



Midlife No. 2 dissects housing, home, and general post-pandemic malaise in poignant sequel

EDMONTON, AB -- Middle age in a post-pandemic world is different than Sarah Chan and Jhenifer Pabillano expected.

“Nothing has turned out as we planned—from life itself to *Midlife No. 2*,” laughs Pabillano, co-editor of and contributor to the second nonfiction anthology, a follow up to the best-selling first work, *Midlife*.

Poignant, smart, and hilariously on-target, *Midlife No. 2* shares Canadian reflections on critical midlife topics like housing, home, birth, death, race, identity, gruelling courses of medical treatment, and the COVID and post-COVID eras.

The authors—all current/former Edmontonians—once again find solace in exploring the complexities of middle age. The collection features 27 new contributions from alumni of the *Gateway*, the University of Alberta student newspaper, with some members stepping back and new ones stepping in. New additions include well-known illustrator Stephen Notley, former *Wall Street Journal* writer Neil Parmar, former *Edmonton Journal* writer Iain Ilich, and more.

Unlike *Midlife*, which was created within a span of months during a time of quarantine, boredom and loneliness, *Midlife No. 2* took its time. Writers dropped in and out of the book. The post-pandemic world prioritised family, friends, loved ones, and life in general, but it also threw a lot of punches: Inflation! Burnout! High blood pressure!

“We’re freaking exhausted,” explains Chan, co-editor and contributor, “but we clearly still need each other.”

“The essays all started from one idea, the idea of home, but transformed into something completely different over the course of an entire year,” continues Chan. “We embraced this chaotic midlife era (post-pandemic version).”

Midlife No. 2 draws on Chan’s rich musical background and is structured like a symphony. A symphony has four movements, starting with a theme-setting segment (Home (& Away)), a sad part (Disturbance), an upbeat, dancey piece (Cycle), and a grand finale (Embrace).

It suited the varied works, as well as the weird and amazing thoughts they needed to make sense of. Together.

“Continuing the work was a thread between all of us,” Pabillano says.

Chan agrees. “It was a way to stay connected to this group of creative friends in a time of incredible ups and downs”

Midlife No. 2 is available via ebook and in a blue linen hardcover book, featuring a silver foiled cover design from internationally renowned illustrator and Gateway alumnus Raymond



Biesinger. The hardcover books will be sold at select Edmonton bookstores including Glass Bookshop and Audrey's Books. The ebook is available at midlifebook.ca and many online ebook retailers, including Apple Books and the Kobo store.

A public launch will be held November 25, 2023. The event will feature sips, snacks and readings from the book. Tickets can be purchased at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

Editor's note: To access our media kit, including hi-res images and more, please visit midlifebook.ca/mediakit.

Press and praise for both *Midlife* and *Midlife No. 2* can be found at midlifebook.ca/press.

Interview opportunities and advance digital copies of the book are available upon request.

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