



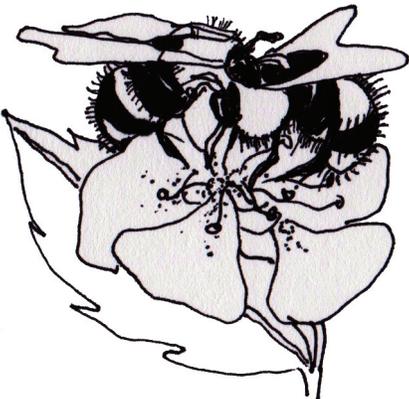
### **Paint Brush**

*Yvonne Blomer*

The human finger, the eye lash, a dragonfly wing,  
the day's wind moving every green branch in the garden,  
the crow's cackle and its sharp eye as I water or dig,  
this is the tongue of the bee.

What intelligence I have, I leave in books.  
Imagine lying under a flower to see the bee's tongue  
as it slips out of its palp and sheath,  
lengthens to the flower's corolla  
dips fine hairs to soak up nectar.

Pollination as sex, I understand,  
but this tiny tongue too is an entering,  
something quenched, something.



**Yvonne Blomer** is Victoria, B.C.'s Poet Laureate. Her most recent collection of poems is *As if a Raven* (Palimpsest Press, 2014). Her first collection, *a broken mirror, fallen leaf* was short listed for the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award for best first book by a Canadian writer. Her travel memoir *Sugar Ride: Cycling from Hanoi to Kuala Lumpur* is forthcoming in the spring of 2017. Yvonne graduated with distinction, receiving an MA in Creative Writing from the University of East Anglia, UK. Place, travel, wealth and poverty, women's place in society and the effects of humans on the environment are some of Yvonne's areas of concern, areas she explores in her writing and in her role as Poet Laureate to the City of Victoria, BC.



This poem is one of ten poems selected to appear in The Pollinator Poetry Post, a public art project of Border Free Bees. Over 130 original poems were submitted from contributors throughout Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The Post will be installed in various locations in Kelowna and Richmond, British Columbia, Canada from 2016-2017. The poets whose work is published are as follows: Yvonne Blomer, Meri Culp, morgan downie, Tami Haaland, Lisa Huffaker, Guillaume Loslier-Pinard, Christine Lowther, Rhona McAdam, Wendy Morton, Phoebe Reeves.

Border Free Bees is a long-term public art initiative headed by Dr. Cameron Cartiere, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Culture + Community at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and Nancy Holmes, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies at The University of British Columbia, Okanagan, in collaboration with numerous strategic partners. The initiative's mission is to raise awareness of the plight of wild pollinators, empower communities to actively engage in solutions for habitat loss, and transform under-utilized urban sites into aesthetically pleasing and scientifically viable pollinator pastures. Border Free Bees is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Judges for the contest were poets Nancy Holmes and Fionncara MacEoin, pollinator scientist Dr. Elizabeth Elle, and public art theorist and artist Dr. Cameron Cartiere. Border Free Bees thanks Fionncara MacEoin, S. Megan Hunter and Kaila Burke for building the Poetry Post. The poetry pages were designed by Fionncara MacEoin with illustrations by Rhythm Hunter.

[www.borderfreebees.com](http://www.borderfreebees.com)

