

# CPR

*Resuscitating the art  
of Canadian poetry*

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## Contents

### Janet Vickers

from *Infinite Power* page 2  
Epiphany I Ability to do or act  
The Unborn Chill Morning After  
Mind Is Wind Reflected

### Robert Martens

from *Hush* page 3  
sleep my child not the end of time  
feefifofum: autotale #1 a marriage  
autotale #6: sleeping in perpetuity

### Daniel G. Scott

from *Gnarled Love* page 4  
in the darkness, love to celebrate you  
love becoming small gestures  
after detached

### Diane Régimbald

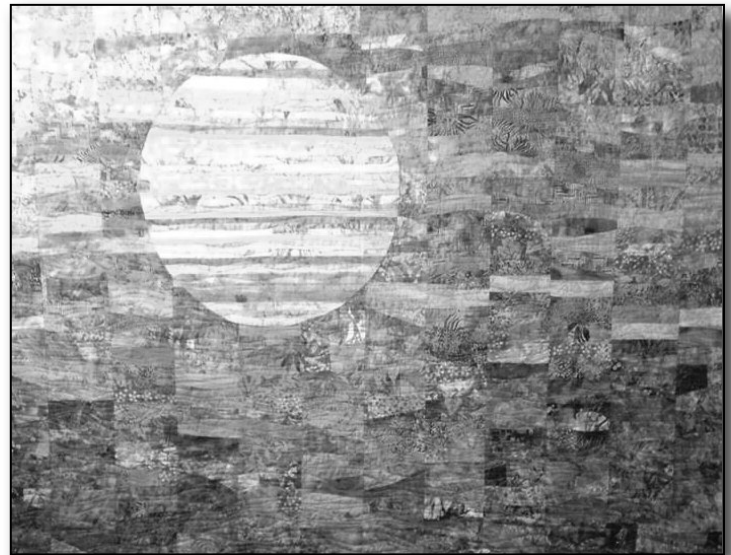
from *The Wind Under Our Footsteps* page 5  
The Water, the Shoreline

### Richard Stevenson

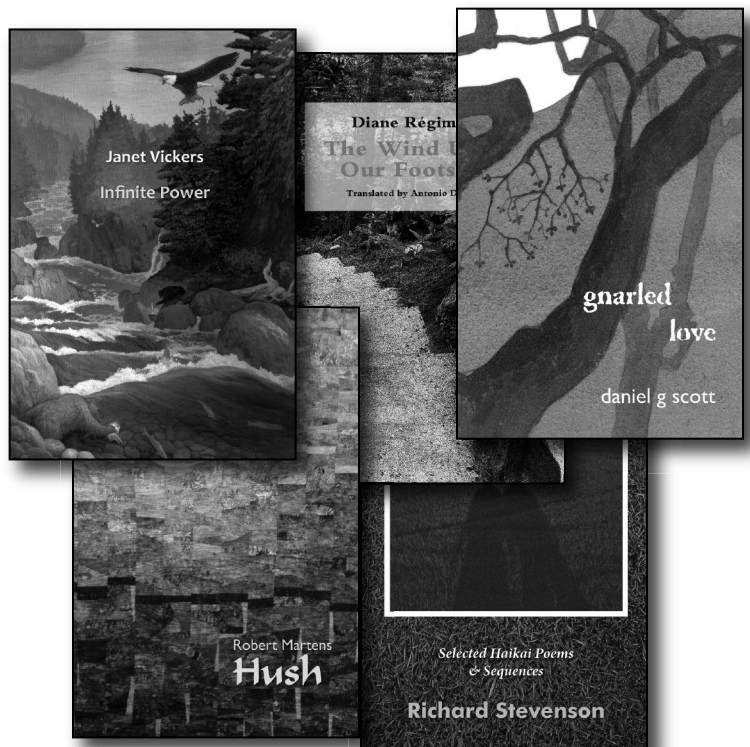
from *The Heiligen Effect* page 6

## Review

*When the World Is Not Our Home*  
by Susan Musgrave page 7  
Review by Chelsea Thornton



Cover image: Harvest Moon, quilt by Lois Klassen



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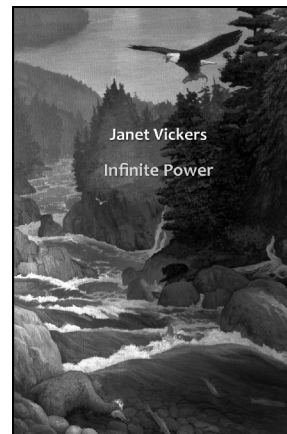
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# from Infinite Power

## Janet Vickers

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-164-7  
Poetry  
94 pages  
6 x 9  
\$23.95



### Epiphany I

An unhappy childhood  
creates the need to achieve  
something, some award or medal  
but it doesn't teach you how

to create the achievement you need.  
How to hold a brush, write a pantoum.  
It doesn't teach you how  
to drive a truck or remove a tumour.

How to hold a brush, write a pantoum  
comes by forgetting what made you seethe.  
To drive a truck or remove a tumour  
you must change gears, sharpen the scalpel

of your rage, forgive your kin.  
An unhappy childhood was not their goal.  
That you learn what lies beyond blame  
is the thing, the award, the medal.

### Ability to do or act

to fry an egg  
to lift it with a spatula and lay on buttered toast  
depends upon a chicken being fed  
a farmer getting a loan until wheat is ready for  
market  
depends upon miners breaking rock to deliver  
ore  
to an assembly line where iron is forged into a  
pan  
which then depends upon railway engineers and  
truck drivers  
and retail shops with people raised by parents  
who love them enough to keep them  
until they are ready to care for themselves  
after teachers and nurses and doctors  
ply them with their own knowledge  
and this is no secret not even to a child  
and yet the ability to do or act in the moment  
feels like an individual initiative  
a sign of talent or a special skill  
which does exist and is essential  
along with the inherent sense of right and wrong  
and yet somehow we are held under a doctrine  
of accredited beliefs that generation after genera-  
tion  
persuade us our ability to do or act depends upon  
a distant bank governed by a caste of experts  
requiring guns and tanks on other continents  
to prop up rulers who cut off the hands  
of children in order to maintain control  
of tiny rocks or dirty oil which we consume  
to break the shell of an unformed bird  
whose mother sits in a cage laying her life's work  
beneath her

### The Unborn Chill

On a cold morning make the bed naked  
throw back the covers of your night  
your folding for warmth, creature bliss  
unconscious flight to blue Arcadia.

Brush flakes of skin from wrinkled sheets  
you are awake now to window frost  
the sky full of snow falling casually  
onto pruned rose bushes and tender

exclamations of grass silenced by yesterday's  
wind. See your nipples shrink and flesh  
goose itself to Winter. The call is this:  
some part of your life wants more than

porridge, the larding of your belly.  
Some light in your grandmother's eyes  
shows you how your body has become  
the shape of your desires.

### Morning After

You know how you wake to the curtain blowing  
and air imminent with rain dances on your face  
until it's inhaled to the tongue  
you rub around your teeth  
and in those seconds

before you recall the conversation you had last  
night  
about her parking your car in front of a fire hall  
then phoned an hour after the police  
after you'd thumbed yellow pages  
paced the floor seventy kilometres away  
to say she picked it up from the pound  
paid the fine and was on her way home

come the answers you never asked for  
the translucent voice of a breeze that says  
it's the bad days that measure us  
and she got an A plus but you didn't?

*This is Janet Vickers's second trade book of poems. Her first book,*

*Impermanence, was published in 2012, also by Ekstasis. Her poems have appeared in anthologies in Canada (Down in the Valley, Ekstasis 2004) and the UK (Refugees Welcome and The Poet's Quest for God, Eyewear 2016), in literary journals and online magazines. Janet is active in the community on Gabriola Island where she lives with Tony, her husband of 46 years.*

### Mind Is Wind Reflected

I left him curled in bed, pillow between  
his knees— taken somewhere in his sleep  
away from this house and garden with its  
endless demands.

His frownless face and  
steady breath will be there when I return  
from my walk on easy roads.

But the breeze  
changes direction.

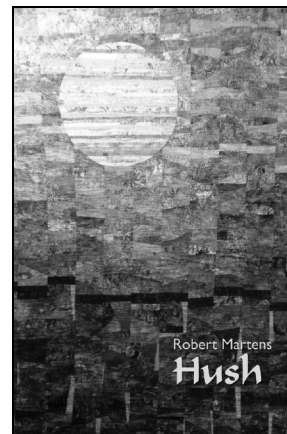
One day he or I will  
not return to this. One of us will go first  
to a sleep that does not wake to the familiar.

One of us will forget  
the fold of these arms.

# from Hush

## Robert Martens

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-162-3  
Poetry  
124 pages  
6 x 9  
\$23.95



### sleep my child

hush my baby never cry  
i'll sing thee a lullaby

far far north the white winds blow  
a wolf cub's lost in drifting snow

in brittle black the stars crick crack  
but thou shalt rest within the storm

for love awaits thee deep below  
so sleep my child there is no harm

### not the end of time

water babies.

an old woman told me the story.

hush my child.

the sun burned out, she said,  
each night, or maybe  
just once. she said, and  
brushed back the silver  
from her eyes. burned  
out, first at the edges,  
and then  
with a whooshh... i was  
so much older then, she said.

she smiled.  
our earth was an ocean  
of midnight blue, we were  
water babies,  
naked green, copper-gilled, buoyant  
in the freedom of salt, and we  
swam the seven seas.  
not the end of time.  
the beginning.  
dream, my little ones.

while the sun slept,  
she said. while the whales  
cried, while you swam  
deeper, homewards,  
hush. you were  
my children.

### feefifofum: autotale #1

when i was a child, an ogre  
hid in the corner  
of my bedroom. night  
rippled, a curtain of camouflage.  
i could feel him watching. sometimes  
he'd step out from the darkness,  
his eyes wide and deep,  
and a familiar light  
playing in his hair.

years passed. at daybreak  
he was caught,  
locked in a mahogany box.  
our dreams are weaker now,  
salted with dust.

yesterday  
i unlatched the box.  
he lay there, quaking,  
lonely. i  
stroked his fevered forehead.

the box is still there, in the  
corner of my bedroom.  
sometimes, after midnight,  
i hear a faint noise, like  
a lullaby spilling on the carpet,  
and i smile, tremble a little,  
pull the blanket over my head.

### a marriage

they work at night. torturer  
and victim. he manipulates  
prod and electrode. she  
responds with the required  
screams. at night, when  
the gods are asleep.  
a blood-spattered door, a  
key in his pocket.

morning. he drives home. she  
is dragged back  
to a concrete bed.  
they sleep.  
in defiance of daylight, of  
the sawblade sun,  
they sleep, and astonished, they  
meet there, they are  
man and wife,  
they live and die together.

if we could stay here.  
oh for that mercy. the ripple  
of rain through closed eyelids,  
here,  
before the dreams begin.

### Robert Martens

*grew up in a village founded by Mennonite refugees from the Soviet Union. Still in his teens, he leapfrogged several centuries into the postmodern milieu of student politics at Simon Fraser University. Robert subsequently settled in Abbotsford, BC, where he writes poems and enjoys the spoiled existence of the wealthy West. He has co-written and co-edited histories, anthologies, and periodicals. Robert is grateful for poetry, music, movies, friends and family, and for his cat, who sleeps soundly through the injustices of this world.*

### autotale #6: sleeping in perpetuity

*"i'm fixing a hole where the rain gets in  
and stops my mind from wandering"*  
~ Lennon/McCartney

and here i stand, whisky in hand  
to fix the life i'm rueing  
while the rain comes gentling in

with face of grey and little to say  
oh what is my lover doing  
while the rain comes trickling in

rain on my tongue, rain in my lungs  
while the world's in court a-suing  
and the brain can't hold things in

while the world's in court, my life too short  
and trolls are jeering and booing  
old age is a legal sin

with knuckled bones and kidneys of stone  
and the dove of love still cooing  
while the rain sleeps in my skin

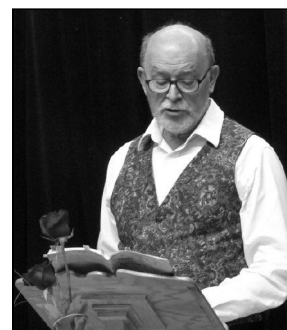
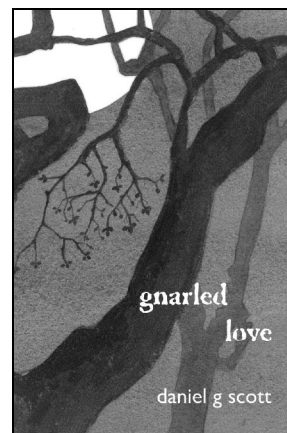
i shall lay me down, a foolish clown  
while the rains of rest are rueing  
while my lovers lost come calling

may the rain come stillingly in

# from Gnarled Love

## Daniel G. Scott

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-152-4  
Poetry  
102 pages  
6 x 9  
\$23.95



**Daniel G Scott** currently is the Artistic Director of the Planet Earth Poetry Reading Series in Victoria BC and will retire from the School of Child & Youth Care at the University of Victoria in June. He has published individual poems in journals, and anthologies and this book is his third book of poetry, preceded by *black onion* (Goldfinch Press, 2012) and *terrains* (Ekstasis Editions, 2014). He has two previous chapbooks the latest, *interrupted* (Goldfinch, 2015) explores two cancer journeys.

### in the darkness, love

in those fleeting  
passages  
when we are knotted  
arms and legs  
straining  
i lose  
the edge of my body

where you stop  
where i begin  
the reaching place  
the holding place  
melt together

moonlight  
knives  
through the window  
shadows  
carve the darkness

doubts have taste  
fill my mouth

nakedness  
is not infinite  
the air cools  
we cover ourselves  
huddle  
warm skin against cool

feel again our edges  
know love  
as a brief season

### to celebrate you

in the diamond clarity of years  
in soft folds of aging skin  
i rediscover love  
return to  
your gentle caring

i am renewed  
by the failures  
we have borne  
by the winnowing  
love gives

i marvel  
at life together

### love becoming

the dome of her shoulder  
dissolves in my mouth  
becoming  
honey dew melon

our solid bodies  
flow, blend  
become  
dream fluid

we are sea creatures  
diving, rising  
salt in our sweat  
skin wet, pungent

then we  
become  
land animals again  
panting for breath

beached  
on coral sheets

### small gestures

her touches  
a caress on the cheek  
a flick of hair  
a fluttering hand  
take on their own life  
become  
intimate language  
we are tied to one another  
in small gestures  
signs

### after

after years  
journeying together  
the throb of your pulse  
still draws me  
holds me  
sings in my veins  
entwines our words  
structures our rhythms

this morning  
still naked  
like a vine growing  
you stayed  
on me and i on you  
entangled

### detached

we make love  
familiar with one another

my body is doing  
what bodies do  
but i am far away  
undone  
detached

a knot loose  
i drift away  
not connected  
to you

i wonder  
are you adrift too  
is our tapestry  
untangling?

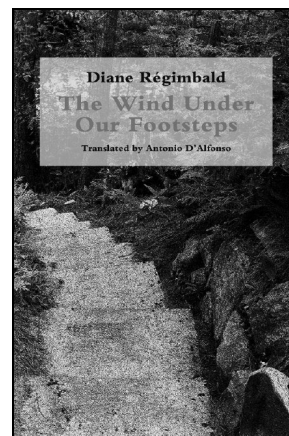
i seek a heat  
once found in bodies  
seek  
a deeper warmth  
from you  
for you

# from The Wind Under Our Footsteps

Diane Régimbald

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-143-2  
Poetry  
154 pages  
5.5 x 8.5  
\$23.95



**Diane Régimbald** was a writer in residence in Amsterdam, Holland, in 2006, and in Amay, Belgium, in 2006. A widely published poet, she has given readings in America and Europe. Her work has been published in English, Catalan, and Spanish. She lives in Montreal.

## The Water, The Shoreline

Voices float over the currents in the sea  
where snow fills the cracks  
in icebergs eroding time.  
Voices at daybreak sing  
and disclose wounds  
voices provide love with you  
and more time.  
You cross into the bark  
and listen to the echo resonating.

\*

The sea beyond hangs its waves  
on the sand gone adrift.  
You breathe in the salted writings  
carried by the gust of wind  
over the dune walls  
your word is breath rustling objects.

The echo snaps.

Your sights on the horizon  
cannot cross over  
except on the curving crest  
of waves.

\*

The wind rolls up  
migrating birds abandon our land  
and clouds turn into smooth fleece.

On the surge of a wave your hurt sinks  
like a liquid people on fire  
before the mirror of waves.

The shoreline drowns under the steam  
caving into havoc  
slight grass retains  
the soil alive, fragile, yet sturdy.

\*

Heads in stone splitting the dance  
surging from the sea  
from the crumbling of the ramble  
day after day  
a distant moan shifts.  
There is a fire carving itself in us.

\*

You spend years on thresholds  
harvesting stones for travelling  
which remind you of the land of their origins.

Drops of water sparkle  
as they slide down your thigh, turning soft  
on your cheek making you wet  
licking the solitary  
rock that like a nose points beyond the island.

You lower your eyes when birds caw  
look at my hand where a shadow breaks loose.

\*

Seconds recognize the secret of solitude  
in the echo of mountains  
the landscape spreads out.

Absolute love of footsteps  
recollection of footsteps.

A book is open  
on the page with your name on it.

\*

You dig into the soil between your legs  
amid the stones, a root.  
There you notice worms swarming about.

You implore the sky to give life back to you.  
You always feel this sensation that you are dying  
liquid sensation, without path  
without exit.  
Every moment you are looking for a presence.

\*

Your fingers scoop the barren earth  
revive thoughts  
that lead toward forgetfulness.

A rainy day  
eye staring outside the window  
I listen to meditants' footsteps moving  
like the liveness of peace  
over the embers of our spirits.

\*

One day there was darkness in the sky  
my mother was hanging the bed sheets out.

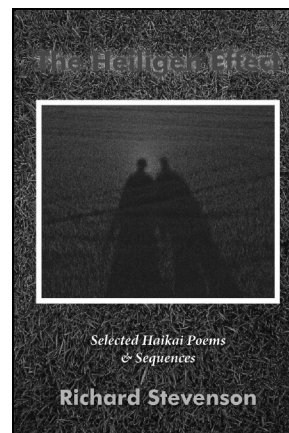
To her side, I looked captive  
movement and light  
held and stretched  
these white shapes  
in the gale.

Diaphanous ghosts  
turned around me as I danced  
on the moistness of the grass  
to a melody she was humming.

# from The Heiligen Effect

## Richard Stevenson

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-101-2  
Poetry  
80 pages  
6 x 9  
\$23.95



**Richard Stevenson** recently retired from a thirty-year teaching stint at Lethbridge College. He has bought a house in Nanaimo and will be moving back to his beloved

Vancouver Island home as soon as his wife retires. His most recent published works include *A Dog Named Normal* (Ekstasis Editions, 2013), *Fruit Wedge Moon* (Hidden Brook Press, 2015), and *Rock, Scissors, Paper: The Clifford Olson Murders* (Grey Borders Press, forthcoming).

*heiligenschein* –  
halos crown our shadows' heads  
on this dewy lawn;  
we can see each other's  
but cannot see our own

\*

after your divorce  
you walk along the shore line;  
each step a fresh wound  
forces the water ahead  
fills a dry socket behind

(for Donna Lea)

\*\*\*

starving child –  
fly drinking from his eye –  
doesn't blink

\*

he thinks he's a cat!  
fellow tribesmen throw real stones  
when he mewls for scraps

\*

**One Great Hitler Photo Studio**  
the hand-painted sign screams  
click click click click

\*

**Prayer is Telephone to God**  
the bumper snicker reads –  
prayer mat on the dash

\*

on the cab window  
silhouette of Africa  
upside down

\*

outside Leventi's  
artificial Christmas trees,  
three lepers with bowls

\*

in the bath tub  
on a paisley island shirt  
chameleon grins

\*

seen from a distance  
cattle at a water hole –  
not flies, open sores

\*

*Dash me ten kobo!*  
the market urchin demands  
a bite in the apple

\*

wrong place and wrong time:  
kids wale on my car with sticks  
in Islamic zeal.  
Ridding the 'hood of harlots –  
my car a grub among ants

\*

cabbie is confused,  
wants us to raise his child,  
not just babysit  
na we have money plenty?  
na dis be good for Bintu?

\*

the Wabenzi tribe?  
dem who drive Mercedes,  
have naira plenty

\*

water table down –  
old duffer fishes for golf balls  
with a long pole spoon

\*

blue mayfly rests on  
the commemorative plaque –  
bequeaths itself

\*

hosing out the hood  
and air car ducts  
af Kibbles & Bits?!  
dead mouse smell in the  
air conditioner

\*

water striders twitch  
only their middle legs  
and write on water!

\*

loud thunderclap –  
from under the bed  
the dachshund's woof

\*

long shadows now –  
sparrows on the parking lot  
forage for French fries

\*

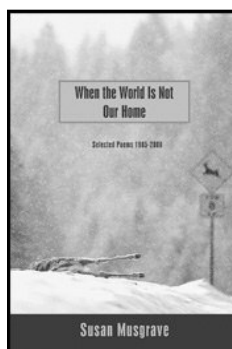
I got one! you yell –  
first catch of the day,  
your face the keeper

\*



# READING SUSAN MUSGRAVE

Chelsea Thornton



**When the World Is Not Our Home**  
Susan Musgrave  
Thistledown Press

When read together, these two separate volumes by Susan Musgrave, *When the World Is Not Our Home* and *Obituary of Light*, easily meld, in the mind, into one collection. The quiet wisdom and wonder of the later *Obituary* clearly grows out of the sharp, honest and occasionally brutal observations of life in *When the World Is Not Our Home*. While the earlier collection trembles with fierce strength and anger tempered by occasional moments of quiet acceptance and humour, the later collection trembles like a spider web in the wind, intricate but simple, delicate but strong.

*When the World Is Not Our Home* is largely a chronicle of how incredibly inhospitable the human landscape can be. It is an unsettling compilation of grief and violence, undoubtedly the stories of many real and imagined characters, but all told with the same poetic voice so that the stories

begin to feel like the chronicle of one person's many tragedies. This unification of suffering makes the anthology's stubborn strength seem all the more defiant: "I'm here for the duration. / Grief's never had it so good." ("Here it Comes – Grief's Beautiful Blow-Job")

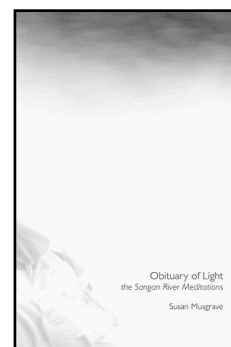
The true strength of *When the World Is Not Our Home* is Musgrave's ability to find moments of beauty hidden within the hurtful world she portrays: "I try/ to remember the immense beauty of pain" ("Mute Swans"). It is the tension between these two realities, the world of beauty and the world of pain, that gives the poems the ability to arrest the reader, to demand stillness and attention. In "The Way We Watch for Her," a mother describes the grave of her child as "only / a mound just out of reach under the nettles / and wild peppermint," and we are caught by the opposition of the grave and growth, mesmerized by both beauty and sorrow.

Also included in the anthology is "Water Trembling at the Rim: The

Process of Revision," an engaging discussion of the process of poetic revision that considers not only Musgrave's own process, but those of Jane Hirshfield, Donald Hall, and Galway Kinnell.

In *Obituary of Light: The Sangam River Meditations*, Musgrave chooses to sorrow quietly and beautifully. The brutal portrayal of pain and cruelty that characterizes her other recent collection is absent here, replaced instead with a meditative tone:

*The brightest stars are not always  
in the mood to sing. Pain  
is simply there, like bread rising,  
like driftwood, and the sun in the garden  
window. There is no place  
to take shelter  
but yourself.* "Summer x"



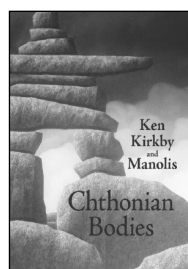
**Obituary of Light:  
the Sangam River  
Meditations**  
Susan Musgrave  
Leaf Press



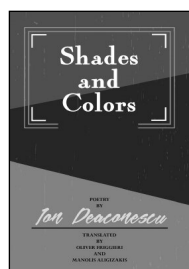
Much of *Obituary of Light* assumes a form similar to a Zen koan – small, unanswerable questions or contradictions designed to further open the mind: "Is it the flags/ that flutter now, or the wind?" (Fall v). The empty space on each page is needed to accommodate the deep well of thoughts the short verses evoke.

Through the collection's quiet, mindful acceptance of sorrow, Musgrave has managed to suck the pain out of it. Sorrow simply becomes another way to experience beauty. She closes with "We are the broken heart / of this world." (Fall xv) In light of the rest of the book, this feels more like a comfort than a condemnation.

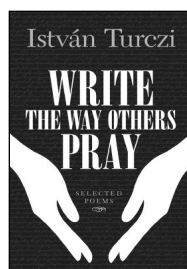
Chelsea Thornton writes from Mission, B.C. She reviewed *What Species of Creature in PRRB*, Spring 2009.



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& Manolis  
  
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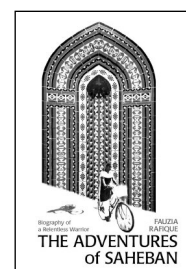
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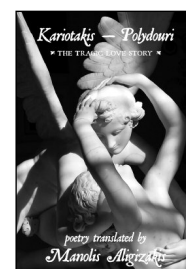
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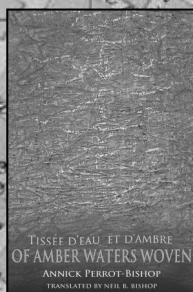
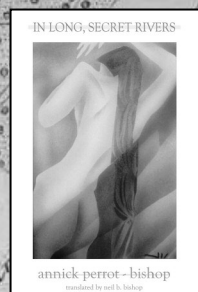
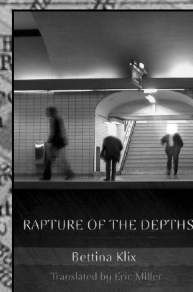
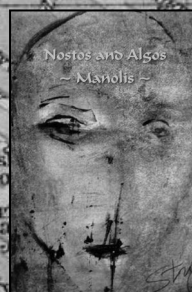
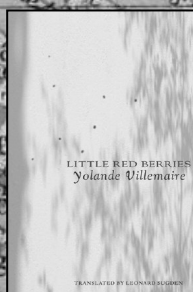
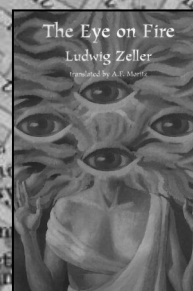
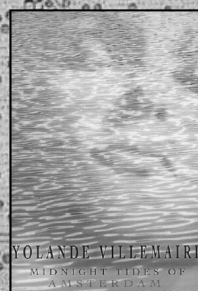
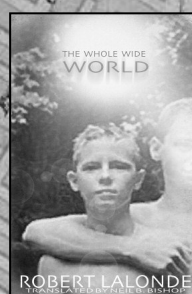
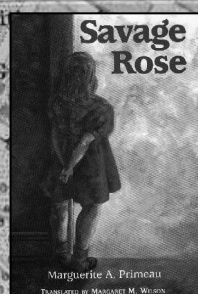
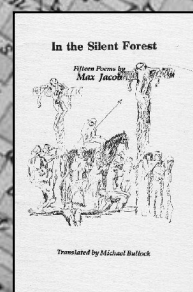
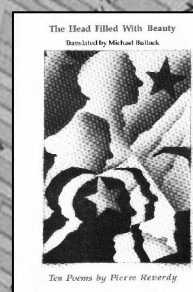
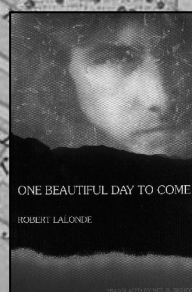
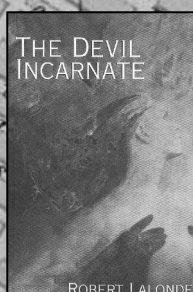
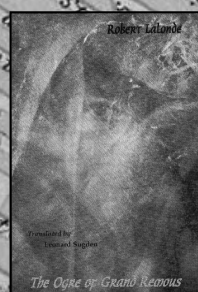




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