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I bear the lovely France a final fleur

Emily Isaacson is a poet who has never held to imperialism. As a creator of fantastical worlds and characters, she has fashioned identities that live on in the hearts of her readers. She is right at the heart of poetry, but she was rather secretive about her gift as a child, and hid her books and poems from others. Now she is like a hunted unicorn.

Isaacson, who is fast becoming Canada's favourite poet with over 1.6 million visits to her websites, has been living in the rural towns of the Fraser Valley for almost twenty years. In Abbotsford B.C. she has been publishing her poetry since 2011, when she published her first work in three volumes *The Fleur-de-lis*.

“The publisher made a book trailer that aired in the New York area more than 50,000 times and a book website that drew attention,” she recalls. Her sister, who was adopted at thirteen and hadn’t spoken with the family for years, tried to reach her immediately. Isaacson received several emails from her sister Brandy saying she was trying to get in touch. When Isaacson connected back, she found out that her sister and her family were living just outside New York. Brandy knew who Emily was and about her career, even though she had changed her name in the meantime.

Isaacson recalls, “My adopted sister who was the same age as me growing up and almost like a twin, had distanced us and had no contact with us for over seven years.”

Isaacson concluded that Brandy had seen the book trailers airing on TV. Isaacson had sent her many emails over the years, but none of her emails had been answered. Eventually the family had given up any hope of reaching her and assumed the email address was no longer active.

“What a reunion it was,” Isaacson says of their re-connecting. “I learned my sister was now married to the vice-president of a computer software company and had two sons in hockey.” Brandy had a blog and even sent pictures. Isaacson had no idea that publishing her poetry would lead to their being reunited.

The websites that contained Isaacson’s poetry were created in 2005. “Over the years,” Isaacson shares, “they became was known in multimedia circles as a website tapestry. It usually had six to eight interactive sites for visitors that featured my poetry, my landscape photography, and even my music at points.”

Her sites are still active today, during the pandemic, in fact they are gathering more visitors than usual mostly by word of mouth. She is a postmodernist in her style contrast of both minimalism and maximalism. She is extravagant in her ornate and detailed poems, but her personal style is polished and minimalist. She does readings, and circulates brochures locally as well as sells her books in local

bookstores. Her main website that she designed personally is called *The Lion and the Unicorn Tapestry Series*. Charlotte Rivers describes in *Maximalism: The Graphic Design of Decadence & Excess* how "maximalism celebrates richness and excess in graphic design", characterized by decoration, sensuality, luxury and fantasy."

Isaacson is not one to be exempt from the luxury of being a poet. By 2017 Isaacson had published ten volumes of poetry and Dove Christian Publishers signed with her for her *Hallmark: Canada's 150 Year Anniversary*, a Commemorative Edition of combined old and new poems. Isaacson had composed the sonnet about Joan of Arc that people were ruminating on for years afterward with the quote, "Now to my end I come in stately black,/for I am but a prisoner of this earth,/I can't escape its clutches or its wrath,/nor any of its loves, nor laughs, nor births./I bear the lovely France a final fleur. . ."

More recently she has been publishing her poems about the pandemic. You can follow her compositions along online, one of the characteristics of her books at www.ashesofplague.blogspot.ca. They usually had an audience long before they were published.

Emily Isaacson's parents have a historic reputation in the lower mainland. They moved to the Greater Vancouver area when she was twenty and established themselves over the next twenty-five years in the small town of Mission, B.C. in the family home at the foot of Bear Mountain. They started a non-profit organization and worked to found it in connection with churches and other organizations with a similar focus over twenty years. They have now retired and sold the family home last month, Isaacson says. The Headley Family referred to it over many years as the Headley Homestead. Hundreds of visitors came by over the years to connect and experience their peaceful and contemplative property.



Isaacson's parents had the extended family gather for Brian and Della Headley's 40th anniversary in 2013. They now include 11 grandchildren. Family photos were taken and Emily made a video of the photos.

It can be viewed along with her other 25 poetry videos on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/voetelle/videos>.

Emily Isaacson founded fifteen years ago what is the Wild Lily Institute today. WLI is established in the Fraser Valley, currently in Abbotsford. Isaacson has been working from her home office during the pandemic, and baking up a storm including her favourite ginger cookies. The Institute is largely concerned with her poetry however; she has published over 1532 individual poems, a collection so vast it outnumbers almost every published poet in history. At UFV master's students have the option of studying Emily's poetry. The Institute preserves her work and legacy and has been actively keeping its Friends correspondence going to what has grown to 200 contacts over 10 years.

"Correspondence is one of the tenets of my work, and my goal of community building by offering the gift of poetry," she states, "and that has inspired me to

keep going even in difficult times.” Isaacson has already signed with a publisher from the States for her next book deal.