

## CURRICULUM

### **ROSEMARY SULLIVAN:**

A Montrealer by birth, Rosemary Sullivan received her B.A. from McGill University, her M.A. from the University of Connecticut, and her PhD from the University of Sussex. She is the author of fourteen books including *Villa Air-Bel: World War II, Escape and a House in Marseille*, published by HarperCollins in Canada and the US, John Murray in England, as well as in Spain, the Czech Republic, Brazil, Italy and The Netherlands. It won the Canadian Jewish Book Awards Yad Vashem Prize in Holocaust History/ Scholarship. Her other books include *Labyrinth of Desire: Women, Passion, and Romantic Obsession* (2001) published in Canada, the U.S., England, Spain, and Latin America; *Cuba: Grace Under Pressure* with photographs by Malcolm David Batty (2003); and the national best seller *The Red Shoes: Margaret Atwood Starting Out* (1998). Her 1995 biography *Shadow Maker: The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen* won the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction, the Canadian Author's Association Literary Award for Non-Fiction, the University of British Columbia's Medal for Canadian Biography, the City of Toronto Book Award and was nominated for the Trillium prize. It became the basis for Brenda Longfellow's award-winning documentary *Shadow Maker* (1998). Sullivan's first biography, *By Heart: Elizabeth Smart/A Life* (1991) was nominated for the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction. Her first poetry collection *The Space a Name Makes* (1986) won the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award. She has since published two other books of poetry with Black Moss Press: *Blue Panic* (1991) and *The Bone Ladder: New and Selected Poems* (2001). In 2001, Black Moss released *Memory-Making: The Selected Essays of Rosemary Sullivan* that included essays published in Canadian and International magazines. Her children's book *Molito*, written with Juan Opitz and illustrated by Colleen Sullivan was published in 2011, with a CD of music and narrative in the sleeve of the book. Her journalistic pieces have won her a National Magazine Awards silver medal and a Western Journalism Awards first prize for travelogue. Sullivan is also the editor of eight anthologies, including, *Stories by Canadian Women*, and *Short Fiction* for Oxford University Press. She was awarded the Lorne Pierce Medal (2008) by the Royal Society of Canada. She has lectured across Canada and in the US, England, France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, India, Puerto Rico, Chile, and Mexico. She was the recipient of Guggenheim, Killam, Camargo, Jackman Humanities Institute, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation fellowships. She is currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto where she held a Canada Research Chair in Biography and Creative Non-Fiction and was the founding director of the MA Program in English in the Field of Creative Writing. She was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in Ontario and, in 2012, and that same year was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada (Canada's highest civilian award) for outstanding contributions to Canadian Literature and Culture. Her latest book is *Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva* (2015)

*“As a poet and writer, [Rosemary Sullivan] knows that life is lived not as theory but as practice, that we exist on earth not as ideas but as living creatures, and that you can understand nothing about a place without listening to individual people and their stories. She has concerned herself with intense particulars.”* – Margaret Atwood

*Villa Air-Bel: World War II, Escape, and a House in Marseille*

**Winner of the 2007 Award in Holocaust History / Canadian Jewish Book Awards**

"...Sullivan goes beyond the confines of Air-Bel to tell a fuller story of France during the tense years from 1933 to 1941...What's palpable is the welter of shock, fear, world-weariness, cynicism and misplaced idealism evinced by the villa's transient residents as they apprehensively awaited their fate... What is palpable is the welter of shock, fear, world-weariness ... a moving tale of a great sacrifice in tumultuous times."

*Publishers Weekly*

"A complex tale showing how hope and courage flourish, even in the toxic soil of totalitarianism. ... Sullivan offers a gripping look at the desperate and joyous days – with artists hanging paintings from trees – as musicians, scientists and intellectuals waited for the visas that would give them safe passage out of Vichy France. ... Sullivan captures the tense atmosphere of France as the Germans invaded and the fear and anxiety of the intellectuals, some held in detention camps and some who ignored the danger until it was nearly too late."

*Kirkus*

"Sullivan captures the tense atmosphere of France as the Germans invaded and the fear and anxiety of the intellectuals, some held in detention camps and some who ignored the danger until it was nearly too late."

*Booklist*

"With tremendous suspense and emotional pull, Sullivan recounts the little-known story of Varian Fry."

*Vogue*

"Her scene-by-scene evocation of life at the house reads like an updated Chekhov comedy laced with horror."

*Financial Times*

"As a piece of narrative Villa Air-Bel is considerable. It tells a number of individual stories-about 40-brilliantly and it places them in context.... It also illuminates a little known but important aspect of the history of the second World War.... the style is beautifully clear and concise....Sullivan's book should be mandatory reading."

*Irish Times*

"It's history, it's intrigue. It's nonfiction. It's a real page-turner."

*New York Magazine*

"This is a magnificent, complex narrative of courage, folly, and complacency...a beautifully narrated book."

*Telegraph*

"Sullivan brilliantly interweaves personal histories with terrifying tales"

*Sunday Times (London)*

"The great virtue of Sullivan's account of these dark times is the meticulous research that informs it, the uncovering of memoirs, photos, and other documents in numerous Canadian and American libraries as well as archives in France and private collections....Villa Air-Bel is a most welcome book, a triumph of the human spirit"

*Philadelphia Inquirer*

"A moving and richly detailed account"

*Boston Globe*

"Sullivan's book covers a little-known chapter of the Second World War...Villa Air-Bel is a remarkable achievement."

*National Post*

"[Sullivan] manages to combine solid scholarship with a snappy writing style...a history book that is completely riveting"

*Vancouver Sun*

"In this little-known saga of wartime Europe, Sullivan deftly renders a tale of human courage and hope as tautly as any thriller. Watching *Casablanca* will never be the same."

*Chatelaine*

"Sullivan has written a book of great detail and complexity, though one that is full of darkness."

*Quill & Quire* (starred)

"[In Villa Air-Bel] stories are told with passion."

*The Advocate*

"Deft handling of a twisted plot with a large number of characters"

*The Forward*

### ***Labyrinth of Desire: Women, Passion and Romantic Obsession***

#### **National Bestseller**

"Why do smart, sensitive women turn into lemmings at the sight of some Don Juan, throwing themselves over the cliffs of love like self-destructive fools? They're not fools, Sullivan argues, and far from destroying themselves, women use these "love objects" very deliberately, if not consciously. Sullivan ... develops this idea in an original and disarming manner ... And while Sullivan explores differences between the sexes in the way males and females love, she acknowledges that there's a universality in the obsessive love experience. Plunging into a passionate obsession lets humans release control and explore unknown depths within themselves. In the end, they may be shattered and alone, but out of that loneliness can come new understandings ... an obsessive read"

*-Publishers Weekly* (starred)

"Sullivan's introduction of real love stories and her conversational style, which creates intimacy between reader and writer, set this apart from other popular works on the subject."

*-Library Journal*

"eye-opening ... Sullivan eradicates the bell jar effect of infatuation and conducts an honest tour of female entanglement with obsessive love ... The experience of reading Sullivan's words is very much like holding a mirror up to your soul ... a special book that will have universal appeal wherever it is published and is bound to be shared and reread by women of all ages."

*-Booklist*

"A fascinating analysis of the female psyche and of the phenomenon of obsessive love."

–*Elle Magazine*

“Women letting men turn them into wounds is an old depressing story, but Sullivan chases it to a new and adventurous place. Using pungent examples from history and literature (the Bronte chapter is worth the price of the book), she suggests that ‘the hot thing we fall into’ has less to do with finding a mate than with finding the true self one craves to be.”

–*O, The Oprah Magazine*

“...original and engrossing. I couldn't stop reading.”

–Alice Munro

“By turns learned, edgy, analytical, plainspoken, intense and highly personal. *Labyrinth of Desire* successfully treads the line between fiction and nonfiction, revealing truths about love that women and men alike should learn.”

–Infodad.com

“*Labyrinth of Desire* is powerful reading. . . . Sullivan manages to debunk patriarchal stereotypes of love without diminishing love's grandeur, its powers of redemption, transformation and endurance.

–*Book Page: America's Book Review*

“*Labyrinth of Desire* reads like a dream – it is a slippery and easy pleasure, and there is not a boring moment in it.”

–*The National Post*

“Romantic obsession is one of those wickedly tricky subjects that easily leads to a badly written swamp of pitiful sentiment – but not in the discerning hands of veteran biographer Rosemary Sullivan. Turning her attention here to a passion instead of a person, she crafts *Labyrinth of Desire* into a gem of comprehension and eloquence. . . . Sullivan, a biographer of such unwieldy, wild women as poet Gwendolyn MacEwen, here takes an unwieldy, wild subject and not only describes wonderfully its excruciating emotions, but unravels them with a marvellous dignity.”

–Joan Barfoot, *Quill & Quire* (starred review)

“Sullivan is an elegant, subtle writer and this is a clever, intriguing book.”

–*The Globe and Mail*

“A fascinating pager turner on the old irresistible question: why do we love the way we do? There isn't a sentence in the intellectually sexy *Labyrinth of Desire* where the reader doesn't learn something very big about romantic, obsessive love.”

–*The Citizen's Weekly*

“Sullivan understands how seductive the call to romance is to women. She unmask the myths with wonderful delicacy, yet never plays the hectoring schoolmarm, never wags her finger at the ditzzy, martini-addled Carrie Bradshaw in all of us.”

–*The Vancouver Sun*

“A deliciously thought-provoking book.”

–*The Sun* (Calgary)

“Sullivan does a masterly job of describing some of the less sentimental aspects of romantic obsession—the awakening of the most primitive, needy self, the loss of old boundaries and reversion to irrational behaviour, the pre-eminent importance of the physical, the perverse pleasure of chasing the unattainable.”

–Maclean’s

“Rosemary Sullivan has written a most unlikely, arousing, inconclusive thing: a conversational taxonomy of obsessive love. Reading it in one sitting as I did makes for an intellectually sexy afternoon, like attending a learned lecture on literary biography and then comparing notes with friends at the local bar afterwards, with all the lurid, confessional, delicious details left in. A provocative (in the best sense) pleasure (in the only sense worth knowing).”

–Andrew Pyper

“This thoughtful examination of romantic love is a series of timeless, cautionary clues for the young women who have not succumbed to it, a consoling touchstone for women who find themselves in the heart-scorching heat of it, and a knowing nod, a regard for those quiet women among us who carry in their hearts that thing we call, so mistakenly, a past.”

–Bonnie Burnard

### ***The Red Shoes: Margaret Atwood Starting Out***

#### **#1 Bestseller**

“Sullivan is [an] experienced biographer, and ... blessed with an eye for crucial detail, ... a rich and intense view of Canada’s top literary star.”

–*The Globe and Mail*

“AN INTIMIDATING ICON... AND A BRAVE BIOGRAPHER. ... Sullivan has attempted something different: a book about ‘the writing life’... This is a fascinating narrative... Sullivan traces the arc of Atwood’s story, gracefully linking particular works with various points in her life...the reader grasps both subject and context....Sullivan is herself an accomplished poet. She has also written outstanding biographies of the poets Elizabeth Smart...and Gwendolyn MacEwan.... Sullivan allowed me to meet Atwood the private, hardworking writer, rather than Atwood the ferocious literary eminence. And she inspired me to reread the Atwood oeuvre.”

–*The Ottawa Citizen*

“Rosemary Sullivan, the pre-eminent Canadian biographer whose earlier work earned a dazzling array of awards, turns in her latest book...[on] a hugely successful living author. Sullivan is able to do what she does best – interfacing between the culture that formed her subject and the writer’s mind. With consummate skill, combining the techniques of poet, novelist and dramatist, she paints a vivid picture...An exemplary work of literary biography.”

–*The Toronto Star*

“Sullivan writes wisely and sensibly and well: she avoids gossip and generalization... an inspired and inspiring book.”

–*Quill & Quire*

“fascinating...”

–Maclean’s

### ***By Heart – Elizabeth Smart: a life***

#### **Shortlisted for the Governor General’s Award for Non-Fiction**

“It is clear from the first page of this immensely readable book that the association of Rosemary Sullivan and Elizabeth Smart is one of the truly successful biographical pairings. Evidence of the mysterious

kinship is in Sullivan's style – lyrical, vivid, passionate... totally appropriate to the telling of this strange life.... *By Heart* makes an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of women's lives... “

–*The Globe & Mail*

“Superb... Sullivan...is a biographer with an energy and perceptiveness that match her subject's. *By Heart* has the momentum of a well-paced novel, but also the discursive intelligence to pick out the patterns in a life that Smart herself frequently found baffling.... It is impossible to read Sullivan's biography without, in some sense, falling in love with Smart... It is a measure of the book's power that [Smart's sudden death from a heart attack] strikes with the force of a personal loss.”

–*Maclean's*

“a sensitive tribute to an important writer and an exceptional woman.”

–*Ottawa Citizen*

“an important biography”

–*Kingston Whig Standard*

“Sullivan is a good writer... vivid detail”

–*The Toronto Star*

“We come away understanding, sympathizing, even delighting in the vitality and will of this writer. It's a surprising and wonderful story.”

–*The Windsor Star*

“Eloquent”

–*Vancouver Sun*

“an admirable biography, energetically written.. *By Heart* is a contribution to understanding not only Smart's life and work, but the growth of the realm of art as a place where women might live and even prosper.”

–*London Free Press*

“moving and absorbing... In *By Heart* Sullivan has captured the spirit of a woman who defied conventional norms to live a life of truly emotional depth.... Sullivan ensures [readers] will be fascinated by [Elizabeth Smart.]”

–*Barrie Examiner*

“a massive and poignantly rendered journey through one of the most fascinating lives in Canadian letters.... “

–*NOW Magazine*

“a fluid, fascinating portrait of a complex woman who wrote an emotional script for herself early in life, then relentlessly followed it....”

–*The Edmonton Journal*

“Impressive... Sullivan demonstrates amazing empathy with her subject, and her biography itself becomes a work of art.”

*–The Toronto Sun*

“a lusciously evocative telling of the writer’s shelled, skinned, nerve-exposed life... a constantly surprising revelation .”

*–The Vancouver Province*

“*By Heart* ... reads with such rhythm and grace that I had to remind myself I was not reading fiction.”

*–The Varsity Magazine*

“the best Canadian biography of the year, a book bursting with stylish prose and a profound and successful understanding of the subject.”

*–The Toronto Star*

“written with sensitivity and care”

*–Canadian Literature*

*Shadow Maker: The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen*

**Winner of the Governor General's Award for Non-fiction**  
**Winner of The Canadian Authors' Association Award**  
**Winner of The University of British Columbia Medal for Canadian Biography**  
**Winner of the City of Toronto Book Award**  
**Shortlisted for The Trillium Award**

“With rare empathy and a genius for analysis, Sullivan freely probes and interprets MacEwen’s inner and outer lives”

–*The Gazette* (Montreal)

“Rosemary Sullivan ... crafts that intense bond between the reader and her subject.”

–*The Globe and Mail*

“... an excellent, painstakingly produced chronicle of the artist as a young, haunted woman; it is a supremely honourable, yet unhagiographic, tribute to MacEwen, our greatest poet of the mind.”

–George Elliott Clarke, *The Halifax Chronicle-Herald*

“Readers interested in a complex and troubled personality, as well as those who care about writing, women, and culture in Canada over the past four decades, will find it compelling.”

–*The Edmonton Journal*

“*Shadow Maker* is an example of literary detective work at its compelling best”

–*The London Press Press*

“Turning the pages of *Shadow Maker*—reading through to MacEwen’s heart—is as painful and tense as watching surgery being performed on someone you love. The suspense is electrifying, and the reader’s ultimate bonding to the central figure in this book is the crowning triumph of Rosemary Sullivan’s skill and compassion. *Shadow Maker* is not a biography—it is a love affair between every one of its readers and Gwen MacEwen.”

–Timothy Findley

“*Shadow Maker* reads like a wise, intuitive, and intensely affecting novel. By conjuring Gwen MacEwen in all her brilliance, as well as by grounding her in a very particular time and place, Sullivan enriches our understanding of both the poet and her country. The interplay between a country that can isolate and marginalize artists of MacEwen’s magnitude, and MacEwen’s own need to isolate herself, is at times heart-breaking, but there is triumph here, a triumph of self-invention against all odds.”

–Carole Corbeil

***The Bone Ladder***

“The poems in this collection embrace experience open-heartedly. Their beauty is poignant; home is seen by the exile, freedom by the oppressed, love by one familiar with loss. How grateful we can be for poems that are unafraid of love’s necessary risks and sorrows.”

–Anne Michaels