

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert Date)

THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA ANNOUNCES SEÁN VIRGO AS THE HAIG-BROWN WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

The Department of Writing, in collaboration with the Haig-Brown Centenary Committee and The Land Conservancy of British Columbia, has established the Haig-Brown Centenary Writer-in-Residence at the University of Victoria. This year is the 100th anniversary of the birth of Roderick Haig-Brown -- noted author, conservationist, magistrate, and former Chancellor of the University of Victoria. The award-winning writer Sean Virgo will be the Haig-Brown Writer-in-Residence.

Seán Virgo was born in Malta, and grew up in South Africa, Malaya, Ireland and the U.K. He has lived on the Queen Charlotte Islands, Newfoundland, various Gulf Islands, the Bruce Peninsula and – for the last few years – in south west Saskatchewan. He worked with the Scottish Nature Conservancy in the Inner Hebrides, and as well as teaching and editing, has been a sheep farmer, a logger and a well witcher. He was the writer and host of the TV series, *Middle of Somewhere* and edited the anthology, *The Eye in the Thicket*, essays at a natural history. His first publications were poetry but he is better known for his short stories (*White Lies & Other Fictions*; *Through The Eyes of a Cat*; *Wormwood*; *Waking in Eden*; *Begging Questions* and *A Traveller Came By*) and a novel set in Melanesia, *Selakhi*.

In 1965 Mr. Virgo happened upon Roderick Haig-Brown's book *Panther* at the Clifden library in County Galway. "The book was a page turner" writes Virgo, "steeped in a real knowledge of the land, and of the animals — cougar, wolverine, black bear, wolf — that were still only phantoms in my mythology of the New World. So Roderick Haig-Brown... gave me the sense of still-existing wilderness, and of Man's ambiguous place within it, that led me to Canada."

The Land Conservancy will provide a residence near Sooke for Mr. Virgo. The residency will be run from September 15th to December 15th, 2008.

All are welcome to attend Mr. Virgo's public talk *Where Walls Dissolve: Words for the Dispossessed* (insert time, room and date)

For more information please visit our website at <http://finearts.uvic.ca/writing> or contact the Department of Writing at 250-721-7306.



University
of Victoria

