

Meet the Author

Angela Thompson

Regan McDonell

Regan McDonell is a White Pine Award™ nominated author. *Black Chuck* is her debut novel.



TingL: What has your journey as an author been like so far?

My debut novel, *Black Chuck*, came out in April 2018, so the past year has been a total whirlwind! When I was writing this book, I had no thoughts of how it would get published, or what it would feel like to have strangers reading it, or that it would take on a life of its own without me. It's such a personal story, filled with images and events from my own life, that it's been strange to share that stuff with so many strangers. Thank goodness most of my readers have turned out to be such nice people! And to have been nominated for the White Pine Award is really, really surprising and wonderful!

Where do you find your inspiration to write OR What motivates you to write?

I've always been a really big reader—I remember reading about the Vietnam War in my grandmother's encyclopaedias one summer, and then deciding to write an epic war novel at the age of maybe 11 or 12. (I never finished it). Eventually, after four years of learning to write poetry in university and twenty years of thinking about it, *Black Chuck* started to form. It's inspired by real people and events from my teenage years, although it's completely fiction.

I'm working on something new that's inspired partly by my partner's high school years, and also by a road trip we took to Sleepy Hollow, New York a couple of years ago. The short pitch is: a small town, a monster, a missing girl and her heavy metal brother, who is unwittingly enlisted to find her. Hopefully it will see the light of day before too long!

In your debut novel, *Black Chuck*, Réal and Evie are particularly vivid characters. Why was Réal's Anishinaabe heritage important to the narrative? How did he and Evie (and Sunny and Alex) come to life?