

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha CV

Education:

Honors BA, Writing/ Third World Women's Studies, Eugene Lang College, New School for Social Research, New York, NY 1993-1997. (Lead Teachers: Jacqui Alexander, Gary Lemmons, Sekou Sundiata.)

Poetry Residency, Voices of Our Nations Writer's Workshop, University of San Francisco, June 2005. (Teacher: Suheir Hammad.)

Current Projects:

Blood Memory: A Sri Lankan Storytelling Project. (in progress.) A collaboration with Marian Yalini Thambynayagam and Varuni Tiruchelvam using spoken word, storytelling, movement and cello.

The Parkdale Stories Project. A collaboration with musician Reena Katz, using street postering and radical walking tours to fight gentrification's erasure of the histories of Parkdale, a Toronto 'hood. To be presented in Spring of 2006.

Publications:

Poetry/spoken word:

Consensual Genocide. Toronto: TSAR Press. Forthcoming April 2006.

Published as limited-edition chapbook in 2004 by Booklyn/ Betty and Jim Press, Brooklyn NY.

The Real Revolution Is Love: A Soundscape of Liberation. Commissioned by Zahra Dhanani for Funkasia at Pride Toronto, 2005.

"I didn't want the end times to be like this: 9/11 in seven slams." **Mizna**, Fall 2004.

"Noise" and "Sweet Water", **Lodestar Quarterly**, no 10: spring 2004; special queer Asian issue.

"Pretty light skin dream" in **Thirdspace**, Winter 2003.

"Crazy girl on red bike" in **big boots**, volume 3, issue 2. Summer 2003.

"I am a contradiction to your definition," in **Letters from the war years**, fall 2003.

"Gonna get my girl body back: this is a work in progress," in **Brazen Femmes:**

Queering Femininity, ed. by Anna Camilleri and Chloe Brushwood-Rose. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp, 2002.

"For Burgher women: I write this in fire," in **Fireweed's Mixed Race Issue**, Summer 2002.

Prose:

“New York Femme Memory #1” in **With a Rough Tongue: Femmes Write Porn**, edited by Trish Kelly and Amber Dawn Upfold. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp, 2005.
“Scholarship baby,” in **Without a Net: The Female Experience of Growing Up Working Class**, edited by Michelle Tea, Seattle/New York: Seal Press/Avalon, 2004.
“Gonna get my girl body back: II,” in **Dangerous Families: Queers Surviving Sexual Abuse**, edited by Matt Bernstein Sycamore, Philadelphia: Haworth Press, 2004
“Slut kiss girl,” in **Geeks, Misfits and Outlaws**, edited by Zoe Whittall, McGilligan, Toronto, 2003
“Browngirlworld: queergirl of color organizing, sistahood, heartbreak” in **Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today’s Feminism**, edited by Daisy Hernandez and Bushra Rehman. Seattle: Seal Press/Live Girls, 2002.
“Mestiza rapechile luvstory” in **Bent on Writing: Contemporary Queer Tales**, edited by Elizabeth Ruth. Toronto: Women’s Press. 2002.
“Ammachi Stories,” in **Fireweed’s** Short Fiction issue, Summer 2000.
“Bi-femme” in **Femme: Feminists, Lesbians, Bad Girls**, edited by Liz Crocker and Laura Harris. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Articles:

“Sisters in Print,” **Colorlines**, Spring 2006
segments for “Bitchlist”, **Bitch**, Fall 2005
“After the whirlwind: Sri Lankan post-tsunami activism,” **Colorlines**, Summer 2005
“Continuous Journey: The world of Ali Kazimi,” **Colorlines**, Fall 2004
“Even in Canada,” **Colorlines**, Summer 2004
“Busting the Beige Barrier,” **Bitch**, Fall 2004
“Art/rebel/warriors: South Asian radical art post-Desh Pardesh,” **FUSE**, Summer 2004

Selected Performances:

Kriti, South Asian Literary Festival, Chicago, IL, November 2005
South Asian Women’s Creative Collective, New York, NY, October 2005
3rd Asian Spoken Word Summit, Boston, August 2005
Masala Mendhi Maasti Festival, Harbourfront Centre, Toronto August 2005
Shameless Magazine Launch, Distillery District, Toronto, On June 2005
Pink Ink Zine launch, Buddies in Bad Times, Toronto, June 2005
Browngirlworld 4, Toronto Women’s Bookstore, Toronto, May 2005
Mayworks Festival Queer Cabaret, Buddies in Bad Times, Toronto, May 2005
Silent Slam, Drake Hotel, Toronto, April 2005
YWCA Week Without Violence, Toronto, October 2004
Live Wires Shock The Empire, Anti-Columbus Day, University of Guelph, October 2004
Language Lounge, Queen West Art Crawl, Toronto, September, 2004
Strangers At Home, Benefit for Project Threadbare, Toronto, December 2003
The Loft, Minneapolis, MN, August 2004
Gloria Anzaldua Memorial, Toronto, ON June 2004

Mayworks Festival, Toronto, May 2004
Rivers of Honey, WOW Cafe Theatre, New York, NY, April 2004
Bar 13/ LouderArts, New York, NY, March 2004
Bluestockings Books, New York, NY, March 2004
The Finger, Chicago, IL, March 2004
Asian Pacific Islander Spoken Word Summit, Chicago, IL, August 2003
SALAAM Toronto Queer Muslim Conference, Toronto, June 2003.
Diasporadics Festival of Radical South Asian Culture, New York, June 2003
High Femme Fridays, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Toronto, July 2003
Sex'n Revolution queer woman of color Pride performance, Toronto, June 2003
Diasporadics Festival of South Asian Culture, Asia Society, New York, May 2003
Oberlin College, Edmonia Lewis Women's and Trans Center, Oberlin, Ohio, May 2003
Yale University, South Asian Solidarity Summit, New Haven, CT, January 2003
Strange Sisters, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Toronto, ON, October 2002
Artwallah Festival, Los Angeles, CA, July 2001
52 Inc (performance space), various nights, 1999-2001, Toronto
Clit Lit, Toronto; 1998-2002; multiple appearances
Desi-Q, LGBT South Asian Conference, San Francisco, June 2000
Desh Pardesh, Toronto, June 1999

Awards:

2004 Community Service to Youth Award, City of Toronto
2003 Community Artist Award, ArtStarts, Toronto, ON

Grants:

2005 Word of Mouth Grant, Ontario Arts Council
2005 Writer's Reserve Grant, Ontario Arts Council
2005 Arts Education Grant, Ontario Arts Council
2003 Toronto Arts Council Grant to Established Writers
2000 Quest Grant to Emerging Multicultural Artists, Canada Council for the Arts
1999 Toronto Arts Council Grant to Emerging Writers

Event production, Arts Education, Editorial:

Producer, Browngirlworld LGBT of color spoken word series, 2003- present. Curate, produce and promote the series. Nights have included *Ladies Against War*, *Asian Invasion Raging*, *Sex'n Revolution* (Pride 2003), *South Asian Liberation*. Have established partnership with Toronto Women's Bookstore for 2005-06 to expand events to 200-300 seat venues.

Teaching Writer, Pink Ink, Supporting Our Youth Toronto, 2002-present. Create, teach and facilitate writing workshops for LGBT youth modeled on June Jordan's Poetry for the People curriculum. Achieved goal of transforming existing group to 50% participation by youth of color, female and trans youth within first year. Produced Fruit

Loops Pride literary stage, 2003-5. Produced and edited zine, *10 Reasons to Riot*, which was declared Best Zine of Toronto in NOW Magazine's 2005 Best of Toronto issue.

Lead artist, Asian Arts Freedom School, ASAO, 2004-present. Grant writing, curriculum development, outreach and teaching.

Workshop facilitator, "Splitting open the world: radical women's poetry 1970s-now," 4-week course, Toronto Women's Bookstore, October 2004.

Writing workshop teacher. Clients have included Eva's Place youth shelter, Triangle Program/ Toronto District School Board, Express LGBT immigrant youth project, Griffin Centre LGBT youth group.

Co-Editor, *Fireweed's* Mixed-Race issue, Toronto, ON, Summer 2002.

Lectures:

Sarah Lawrence College, Women's Histories Conference, Bronxville, NY, March 2005.

Youth Scream spoken word conference, Toronto, Marc Garnier High School, November 2004.

Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto, April 2004.

Eugene Lang College, New School for Social Research, New York, NY, April 2004

FIERCE, New York, NY, April 2004.

Color of Violence 2 Conference, Chicago, IL, March 2003.

Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH, April 2003.

George Brown College, Toronto, March 2003, April 2004.