem or something like that, we ask that you send seven pages maximum per week per meeting and that you send them to Adam by Wednesday if the meeting is on Friday so that he has a couple of days to read them and sit with them and think about them. To sign up for slots, please follow the two links that I have got there. The TinyURL and full URL. The link to the sign-up sheet is on the poster. I expect you will be able to find it in your email that I sent you yesterday and also it is always going to be in the virtual community and in a lot of your Slate pages for your core classes this semester. So, unless there are any other questions and I don't see any other coming in, then I will say thank you very much for joining us.