

Poet of St. Clare



Skylarks and Daffodils

Known as the Poet of St. Clare, Emily Isaacson began writing poetry at age ten, and was first published at age 13 for her poem, “The Wild Madonna” in *Unicorns Be*. Her stylistic and idealistic work distinguished her poetry and prose as both unsentimental and forthright, an unequivocal commentary on human nature. Although, her self-described style was “skylarks and daffodils,” her postmodern voice addressed both human suffering and a transcendent victorious outcome. Her early poetry would be evidenced in *The Fleur-de-lis*, in the “Oracle of the Stone”, compiled works from age thirteen through her university years, inspired by various books and magazines. Her later style was culturally rich and described the literary landscape, while distinctly of European descent in both her proud characterizations and honest romanticism of royalty, in the realm of both passion and politics.

Emily Isaacson spent her early childhood in Windsor, Ontario where her father built the brick community Presbyterian church with a white steeple in Forest Glade. She began French Immersion at age two, and was taught by nuns at a French Catholic School, St. Therese. At age six, her family moved to Victoria, British Columbia, where they lived near the university. Emily was taught private piano and ballet lessons, and finished her Royal Conservatory piano and theory up to Grade 10. Her music teacher from age ten onwards encouraged her the most in the pursuit of music, and was a respected concert pianist. Emily would ride her bicycle to music lessons each week, along the sea road, to her instructor’s house, where she braved the grand piano.

Isaacson was in French Immersion until high school, which influenced her later French poetry, and upon graduation from Pacific High School won the French award. She left home at eighteen to travel to the mainland and continued her education at Trinity Western University for three years, taking biology, psychology, music and French. She

also studied English literature and creative writing, doing a directed study in writing with a professor she respected and admired, Lynn Szabo. Szabo continued to be an influence on Isaacson throughout her writing life, fine-tuning her writer's voice, and offering her encouragement without much editorial criticism.

Isaacson lived not far from the Poor Clare Monastery as an adult, and was a frequent visitor of not only the convent, but also the Mission graveyard outside its gates, and the cathedral of Westminster Abbey which housed the monks of St. Benedict nearby. The sisters of the Poor Clare convent were among those that had read her writings almost in their entirety before their eventual publication.

Isaacson in 2009 became a PPABC photographer for her unique analogue captures of the local countryside. From 2004, she had shown great aptitude for this art form following a car accident from which she never fully recovered. In 2010 she exhibited as a solo artist at the Mission Art Gallery. Her photograph, "Rushing Water" sold by silent auction for 200 dollars, and looked more like a painting. Her dream of The Lion and the Unicorn Tapestry Series, now called The Clay Road was created to display her multi-media talent and the various websites owned by The Wild Lily Institute to visitors. At the end of a decade, there were over 800,000 visits to her sites, establishing her as a desired mythic presence, both prolific and distinctly Canadian poet.

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St. Clare lived in Assisi at the time of St. Francis. St. Clare dedicated her life to the poor, and entered a convent to exemplify her vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and enclosure. She founded an order of nuns called the Poor Clare's. Their order exists in monasteries around the world today, including here in Canada. The Poor Clare nuns are famous for teaching the art of lace-making in Ireland to women so they could support themselves. The lace is called Kenmare Lace, and has been featured in Victoria Magazine.

In the modern world, St. Clare and St. Francis are like two prophets who speak only in the spirit world. Their conversations are like prophetic oil. They both had significant influence in human history, and their vision impacts other Catholics.