

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

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Contents

Charles Noble

from *Mack the Naïf* page 2

Mona Latif-Ghattas

from *Sails for Exile* page 3

Nuij Night Forgotten Statue
The Day After the Massacre
The Mawal of Fig Trees Gray Stars
Requiem of an Ibis Last Night
Fluid Journal

Irv Huck

from *News of the World* page 4

To an Editor Who Suggested a Revision
Encounter, With Birds at His Window

Carmelo Militano

from *The Stone Mason's Notebook* page 5

March, after Boucher Caught
October, Another Version What you see

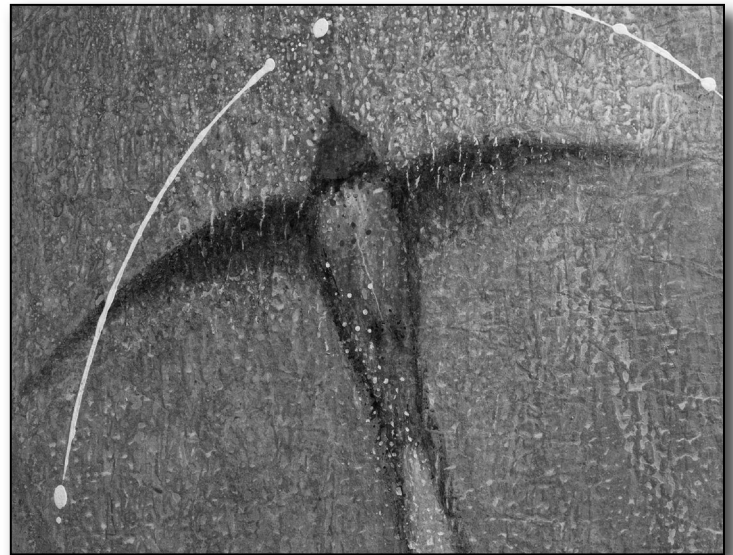
Károly Feller

from *Sieve of Light in the Pine Forest* page 6

Gutter Tale
If Clumsily
Spring Wolf Den

Review

The Art of Breathing Underwater by Cathy Ford page 7
Reviewed by Ali Siemens



art: Miles Lowry



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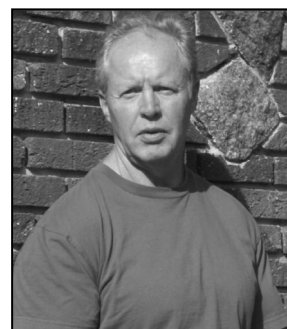
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from Mack the Naïf

Charles Noble

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



Since 1972, **Charles Noble** has been publishing poetry in a modest Canadian literary underground. A few of the titles that have emerged are *Doubt's Boots* (U of C Press), *hearth wild / post cardiac banff* (Thistledown Press), and *Wormwood, Vermouth, Warphistory* (Thistledown Press), which won the 1996 Writers Guild of Alberta poetry award. Also a dedicated farmer, Noble works the land of his family's farm in Nobleford, Alberta and spends a significant amount of time in Banff.

In heightened surveillance
you can hear a penis drop
an eye drop of urine
in the underwear

too much information
the arc of the story
vees south to the season

the hunting balloon
drags its basket
into the hedge

they all fall down and out
tagged but laughing.

~~~~~

"The whites of their eyes  
are here"  
announced the butler wirelessly.

~~~~~

I'd forgotten that word
one of those 43 cent
workhorse words

well not forgotten
since as soon as I heard it
I knew its name
and eagerly shook its hand

out of the pan mind
into the fire brain

have to kick the old brain
from time to time

my father's cousin
kicked a football once
and did a very precise number
on his brain
became psychotic
till they gave him
a simple compound.

~~~~~

Put all the science  
end to end  
well within the possibility  
of means

then set out three dots  
go-dots

not big gravity killing time  
but breaking down the scar tissue  
the "capsules"

trying to take a step back  
into our own shoes.

~~~~~

Mack takes his naïf
in hand
makes a kindness cut
maybe a Dedekind cut
or what have you

Peirce on the verge
of special relativity
Einstein still just dumb
Flaubert seemingly not able

to speak
Glenn Gould cutting sound
with sound
via the maid
to order
some heady lemonade

the molar naïf
cuts into the quark

the disbelief
is solid
backed up
and non-sensational
to boot

yet derived sensational
when the news gets around
to the implication.

~~~~~

Crawford Brough Macpherson  
said when farmers in Alberta  
were plentiful as weeds  
and wage slaves much less so

that they saw themselves  
as free producers  
neither big time eastern capitalists  
nor wage slaves  
but as bucking against tariffs  
freight and interest rates

C. B. said their independence  
was delusional  
in light of the world market  
and the big grain buyers

Harper harpooning the wheat board  
bought into this delusion

I hauled loads of wheat  
winters and summers ago  
into the elevators now gone

the grated sink hole  
cum mill of magic  
spitting out widgets  
of no dimension

'cept for the sceptres of spec  
the spectres of what Doug Henwood calls  
parasites haunting the globe

Larry the knife  
buys a truck  
makes a buck

some people are eating  
arisen bread  
from poly-seamy dough

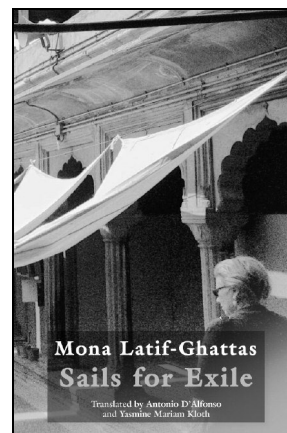
some people are  
starving

# from Sails for Exile

Mona Latif-Ghattas

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso  
and Yasmine Mariam Kloth

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-133-3  
Poetry  
88 pages  
5.5 x 8.5  
\$23.95



## nuij night

I will disguise neither word nor silence  
without lipstick I will speak  
hoping the kohl of my eyes will not betray me  
as it runs awkwardly down my cheek

## forgotten statue

Merciful people I beg you  
Place your hands on my face  
Caress it gently you will find me again  
I have black eyes  
a pharaonic nose  
and a ceramic mouth that the potter left unfinished  
It is me I swear  
Rub rub

Yesterday I fell in a gutter

*Nuij in the cave of night.*

where a goddess rests  
listening throughout the day to figs weeping.

May the Edfou sky one day rain  
On the drying pulp  
On the exploding bark  
On the debris withered by pain  
Nuij on the doorstep of night.

## gray stars

The star and the crescent collide in the sky  
A malignant powder trickles on the desert.

Do not walk bare foot in this infected space.

I stepped into the arena of the desert with my open soul  
I have blisters on my heart  
and if I sleep I dream  
that I no longer dream

*Nuij in the desert of the night.*

## the day after the massacre

This morning, sad friend, I have whitened ears  
And my legs are still black with tar  
I floundered in the burning asphalt  
Attracted by the reflection of a peculiar glimmer on the  
blackness of the path.  
The path has melted  
And sticks to my calves  
The world around me is vociferous and noisy  
But it is the sand swelling that pushes me out of hell.  
And this morning find me again near the wall of your house.  
So by the window in the name of your goodness hand me  
a humid cloth.  
It is to dry the thread of blood pouring from my ankle.

*Nuij at night.*

## requiem for an ibis

Chased by the flowing waters  
the featherless bird slept on the summit of a palm tree  
The gust of wind passes and returns  
he sleeps  
the wind tickles the green palm tree  
he sleeps  
the wind caresses its brown branch  
he sleeps  
the wind shakes its trunk at its anchor  
the wind whips the palm grove  
he sleeps  
he sleeps  
the ibis is dead.

*During the dark night of Nuij.*

## last night

And I raised my eyes.  
Far beyond the Nile the lake is purple and the clouds are  
like boulders.  
Who has tacked the moon there?

Poet, novelist, translator, and stage director, **Mona Latif-Ghattas** has published more than twenty-five books, most of them in Quebec. Born in Egypt, she has lived in Montreal since 1966. Her work, written in French, mixes the cultures of the East and the West. Her work has been translated in Arabic, and has been the subject of numerous theses. Her latest poems, written during the Egyptian revolution, were published by L'Harmattan in Paris, in 2013.



Tonight the full moon  
lights the rocky shores of absence.

He who does not risk his abuse of remembrance

Will not have lived.

There are nights when I wish I had not lived.

*Nuij, night of insomnia.*

## fluid journal

This coming spring forget me at the doors of childhood.

it rained in April when they loved each other  
it rained in April when they left one another.

Substantial journal.

It is summer again  
the girl will no longer return  
and the boy is alone  
lost in his music

*Nuij, the night of lovesickness.*

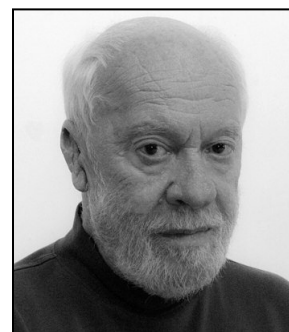
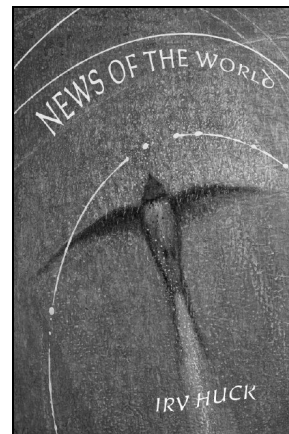
## the mawal of fig trees

The sun has boiled the black girl's brain  
with the lotus  
up the hill  
toward the white altar  
in the shade of fig trees

# from News of the World

## Irv Huck

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-172-2  
Poetry  
84 pages  
5.5 x 8.5  
\$23.95



**Irv Huck** was born in Chicago. He received his BA in English from the University of Illinois and studied under Theodore Roethke at the University of Washington. After receiving an MA in English literature Irv taught in the English faculty at Bellevue Community College in Bellevue, Washington. and has spent many years as the class accompanist at Pacific Northwest Ballet School in Seattle.

### To an Editor Who Suggested a Revision

Say it: I missed the particular cadence  
of the wind streaming through the birch  
when I jumped derisively to a human cry of loss,  
"the anguish of the mind's forgetfulness."  
Yes, and I posed at windows, staring bereft,  
beside myself to dredge up Edward's face...  
here in the hour of heaviest thoughts between  
the falling light of the moon and the rising sun  
"when shadows want to walk, to turn to  
memories."

I'll confess, as well, to be at my mind again,  
to advance, however I can, to the heart of it,  
some strand of fury. My back's to the fire  
washing up the room's pale walls  
and seemingly stirring regret in this well of night,  
the flickers like echoes of the Elegy  
with which I'd intended to invoke him...

Was I five when Edward,  
my oldest brother, died?  
He was also my father.  
I remember his head in the casket...

as I turn to the birch looming over the wild rose,  
draped, weaving in November's morning mist,  
the ivory bark in silvered limbs...

(Sweet Song, descend  
and let me sing  
when shades are sharp  
and memory's distinct, to call him back,  
the only man...)

as I study the late November's leaves  
strung from tips of the sapless stems  
in the plodding wind, haunting, out there...

Was I three when Edward  
lay asleep in the sunroom?  
His face was enhanced  
by the shadows of leaves  
from the front-yard elm.  
I studied the lines  
at the corners of his mouth.  
I saw it once in a photograph,  
myself in his arms...

in the wake of the rising day,  
the light fanning up the sky; the gaudy light

when the dark of night's been as comforting  
as the mind's own sweet confusion...

Edward's face in the casket  
without the child in his embrace?  
Was there envy, then, in the child's stare?...

how? how did I lose touch with that question?  
As if fatally ailing, my narrator rasped  
at the lightening day...

*Close the window.  
It's too beautiful.*

I must have smothered, there, my only  
inspiration,  
left hovering on a slender point of wit,  
both Love and Loss reflected in one near-  
forgotten glance

at Edward's powdered face: gone.

I submit, then, in all deference to your taste,  
this token for your pains...

*Edward's Poem*

*In the whitening dawn  
I envy the moaning  
winter trees.*

### Encounter, With Birds at His Window

He can still see the ship to the mainland  
chug numbly, glide cloudlessly out of the port,  
the green wakes churning up from the prow of  
the ferry

describing, etching in water the long corridor  
growing wider, broader and swept at the edges  
like wings of the birds sweeping up from far  
trees.

Transversing the pyramid, quavers wash slowly,  
drift endlessly back to the pier, cutting through  
the expanding perimeters drawn from the stones  
he kicked over the side. Not for him this time.  
Going nowhere, at last going nowhere. He stays,

bearing in mind he knew none of the passengers  
well,  
holding that fact for a while, as if a slight flower,  
white flower which, cupped in his palm for a  
moment,

darkens before his own eyes, doesn't rot, quite,  
but fades from the heat of his hand, and he sees it  
and drops it, watches it blend into dust.

They were with him each day at the beach, would  
swim

off the jetty where he tried to read. Only faintly.  
No notion they might have been sailing that day,  
nothing urged him to stroll to the port, see them  
off,

faces loading the ferry, and calling goodbyes to  
faces.

Recalling his own crossing, braced at the railing  
late into the night at the prow of the freighter,  
the dark, the black waters with only the stars  
arching over, the Milky Way streaming, dust,

off to the Southern Cross marking the edge  
of the sea at the tip of a serpentine, dragon-  
like stellar arrangement which traced nearly  
half of the sweep of the sky. Watching the  
phosphorous, all the night pitching, the dipping,  
the roaring of foam spraying biting full  
in the face, such abyss, such a lost empty  
knowledge,

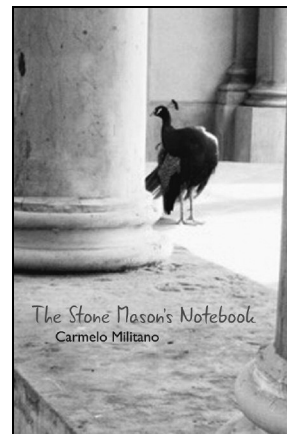
or walking the lane to his cottage, transecting  
the deep, pungent shadows cut over the asphalt,  
the thorns and the spear-palms flat bulwarks  
against  
the soft fields swept with light from the quarter-  
moon, streetlamps spaced block upon block  
shining  
brightly with emanant lines iridescently glowing,  
to hear from a hill some tin music, and deep  
down the pasture faint squeals of some lovers.  
Eyes on the sea or his ears upon land, at his back  
or malingering slightly, peripheral, circular;  
best feeling drawn to his heart's content. Best  
there.

*-Corfu-Seattle: October, 1969 to October, 1970*

# from The Stone Mason's Notebook

## Carmelo Militano

Ekstasis Editions  
ISBN 978-1-77171-160-9  
Poetry  
66 pages  
6 x 9  
\$23.95



**Carmelo Militano** is a Winnipeg poet and novelist. He was born in the village of Cosoleto, Province Reggio di Calabria and immigrated to Canada with his parents at an early age. He is the winner of the 2004 F.G. Bressani award for poetry for *Ariadne's Thread*. His novel *Sebastiano's Vine* was short-listed for the Margaret Laurence fiction prize, 2014. Militano hosts a weekly poetry show – The P.I. New Poetry Show – where he interviews poets from across Canada.

### March, after Boucher

Old snow on the front lawn bleached white linen  
hung from a clothesline on the island of Hydra  
where a grey mist below drifts floats like a lazy  
spirit  
between shadows, purple figs and olive green  
trees  
Morning sun writes with March holy light  
between the sky's blue lines and the mountains  
Distant sea below rolls a sigh  
Magical spell of pebble, sand, and water over and  
over.

In the old cafe in front of the harbor  
old men sit alone in grey suit jacket and white  
shirt  
Smoke cheroots wait for the arrival of a friend  
after the burial of the dead  
Waiter to serve mid-morning coffee  
or so I imagine and then remember a Greek  
spring morning.

Everyone here walks to the supermarket  
head tilted away from the North-west wind  
Car wipers scrape against frost on windshields  
their movement recall Leda  
and the swan's quick urgent wings  
If only we could find a way to rewrite the old  
erotic myths  
is the universal dream of bundled up prairie poets  
Spring arrives regardless every year  
with her smooth round ass up  
under her belly some small pillows of snow  
crumpled like Boucher's blanket.

### Caught

I had forgotten about the old war between Apollo  
and  
Dionysus when I walked over the the bridge to  
the Pitti Palace  
where you waited alone by the hedges  
in the Boboli garden  
The sound of crushed gravel under your boots  
menacing it was January  
your Loden coat collar up against the wind  
You looked smiled cigarette poised  
like a foreign agent on the Moscow platform  
the mission dangerous, the outcome uncertain.  
Or maybe it was fashion that held you  
a Truffaut kind of day full of black and white stills  
except for the red tiles of Il Duomo against a  
gray doom  
We walked talked about what I don't remember  
it felt like another French film  
the camera now swept the rooftops

distant blue mountains, brief close-up of the  
Arno  
metallic and gray with a patch of sunlight  
the view from the garden so damn pretty.  
You loved being a stranger to yourself  
I was there for another cameo  
accompany the slip sound of you in the  
pensione's hallway  
in the middle of the night complaining I had not  
yet tried to kiss you, that you had to pee  
annoyed we were strangers  
and replied by holding the bathroom door  
open to make your point  
Letters eventually arrived  
a phone call from New York, a final one from  
Vienna  
slow tedious traffic of a Sunday morning in  
February  
the statues in the Piazza Della Signoria  
caught indifferent to weather and pigeons.

### October, Another Version

It is the middle of October  
Around six o'clock maybe seven  
And the sun pours gold on to grey  
Burns red, purple in the corner of the sky above  
petitioning bare trees on River Avenue  
their branches bent like old athletic fingers  
Empty supplicant dark pen and ink lines  
grey on grey air  
another version of evening light.

Street mourns itself  
silent and still as if in this light  
it could remember the past.

Apartment blocks on both sides of the street  
Face the empty sidewalks  
Some window blinds are half open like drowsy  
eyelids  
You imagine the smell of burnt steaks  
Boiled potatoes in the hallways.

This stillness and light the original reason for  
myths  
Later they built cathedrals wrote manifestos  
Before the lighting of the street lamps  
After the day sank into darkness.

### What you see

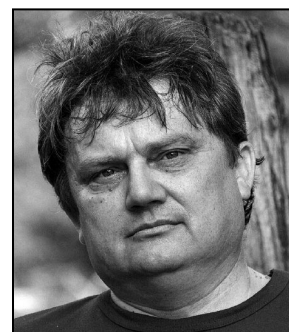
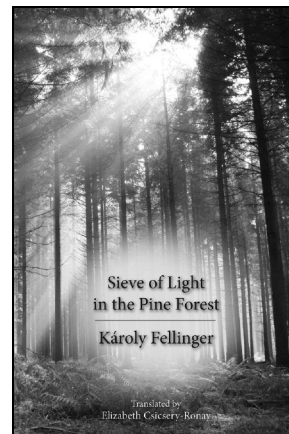
I can't make this poem dramatic  
It was simply the two of us wanting to believe  
Tried to read your mind when it was somewhere  
else  
School yard fence the one and true line  
At least you could see it  
You could see cigarette smoke pouring from our  
mouths  
What you could not see was unexplainable  
And it almost seems trite now to say  
Lovers and the unexplainable  
Reaching back to childhood  
At least that is what Freud would have us believe  
Reaching the way empty oak and elm trees do for  
sky  
The way Sappho's fragments reach ache for her  
lover  
At the edge of a cliff over-looking the sea  
There is the wind you cannot see  
Not even sure who she is reaching for and why  
But the sea breeze is there in her beautiful  
billowing hair  
Perhaps if we were lovers at Stalingrad it would  
all make sense  
There would be broken bricks at our feet  
Smell of sulfur and burnt flesh  
Shadowy shapeless figures emerging from the  
sewers  
On the counter-attack.

# from Sieve of Light in the Pine Forest

Károly Feller

translated by Elizabeth Csicsery-Ronay

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124 pages  
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## Gutter

### I.

Because Janos fell asleep at the exact time  
he's dreaming now of hungry dream-readers  
not in vain  
for only the child born blind  
can still be invisible

at such times, Janos can learn that  
by observing, he could discover  
that one could no longer defy hope

and that hope is always there  
and that even God messes  
things up for us.

### II.

Janos is waiting for Juli behind the mirror,  
so when she arrives in front of  
the mirror she can sit on the  
plastic chair that was put there  
as has been pre-arranged, he  
can paint her from memory  
not seeing whether she is naked or dressed  
though Janos paints Juli with his back to the mirror  
catching the dress spot on, as well as the colour  
of  
her hair.

### III.

When Janos leaves home  
he locks the door with a key  
in truth he locks himself out  
he's someone who finds a home  
among his wild dreams, among his ghosts.  
When he returns they quickly secure the dread-  
fully  
creaking iron door of the dog-house  
though the dog left a long time ago

## Tale

In the paradise of desires  
in the Wonder Palace of magic  
who else could the waitress be  
the skillful cook, than  
reality itself for whom  
Janos, the very last of the last  
candid poets, gave a good letter of  
recommendation

when he dreamt of  
perfection and commitment  
when the essential nature of things  
grew fatter and fatter, wise and undisturbed  
like the worm in the red apple

## If

Juli appears in the poem today, if  
Janos were serious about not taking the  
Lord's name in vain, crossing out Juli's  
name above God's, although Juli knows  
nothing about the whole thing, at such times  
she gives Janos a good dressing down  
demanding that he wash up after himself  
though Janos is curious whether his poem  
will change as a consequence  
although after he reads it several times  
he realises that actually nothing  
has changed  
although it seems that since then Juli  
has been attending on him like  
the almighty, and  
as if tormented by pangs of conscience  
he feels it is right to obey at times.

## Clumsily

Janos rebels clumsily: turns on  
the light, stares stiffly at the chandelier,  
the bulb is missing from one socket  
he finds it odd and he nods  
he has the feeling that more than half of  
last year's Christmas tree decorations  
are under the bed, he looks for the  
proper connector, but suddenly it  
crawls away, inching along,  
it multiplies on the ceiling,  
Janos goes nuts, he leaps up  
and full to the brim  
he turns on the bulb with his head.

## Spring

The trees flowered in the garden,  
Janos frisked about, heart beating,  
touching with his index finger  
—whether with the left or right, I don't know—  
the bare dessicated apricot tree  
thus, turning on God's photocopier.

Sieve of Light in the Pine Forest is Hungarian poet Károly Feller's second book of poetry in English. In language both sublime and earthy, there is a cosmological awareness that arises out of the mundane, an extraordinary moment expressed amidst the ordinary. In the lyric profusion of these newly translated poems can be heard the sharp blasts of a mordant intellect, but not without the human notes of an infinite melancholy playing in the background. Károly Feller's work reveals a layered imagination that apprehends and measures our tarnished world in demotic language restores simplicity and bewilderment to our existence.

## Wolf Den

Janos is sparking with rage as  
he rubs pebbles together by the lakeshore  
the pebbles endure the ordeal blindly, but he  
can't make fire for Juli, although it was  
cold enough to make the wolves howl  
Juli is nattering grumpily, she won't shut up,  
she curses her husband,  
while Janos wishes a wolf would turn up  
and devour his wife and on the spur of an  
idea, he wants to strike the wolf dead and tear  
out  
its incisors and use them as an amulet  
then hang it around Juli's neck, after he has  
rescued her from the wolf's maw  
let the lucky one have luck,  
and holding the abandoned snail shell  
to his ear he hears the humming of  
her washing machine and spin-dryer  
with complete satisfaction,  
though the silence shivered steadily,  
Juli has coiled herself around a question mark  
like a snake accustomed to paradise.



# THE ART OF BREATHING UNDERWATER

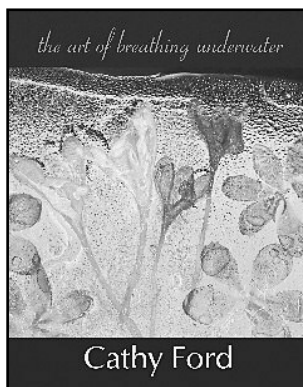
Ali Siemens

A veteran Canadian poet, Cathy Ford is the author of many works. Amazingly, *the art of breathing underwater* is her first full-length collection in twenty-one years, yet it's clear that she is still acutely aware of how to create poems that extract emotions which are often tucked away.

Ford's new poetry is powerful, yet delicate. Divided into three sections it begins with "women and children" and moves on to speak of women who have helped change the literary and cultural world for all women: Emily Brontë, Gertrude Stein, Georgia O'Keefe and Virginia Woolf. While these women often represent power and perseverance, Ford reminds the readers how delicate life is. In a piece entitled "wallpaper, or forced perspective, once altered: your name here," she reminds us how female literary figures throughout the ages have attempted to teach readers how to breathe. Ford's poetry outlines the graces of women and all that they bring to the world, celebrating their gender and the gifts they provide. In the same poem, she provides a disturbing image of two dead children, followed with, "it is astonishing what survives after what kills you."

While life presents its challenges on a regular basis, Ford asks the reader to pause, breathe, and then continue on while looking at life as more than an obstacle. She reminds her readers that although breathing is second nature, it is often beneficial to focus on the act of breathing itself.

In the second section, "Stillwater, Spillgate," Ford changes the style of her poems by melding the topics of women, nature, and men all together. Without titles, each poem brings the reader a quick breath of air before submersing again. "Stillwater, Spillgate," seems to have a body of water running through each of its pages, saturating all of the work. Ford's style



*The Art of Breathing Underwater*  
Cathy Ford  
Photos by Janet Dwyer  
Mother Tongue, 2010  
114 pp. \$19.95

allows for the poems to be read in a natural ebb and flow, but just as water moves gracefully, Ford technique reminds us that she is not only talking about the beauty of nature. Like the swift change in the movement of tides, Ford chooses specific words that keep the reader anxiously awaiting the upcoming chain of events. Whether Ford is writing in a romantic or serious voice, she carries her reader through her poetry with a steady rhythm. In her one poem in book two she writes, "if the birds die, the whales/ it's not safe for humans, the bees/ oh please do not obliterate my heart with the

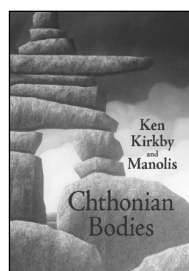
all-too obvious." Here, Ford uses natural imagery in talking about the extinction of three animals and pairs the topic with her heart. Instead of long lines of poetry, her simple and short lines carry a powerful rhythm.

Her third section, "lifelines, or the little black dress poems," unravels the different situations that woman reflect on. In "Passionfruit, or peregrinations" she says, "if you do anything to anything, it changes" (89). Whether she is talking about the power of women and feminism, nature's strength, or relationships, certain information is as essential as a little black dress. Like the little black dress all women should own, reading Ford's poetry makes its way into the same category. Ford doesn't sugar-coat her knowledge; rather, she eloquently displays truth on each page, engulfing heart and soul. You may take a big breath when you begin reading her poetry, but don't worry about suffocation; Ford makes the art of breathing easy.

Ali Siemens writes from B.C.'s Fraser Valley.



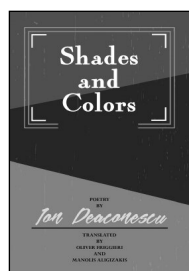
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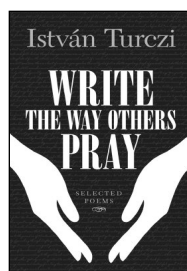
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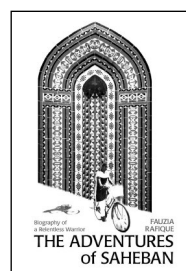
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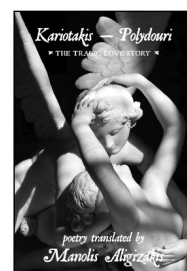
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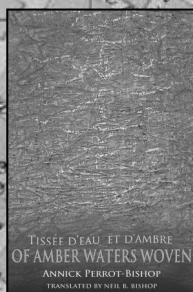
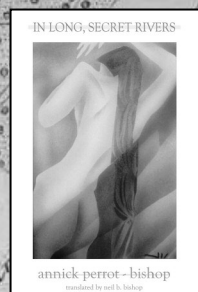
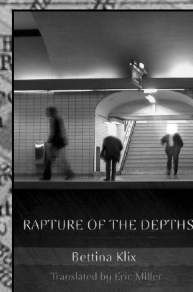
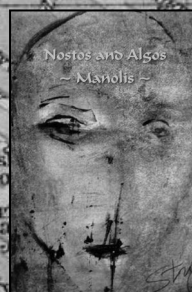
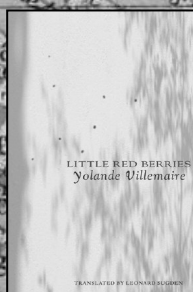
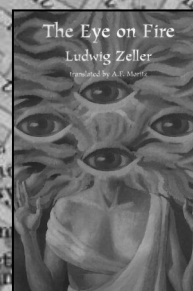
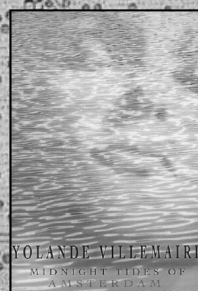
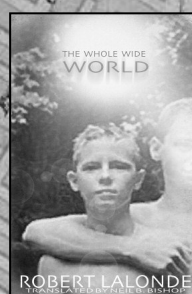
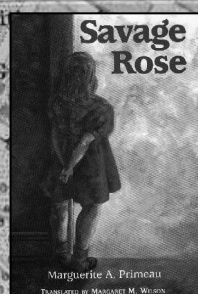
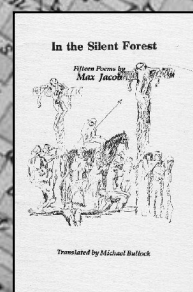
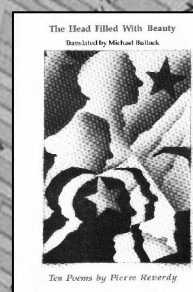
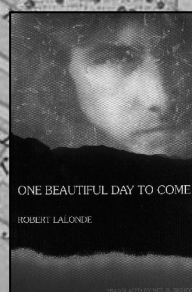
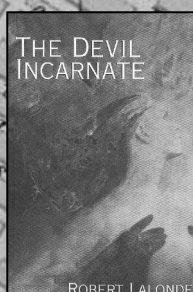
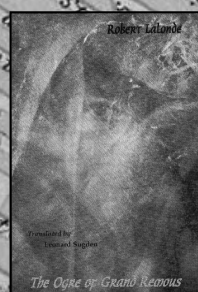




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