



August 21, 2025

Statement from the Eden Mills Writers' Festival

This year, we had planned to include a workshop titled *"Dear AI, Am I Talking to Myself?"*, as part of the festival lineup. This conversation was intended to create a space for critical discussions about artificial intelligence and its effects on the literary world, not to celebrate AI, and certainly not to replace human authors.

This session was an experimental presence, intended to challenge automation logics, not perpetuate them. That said, we recognize that the way we communicated the *"Dear AI, Am I Talking to Myself?"* workshop missed the mark. We've received community feedback and made the decision to cancel the workshop and remove the AI voice from the panel of participants.

In response to concerns raised about AI and its place in the arts, Eden Mills Writers' Festival is hosting a facilitated listening circle for writers, readers and community members. Together, we'll hold space for the grief, anger and questions this technology surfaces, while reaffirming and commitment to human creativity. This is not a debate, but a gathering for reflection, honesty and care.

Registration is free through our ticketing portal on our website. This online session will be held on Friday, September 5th from 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

While we are disappointed to lose what we hoped could have been a generative dialogue, we understand that trust must come first. EMWF has always been, and remains, a community-rooted, volunteer-powered festival that spotlights Canadian writers for readers today and tomorrow. This year's festival features more than 45 authors, many of whom are grappling with the very same questions that sparked this controversy. Our commitment going forward is to continue building spaces for courageous and complex conversations with clarity, with care, and with the community beside us.

We look forward to seeing you all in a few weeks time.

Thank you,

The Eden Mills Writers' Festival Board & Team