

The Biography of Ducharme

Ducharme was born in Edmonton, Alberta in 1981 and relocated to Vancouver, BC at nine years old with the separation of his parents. At fourteen, a childhood tragedy occurred when his mother was brutally murdered by her live-in boyfriend and a man Ducharme looked up to. This event began to shape Ducharme's life direction of philanthropy.

To overcome his pain and find resolve, Ducharme participated in the Fraser Valley Community Justice initiatives' *Victim Offender Mediation Program* and first met with his Mother's killer in prison in 1999 and later again in 2012 and 2018. His story is profound; his ability to forgive the man who murdered his mother shows incredible insight and his will to not just live, but to also be happy. For several years he participated in sharing circles with youth inmates and adult lifers on the importance of forgiveness, compassion, healing, hope and reconciliation.

In 2003, Ducharme achieved his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from *Concordia University of Edmonton* where he also published his first of two books: "The Truest Aspirations of a Poet." As Vice President of the *Concordia Students' Association*, Ducharme was recognized as the University's 'Student of the Year' for his commitment to community engagement and student life by planning and executing 32 successful events in just 8 months. He received the 'Jason Lang Award' for demonstrating strong community leadership and for triumphing after social adversity.

As an offshoot from his use of rollerblading as a physical release for the strong anger, Ducharme spearheaded "A Blade to Consider;" a \$35,000 charity fundraiser dedicated to his mother and to a university friend, Const. Peter Schiemann, one of four fallen RCMP officers killed in Mayerthorpe, Alberta in 2005. By thirty years of age, Ducharme had sadly lost 5 people to murder. Happily for Vancouver, he returned in 2007 and set out to help wherever possible; first, as a Youth to Adulthood Transition Worker helping high-risk aboriginal youth in Vancouver's Downtown East Side.

From 2008-2014, while in a management career with Scotiabank, Ducharme volunteered as Director, Board Chair and President of the British Columbia Bereavement Helpline Board of Directors. Under his presidency, he garnered awareness, credibility and support and fundraised over \$750,000 to create 'BC Victims of Homicide,' a sustainable, province-wide homicide-loss support program. He networked with the Prime Minister, federal ministers, world leaders, academic and financial institutions, celebrities, communities and partners and actively coordinated and participated in federal press conferences, round tables, conventions, symposiums, lectures and galas. He was the Keynote Speaker at the Western Canada Conference for Victims of Homicide, an expert witness testifying on bills in the House of Commons, and a National Spokesperson for National Victims of Crime Week in Canada.

Ducharme also created and co-produced 'Aftermath of Murder: Survivor Stories,' a Canada-wide online media education series consisting of 18 short form documentaries that reached an audience of over two million giving the surviving victims a voice in the media and in society. One of Ducharme's most grateful memories was performing his own poetry, in therapeutic expression, at a national conference in Ottawa. He played an integral role on the Federal Ombudsman's National Core Planning Team to help create Canada's first ever, Canadian Victim's Bill of Rights in 2012.

For making significant contributions to Canada, Ducharme was duly nominated by Canadian Parents of Murdered children and the Rick Hansen Foundation to be a recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Award. He also ranked in the top 25 of 7,000 medal bearers nominated for the *Rick Hansen 25th Year Anniversary Relay* and was featured on CTV's national documentary as a 'CTV Featured Difference Maker.'

Ducharme's aim is to live a loving, happy life by maintaining high quality relationships and hold an optimistic sense of self. He has spent the last seven years of self-care and living in peaceful Cowichan Bay on Vancouver Island. Ducharme regularly practices personal development work: sharing circles, yoga, meditation, exercise,

reading, journaling and writing. He enjoys family and friend time, being in nature, canoeing, motorcycling, hiking, mountain biking, camping, hosting, touring and travelling. He belongs to a weekly men's group which practices authenticity, honesty and openness so Ducharme can live responsibly and in integrity with his values.

Ducharme is an orator, a dreamer and a visionary; his life mission is to assist with the development of international crisis, bereavement, crime prevention and remediation programs.