

What Were Their Dreams?

Valleys of Hope and Pain: Canada's History

These are the simple songs of a people. They are the found poems of Wendy Morton. She has shaped them from the smoke of the mills, the deep water of the fishery, the farms, the woods, the kitchens and the Residential Schools. We are names of this place. "First you dream," she says, and with that dream you can make a whole world.

— Patrick Lane

These small poems are an approaching thunder, that make me lonely and anxious. They break my heart, make it weep. Yet, they mend me.

— Louise B. Halfe, *Sky Dancer*

Wendy Morton's 5th book of poetry may well be her best — it is certainly one that will haunt you and leave you wondering about this country's past. Commissioned by Vancouver Island's Alberni Valley Museum to write poetry from archival photographs and journals, this West Coast poet has come away making a very real connection to the lives of miners, housewives, mill workers and the First Nations men and women who were forced, as children, into Residential Schools. It isn't a pretty picture. It is disturbing and real. But hope runs through these lines. In *What Were Their Dreams*, Morton gives "voice to the ghosts of those who first came to the valley."

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POETRY

Wendy Morton believes that a poem is the shortest distance between two hearts. She is the founder of Random Acts of Poetry, a national literacy initiative, now in its sixth year. For 10 years she has organized and hosted one of the longest running weekly poetry venues in Canada, Planet Earth Poetry at The Black Stilt. She has been sponsored by WestJet Airlines, Chrysler, Fuji, and is currently sponsored by Prairie Naturals Vitamins and AbeBooks. She has been an insurance investigator for 27 years. She lives west of Sooke, B.C. on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. She has lived in the same house for 36 years; she is a raven watcher.



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