

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

CANADIAN POETRY REVIEW ISSN 1923-3019 NOV 2016 VOL 6 ISSUE 6 \$3.95

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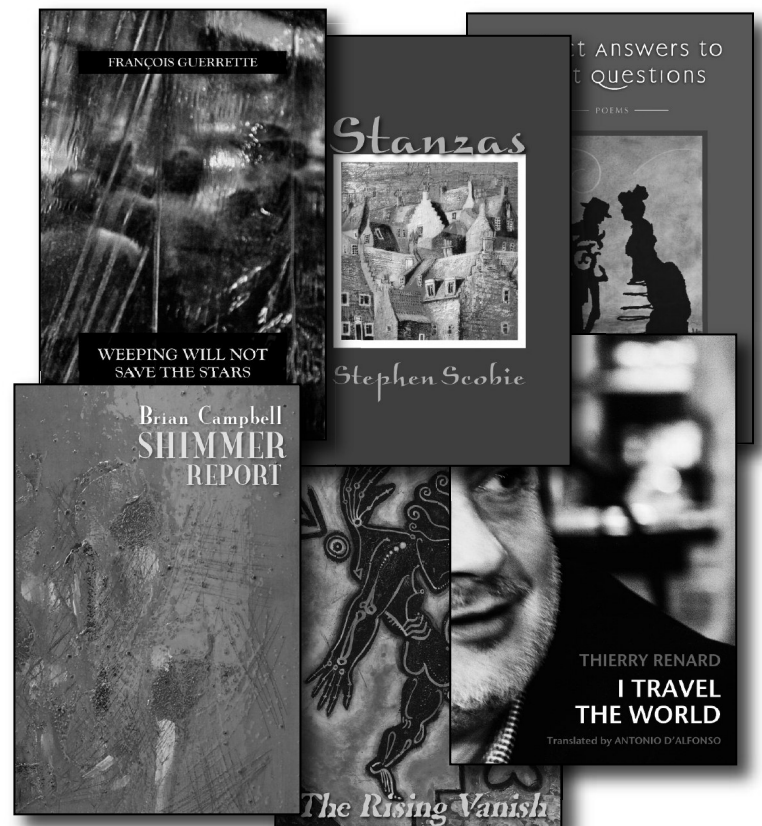
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art: Blythe Scott



Published by CPR: The Canadian Poetry Review Ltd.
Publisher/Editor: Richard Olafson
Managing Editor: Carol Ann Sokoloff
Circulation manager: Bernard Gastel

Legal deposit at the National Library of Canada, 2014.
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The CPR is published six times a year. Back issues are available at \$4.00. A one-year subscription is \$20.00. Please send a cheque payable to the PRRB.

CPR mailing address for all inquiries:
Box 8474 Main Postal Outlet, Victoria, B.C.
Canada V8W 3S1
phone & fax: (250) 385-3378

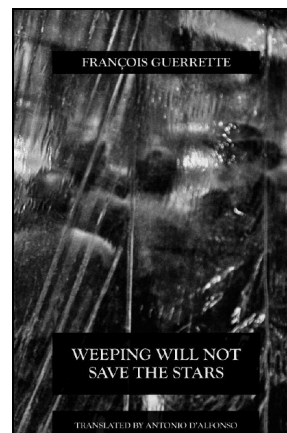
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from Weeping Will Not Save the Stars

François Guerrette

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-131-9
Fiction
80 pages
5.5 x 8.5
\$23.95



I have always wanted to look at the world that the blind see, and recount to our children the dreams that their ancestors watched with their open eyes: love stories, ghost stories, unfolding in the midst of windstorm wars. I am ready. Nightmares flow from my lips. It is dark outside, the inside of a star on fire.

Memories have left on my tongue the taste of wood piled in cords. My head is stuffed with dead leaves. The cottage is tossed over by the blasts of an ancient wind. Primeval squalls. Centuryold rabid dogs. I am doing what I can. I can no longer think straight. I am ablaze, a barrel bottom burning with promises. When blood gets lost in its rush through my veins, words blurt out like the red cry dying birds emit when shot down.

I have been warned: it is too late to be a barbarian.

Tomorrow is a question of seconds. Between shame and death, there is just skin. I am afraid that I will be forgiven. My body bleeds, an hourglass dripping with evil intents.

But I am ready. My nerves taut as a razor blade, I stretch my hand out. And I say yes, I admit it, my soul has been cleansed, and washed daily, with white, warm seasalt water, the same in which the deadborn are bathed, when brought to a nursery home. I need to remove from my shoulders the image blackened by ash, burnished by time, the image of a liberated man that tomorrow's children will run away from, the same way they would run away from the plague, from the war, mutual forgetfulness, mutually, all, in the same direction.

Which of these faces will I set fire to?

My smiles on torn photographs will not heal. Earlier, everything begins with its ending. Trees are eaten by their fruit. The wailing of wild gods are prayers for my days, inspiration for my nights. I am learning to speak the language of ghosts.

I do not need to learn how to walk, but to fall. Head first, the heart rising, veins stiffening, I am an instrument of fear. I shake inside every colour. Like an animal, I am hurting with ideas of magic.

Help me: I will not kill. I will not strip naked. I will not drop
to my knees and become an adult.

in front of my reflection placed
on the shelf of lost objects
breathing halted I am looking
at the news of joy that I am spreading
on the ground like fecund compost

if ever I use the future tense call the police

I descend from a tradition of the unexpected
my fingers are a people
broken but baleful

what I know I stole
while I took my strolls toward the heart
of the distant future and found
abounding vowels which made me believe
that the bud succumbs to madness

may the beauty of the world make me
terribly capable of anything

between my sunken temples I could
live my life like spending a night in prison

I no longer count the dead. Now, I prefer opening
my eyes and let the fire burn anything that moves
within me: child, woman, pet, the memory of a
knife. My hands tremble as I forge the metal of my
testament. I welcome total, luminous fear.

My ancestors, who do not recognize me, accuse me
of biting while I sleep: I am like the piglet born on
the way to the slaughterhouse. I am hanging by my
nails, in gas and holy water.

I have an affinity with anger.

The pain inside my head thunders. I cannot justify
myself. I am falling, my shadow shuffles away from
under me, its curves stir awake the bite marks
baked on my skin. I hate to admit it, but my body
does not need me.

Before I could take hold of myself, my heart was
blue, like the colour of the wings of a butterfly
perched on a ray of light. Waves, mountains,
furious dogs confided in me, using terms wide and
cold as the Gaspé. I was speaking the language of
my ancestors. I could distinctly overhear the wine
ageing in my veins.

Born in
Rimouski,
Quebec, in 1986,
François
Guerrette has
published four
poetry books. He
was a finalist for
the Emile-
Nelligan Award
and the Prix des
Libraires du
Québec. He lives in Montreal, dedicating his time
to writing.



But today I lurk about frantically, like an angel
standing at the edge of the world. I cannot
remember what I am looking for, nor if I really
want to find it. I am studying a newborn
vocabulary just as the whirlwind forces birds to
abort.

accuse me of stealing
a flicker of light from lightning
which I handed to the insane

I am not innocent I have mastered
cheating earth with fire

I am flying like a blessed spider
toward the sun to give my skull
the illumination of a tabernacle
loaded with all the drugs from heaven

my duty consists of dispensing
justice dangerously

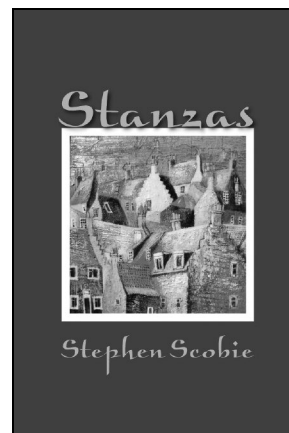
with wire and a screwdriver I want to stitch
together people weeping under my shirt
the past frozen in my mittens

from the crow of every era
I borrow speech's hours
and from the clouds my eyesight
pricked by the howling of chimneys

from Stanzas

Stephen Scobie

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-121-0
Poetry
86 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Today the dawn is breaking
as it always has before
So how come I am feeling
that it's opening a new door?

The sky is a blank colour
as it opens in the east
It stretches like an animal
it scratches like a beast

I didn't want to wake so soon
I wanted two more hours
of sleep and dreams and narratives
that might some day be ours

I am reluctantly awake
night's visions are all gone
Whatever wisdom came to me
you can have it for a song

The nights are getting shorter now
and the morning's turning bright
Yes the nights are growing shorter now
the dawn is growing bright
I can't get back to sleep now
my window's much too light

I can't get back to sleep now
I'm so tangled up in dreams
I can't get back to sleep now
I'm living in my dreams
That's just the way it is, babe
or at least the way it seems

I'm dreaming of you, baby
I'm dreaming of your dreams
I'm dreaming for you, baby
I'm living in your dreams
Your mind is living in my mind
I'm hatching all your schemes

Tonight I'm sleeping early
not that I hope for rest
I'm going to bed early
without no hope of rest
My head will hit the pillow
the place it knows the best

My head will hit the pillow
and then will come your dreams
My head will hit the pillow
and then will come your dreams
Please let me sleep my own sleep
no matter what it means

I've opened up the gates for you
I've answered your demand
I've learned new songs to sing for you
I've held your bad luck hand

The Boston wind is cold tonight
all traffic has been banned
But I am here to keep you warm
and hold your bad luck hand

And hold your bad luck hand, my dear
whatever has been planned
I've learned old songs to sing for you
and hold your bad luck hand

The Phoenix wind is hot tonight
across the burning sand
But I am here to keep you cool
and hold your bad luck hand

When I'm out in the wind, my dear
across the sea and land
I always turn and reach my arm
to hold your bad luck hand

To hold your bad luck hand, my dear
and write your name in sand
To take my chances one by one
as I hold your bad luck hand

When love's gone it never leaves behind no traces

it scatters into fragments of the bone
It lingers in the smiles of empty faces
that never leave you feeling quite alone

The stars lift up each evening just as usual
the moon is yellow in the eastern sky
The normality itself feels just as cruel
as if you'd sentenced all of us to die

I know I'm writing this in the wrong person
it was me who said these final words to you
If there's anyone who needs a lover's cursing
I don't need to know who needs a talking to

When love's gone there are always shards and
splinters
that catch between the finger and the bone
It seems there are no seasons, only winters
that freeze whatever's left to call a home

Stephen Scobie is a Canadian poet, critic, and scholar. Born in Carnoustie, Scotland, Scobie relocated to Canada in 1965. He earned a PhD from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver after which he taught at the University of Alberta and at the University of Victoria, from which he recently retired. Scobie is a founding editor of Longspoon Press, an elected member of the Royal Society of Canada, and the recipient of the 1980 Governor General's Award for McAlmon's Chinese Opera (1980) and the 1986 Prix Gabrielle Roy for Canadian Criticism.

One time I knew a gaunt old wife
and she had children three
One was a lord, one took the sword
and one lived honestly

The lord he stamped upon his ground
"All this is mine" said he
He forced his tenants from their land
and used them bitterly

The second brother loved a duel
he drew his broadsword high
He never minded any scar
he fought each fight to die

The third son nobly practised law
he spoke each word for hire
No matter what the case might be
he argued for the buyer

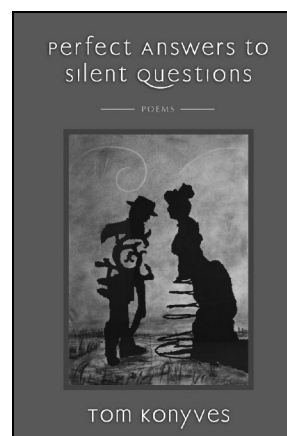
The second son slew the older one
he said it was but honour
The third son would not take the case
on behalf of either brother

The old wife cried, the old wife sighed
but who's to blame another?
When the one he cried and the other died
and a brother kills a brother

from Perfect Answers to Silent Questions

Tom Konyves

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-107-4
Poetry
120 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Born in Budapest and based in Montreal until 1983, Tom Konyves is one of the original seven poets dubbed The Vehicule Poets, a group influenced by the avant-garde literature movements and the artistic innovations of the times. Since 2006, he has been teaching screenwriting, video production, journalism and creative visual writing courses at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford, BC.

Cloud Story

Once upon a time,
we had a bedtime ritual:
we told cloud stories.

Within five minutes,
the lost were found, the kidnapped
rescued, the ugly

became beautiful,
the weak found strength in numbers;
imagination

illuminated
circling birds of prey, whose aim
was mesmerizing;

red then turned to green,
clouds parted, seized parts started
turning "then" to snow.

The Graffiti Artist

Every new billboard
invites graffiti artists –
put your tag on me!

Graffiti artist:
I don't care what billboards say,
makes me feel surreal.

The Birthday Card

*"Rock Breaks Scissors, Scissors Cut Paper,
Card Covers Birthday"*

Poet covers Love.
It's our job: thermometers.
Long live word artists!

Music of the Spheres

Music of the spheres:
swallows, gulls, sirens, children –
all is permitted.

The Optimist

Tuesday on Thursday:
the grass is greener here (there),
and love is blooming.

The Pessimist

Tuesday on Thursday:
is it the past, hat in hand,
or Doomsday, in drag?

To the Surrealists

Crossing your abyss
on this wobbly line of ink –
if I slip, I'm bread.

September 11

No words need be said:
actions speak louder than words,
free to jump, they jump.

...

Two words need be said:
execution, execute:
loud history lessons.

Fifteen Minutes

Half-forgotten me,
half-forgotten, why? Fifteen
minutes pass, a blink

of an eye! Blind fate!
If I could just blame it on
a red wheelbarrow...

One-Line Valentine

One word, Valentine!
If not one word, one look then,
a gesture, saying

I am yours forever
or, if not forever, then
how about one night

under a full moon,
under the black sheet of sky:
one forever night.

If not one night, then
one bolero, one tango,
mambo, cha cha cha

What a serenade!
What limited time offers!
Sign on dotted line...

from Shimmer Report

Brian Campbell

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-103-6
Poetry
94 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Brian Campbell is the author of two previous poetry collections, *Passenger Flight and Guatemala* and *Other Poems*, as well as a chapbook, *A Private Collection*. *Undressing The Night* is his translation from Spanish of the selected poems of Nicaraguan-Canadian poet Francisco Santos. A finalist for the 2006 CBC Literary Award for Poetry, Campbell is also a singer-songwriter, he has produced an independent music CD, *The Courtier's Manuscript*. Originally from Toronto, Brian Campbell currently lives in Montreal.

Décor

Our apartment—second floor—is sand
-wiched: footsteps above, cocked ears
below, while through our window
walls of facing brick and glass,
twist-iron passerelles, balustrades.

Foliage. Black spreading limbs
—twigs that dip with grackles, squirrels—
tints of green or rust that deepen
with each year's increase of winged seed.

View from the balcony:
through webs of wires
domes, cubes, scaffolds, spires
and the burly hill we call mountain
tamed, chained, sown with graves
—city of dead overlooking
the living.

Traffic haze. Siren at least once a day,
keening stress, licking flame, contusion,
broken limb, perhaps a death.

And through these murmuring layers,
faint voices calling, shouting, crying,
neighbour's radio *lay lady lay, lay*
across my big brass bed
before glass door shuts, and I face
a hush.

Books. House plants; padding cat paws;
refrigerator hum. Classical guitar
mounted on a wall. Dabbled canvases,
technique mixte—acrylic, paper, stones.
Low couch, coffee table, bed
all on a parquet floor.

These things we call our own. Their claim
on our selves, our memories foreseeing;
and who are we? echoes, after-images,
décor of this décor: arrival, routines,
laughters, griefs, our passing yet. The stage is set.

Touch

You teach me fondle of instep
caress of toes
repose of hands
on shoulders arms—

Where I'm from
people sit apart
incline heads
from discrete and separate
chairs.

Arches shore up.
Toes spring.
Fingers point, grab
summon or push back.

So I learn willingly
fondle of instep
caress of toes
repose of hands
on shoulders arms

Chrysalis

You sweep your hands

over the hard
shell of my chest the carapace
of my back the cusp
of my penis

— cup palms beneath my chin, gaze
into my eyes.

Through translucent walls
my eyes glide
over your body's
curves.

So safe am I
in my crystal
encasement.

Sprouting unfurling

what will
I be?

Pushing splitting

this tough surface

to meet your touch

I feel

my skin

blossom

pores

breathe

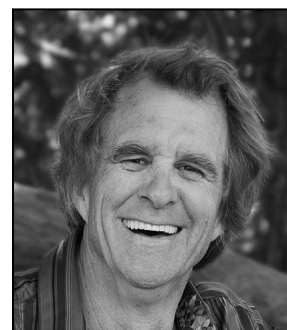
Salt

To taste your salt
sweat on your shoulders, arms, thighs
in ridges, winding estuary—
moist, fragrant, pungent juices—
but salt will remain after you and I are gone,
salt in stone, in shining crystal.
We are salt valleys,
we are dead seas
sowing barren lands.
Now I bury my head in your salt,
rejoice in your sea, rejoice in your cries—
though tasting you be tasting Babylon
Lot's wife, fires raining down on Sodom.

from The Rising Vanish

Derek Robinson

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-083-1
Poetry
182 pages
6 x 9
\$24.95



Raven in My Ear

i

In half-sleep I heard
The oracular raven,
Reciting my heart.

ii

I, too, rose on wings
Capable of crossing worlds,
Savvy though unseen

iii

Clawing my way up
Until I climbed the cloud's back
Beyond the blue hour.

Crown / Jewels

i

Light sunk its talons
Into primeval darkness,
Wounding it with fire.

ii

Owl mobbed by bushtits,
Darkness glides between the stars,
Imperturbable.

iii

Yet—no foes at last.
Night need only suffer these
Gashes for a space.

The Need to Get Out

Yet why does the heart,
That warm thing suckled on Love,
Take to these cold fields,
This black drainage ditch—

The cold calls of geese, flocking above?
Why would mountaintop
Lure it from contemplation
To risk its neck, and ice-up?

Wind whistles it out
Of hiding to hunt for birds and clouds
On a blustery Monday,
And take the rain neat.

It had rather not
Lounge beside the fire
Purring in its nest of books
[However coffee table deluxe].

No: it needs the vast
Reminder of cold and storm
To answer its own immensity at last
And so remain warm.

Dreamed Before

We wear ourselves out, living,
So the final raiment of nothing at all

Isn't, finally, unnatural
But our most enduring coat:

Now with the freedom to get around
Beyond the baggage of rot and history

Who knows but we soar
Into the Heaven we dreamed before.

Warmed By Cold Fire

i

Night needed something
To warm itself with——so dreamed
A zillion torches

ii

Which, stoked to blazing
Passionately warm themselves
And any who think

iii

With like hearts below
As, master of cold marble
Michelangelo.

For Derek

Robinson meaning, though
inscrutable, is a
given. Poetry has
provided the
means whereby to
celebrate, explore,
dare and—per-
chance—pene-
trate reality, take
life by the throat.

A poet of exceptional sensitivity and depth, he was born in Vancouver but has lived on Vancouver Island since 1971. He moved to Victoria in 1980. His first book, *Child*, was published in 1975, followed by *Twelve Poems*. He published *The Inner Shore* in 1985 in collaboration with Miles Lowry and Richard Olafson, and *A Cloud Edifice and Still in the Dream Time with Ekstasis Editions*. He currently lives on Knockan Hill.

Finnerty Gardens

Cold working its magic: the icewind
Wakes an inkling of something miraculous,
Unseen yet felt, back of mind,

So the particulars escape one,
The desiderata.....Skein
Of cobblestone clouds, faint yellow light,

Night coming on: if this joy
Could be bottled——sipped again,
Perchance, as needed.....

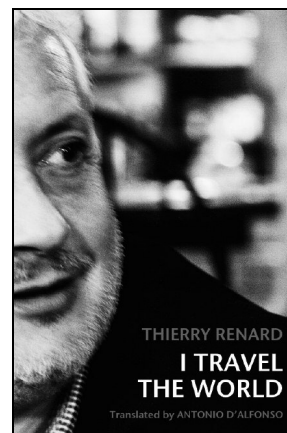
The trees billow now, though skeletal,
And the winter light that vanishes
Already ushers in the upfloating stars.

from I Travel the World

Thierry Renard

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-119-7
Poetry
70 pages
5.5 x 8.5
\$23.95



Get Out!

*All that is: escaping and gliding away.
All that is not: not being one of my delights.*
Claude Roy

*I used to believe in the flash in the pan
But then gradually I settled down
Yet not without a certain dose of curiosity
Because the poet's task is constant rebirth
And breathing deeply
And often with fragility
Surely there is some Prévert in these words
Some Perros
Some Hardellet too
Behind that short man
There is a group of wild Baroque men and women
mixing
With the most tender and the most nervous of
everyday life
Everything is to be found there a lover's eroticism
The ambiguity of the body's nudity
The alchemy of the verb and the wish fulfilled
Incredible reality...*

These are the words I received the other day
Written by an old poet friend of mine
Back in August 1993
I had turned thirty
The poet was Claude Roy
We met only briefly

Obviousness is wishful thinking
A window a piece of the valley
Life a joyous show-jumping

Obviousness can be shared
After all I have spoke about it
Elsewhere
I would like to have Sonia right now
The last night we spent together was way too
short
And contemporary
Get out!

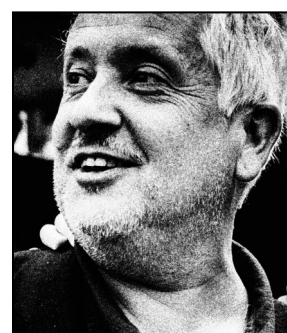
Fire in the hearth will die out
I slept for a measly hour
And had a dream about the Vercors Massif
I slept
Distantly
This is the stuff of a legend

I was sleeping because
I was going away and was everywhere
But now I want you to get out
Let me stop here
Get out!

I am expecting Sonia any second now
I am waiting and waiting
I am waiting always and more
Get out! leave everything as is
*Nothing is sacred
Anything can be said*

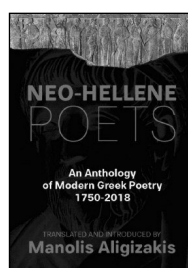
Obviousness is wishful thinking
I have enough of this
Sharing
Let us all go away

Thierry Renard
was born in
Lyon, France, on
14 August 1963.
He studied to be
an actor at the
Conservatoire
d'art dramatique
of Lyon. His work
as an actor and
poet was noticed
as early as 1978.
He is managing director of Espace Pandora in
Vénissieux (Rhône) and Vice President of
l'Agence Rhône- Alpes pour le livre et la documen-
tation (ARALD).



Mine are the words of a hooligan a scoundrel a
foreigner
Or the very last of words spoken
By the last of the homeless
In this world hurting
Get out!

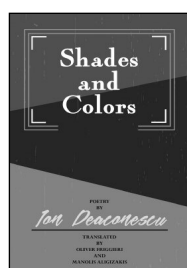
I must sleep
Fire in the hearth will die out
This is the stuff of a legend.



Neo-Hellene Poets

translated by
Manolis

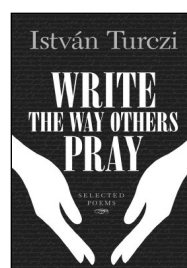
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Shades and Colors

poetry by
Ion Deaconescu

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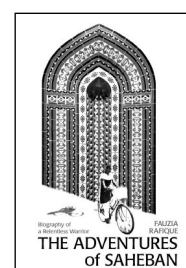
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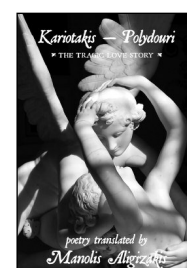
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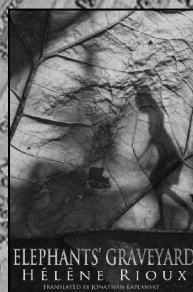
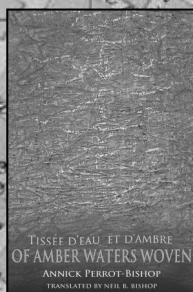
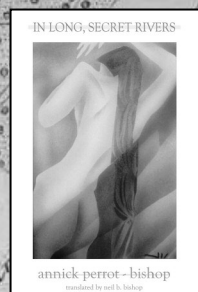
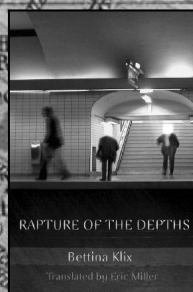
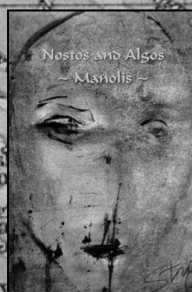
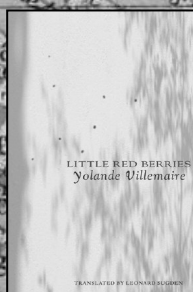
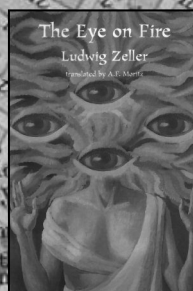
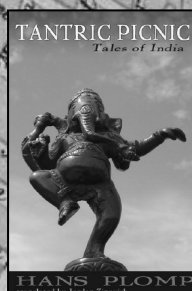
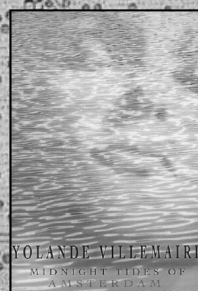
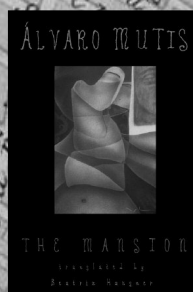
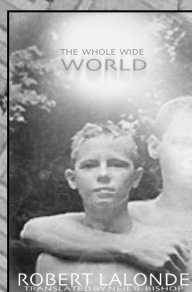
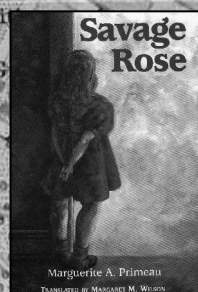
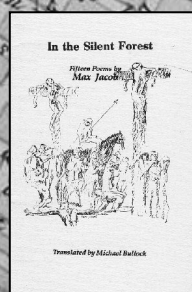
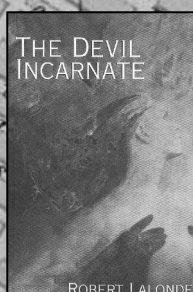
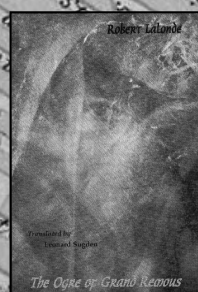
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