

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

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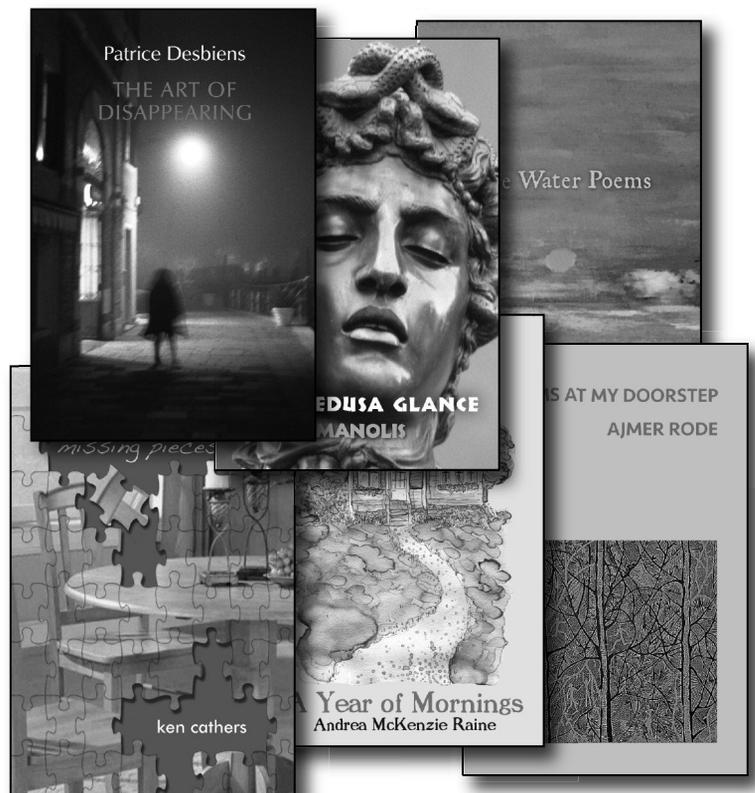
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photo: Frank Baliello



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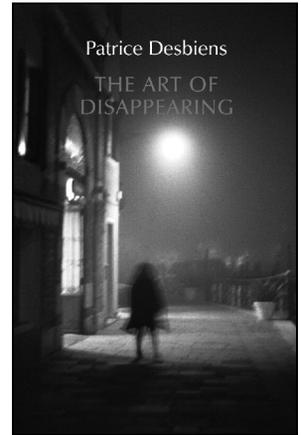
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from The Art of Disappearing

Patrice Desbiens

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-227-9
Poetry
102 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Patrice Desbiens is a Francophone Canadian poet. He was born in Timmins, Ontario and began his career as a journalist. Since making his literary debut in 1972, he has been regarded as one of Canada's most successful French-language poets. He has received many awards for his poetry, including the Prix Champlain in 1997 for Un pépin de pomme sur un poêle à bois and the Prix de poésie Terrasses Saint-Sulpice-Estuaire for La Fissure de la fiction in 1998. He was also a finalist for the Governor General's Prize in 1985, for his book Dans l'après-midi cardiaque.

The Age of Tender Love Songs

The age of tender love songs
is gone

A tear has coagulated under
the skin

Mirrors break
reflecting the
perfection of madness

I am a Stranger Superimposed

I am a stranger superimposed
on flowered curtains

This pen is noisy
scratching like an old
Ink Spots record

I am a dead baby under
hamburger skies

The smokers breathe
thru me

I forgot one of my legs
on the bus
oh

I came here
I am here now
and remain faithfully
but

the poem goes on

The Road to Panic

The road to panic
is so
well-oiled

The priest arrives
in a police car
to administer the
last sacraments

He speaks like
Elmer Fudd and
waves his crucifix around
like a .38

Honest
suntan faces
line the
crime scene

Electric Gazelle

Electric gazelle
sleeping
beside me

Astronauts
have travelled
the troubled space
of her body

Who is she
what does she
want
?

Ask her

disaster

Ottawa

At the bus station
I paid a quarter
for a shit
and

there was
no
toilet paper

Sad tourist in
my own
country

I wiped my ass
with my map
of Canada

Inflation

Diane says
the bread shrinks
as the days
go by

She steps back
a few paces &
disappears

Over the house
the clouds are fat &
hungry-looking &
cruise by at
ninety miles an hour

Emily

With light for legs
Emily waltzes in the night

The earth like a party dress
around her body
she knows everything
and everything
knows her

Each time
the party starts with
and ends
with a question

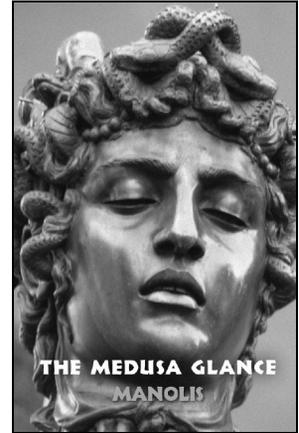
Like birth
like death

like love

from The Medusa Glance

Manolis

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-217-0
Poetry
184 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Manolis (Emmanuel Aligizakis) is a Cretan-Canadian poet and author. He's the most prolific writer-poet of the Greek diaspora. He was recently appointed an honorary instructor and fellow of the International Arts Academy, and awarded a Master's for the Arts in Literature. He now lives in White Rock, where he spends his time writing, gardening, traveling, and heading Libros Libertad, an unorthodox and independent publishing company which he founded in 2006 with the mission of publishing literary books.

COALITION

They assembled from north
and south, from eastern lands and
western territories they gathered

the coalition of the willing
and they reached a conclusion

neocons would attack the western flank
neo-liberals would bomb the eastern sand-dunes
the socialists would secure the north
free marketers would advance from the south

no inch of this country should
be left free to freedom

humanitarians would drop rations
of food in plastic containers
fried rice, mashed potatoes
preservatives and ambience

nations assembled and in unison
they reached an agreement
for the good of the inhabitants
they had to cleanse the land
of undesirable pollutants
and its disapproved freedom

PEACE OF A FULL STOMACH

Citizen watches tv ordinarily
beer belly exposed
tight tee-shirt
jogging pants
fluffy comfort
mind mutated by fat

extreme superiority
over masses of colorful citizens
faraway places where beasts live

mind mutated by notion of entitlement

revisionists accentuated
underscore the importance
of new smart bombs
that outsmart foreign defences

calculations, exact results

deleting hypothesis and estimates
the unprecedented precision
of missile controlled by computer
dark green glow of screen
fingers manipulate the enter button

boom

REGIME CHANGE

Target country needs
a new despot
failed regime needs
to be changed

bombs, missiles,
guided death
put to work

defense contractor
in overtime

one stands opposite
the deciding elit
with its rightful right
to punish, set straight
do justice

old despot needs
to be replaced

announced in the evening news

DIPTYCH

A clear cut case, the leader
of the free world said

either with us or against us *

underlining the war might
stored in dark warehouses housing
his selected war toys

on the far away land opponent blinked
his eyes before the economic
slavery of the multinationals
devastation of bombs falling
smartly to flatten his land

a clear cut case, the leader
of the free world said

either with us or against us

OPIUM OF THE MASSES

Media anchor smiled

blonde hair fell smoothly on her shoulders
she wore a trendy outfit
an Oscar de la Renta design

she talked of agents appointed
to maintain the peace
be ready for the unimaginable
populace revolt
blood in the streets
assassins lurking in every dark corner
in each closed factory

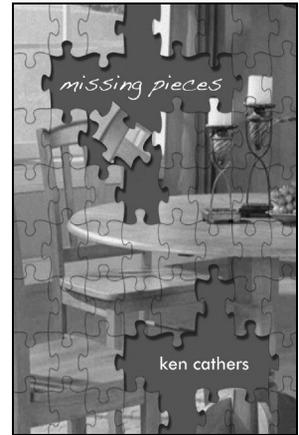
anchor was adamant
quite apologetically
she said big trouble headed their way
if the candidate of the opposition
won the elections

they better organize for soup lines
and rationed tv time

from Missing Pieces

Ken Cathers

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-221-7
Poetry
60 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Ken Cathers is married with two sons and lives with his family in the town where he was born, Ladysmith, B.C. He has worked at Harmac Pacific Pulp Mill in Nanaimo for thirty-two years. He has a B.A. from University of Victoria and a M.A. from York University in Toronto. His previous books include World of Strangers and Blues for the Grauballeman (Ekstasis Editions). This is his sixth published book of poetry.



just an outline
some flaw
 of light

where you were
a second ago

best to disbelieve
keep down the panic
that rises up

prepare for another
ninja ambush
sprung from shadow

the mad echolalia
of laughter as you
spaniel through endless games

turn pinwheel spirals
through vacant
playground rampage

become another line
in a poem
that doesn't end

words falling away
like empty clothes
in my arms

where you slipped
through
 ran to darkness

 grew invisible
 forever



you were missing
& there was
no benign prognosis
 in the works

was sure if I drove
home fast enough
I would find you

safe, before the
night highways
become dead roads
 leading nowhere.

you were missing
& all the torture
of those simple
 explanations

had been long ago
used up



I was on the wrong side
of the mirror

your reflection
could not see me

it floated on
the surface

a naked corpse
on a lake

deeper than
silence



desperate for something
to grab onto,
a story

good enough
to believe -
that time you were

drowning
& I thought
I wasn't strong enough
 to save you

afraid
my doubt
held you under

& I pulled you up
with such force
your face opened

in that unconcealed
gasp of wonder



so this is the narrative
as given

a line, a voice
to follow

a recorded message left
on a broken phone

directions to an empty
house where you were

held, questioned
left for that dead

part of me I could
not grow back

pieces of a life
scattered, glass

slowly broken
tin coins tossed

into a dark water
some dim hope

to pay your way
across. so little left

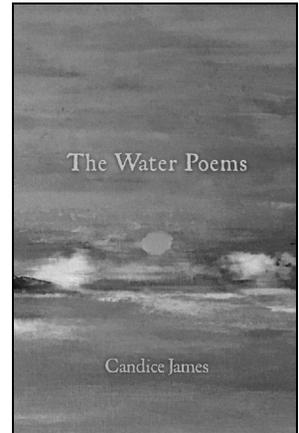
to hang onto.
let it mean

whatever you like
transcend nothing

from The Water Poems

Candice James

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-225-5
Poetry
105 pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Black Onyx Lake

Above the lip of a black onyx lake,
I walked as a ghost in a foreign land,
All around me in a state of flux:
Mountains dissolving;
Sand dunes shifting;
Sky cracking open;
Stars in free-fall
Above the lip of a black onyx lake.

I saw stars being born,
Burning out, disappearing;
Angels in flight touching down on the lake.
I saw high-wires, guidelines and cities
Constructed with neon and gauze;
Rainbows changing their colours at will.

In a moment of madness
The sun kissed the moon;
And imagination's children were born,
Raining down sweet inspiration
Spilling from a crack in the sky
Onto poets, musicians and artists
In reverent and sacred free-fall.

My eyes overflowing
With moon, stars, and sky
And wrapped in the breath of angels,
I stood as a ghost
Turned inside out
Bearing witness to
Both sides of the dark
Below a slow moving heaven
Beneath a surreal sky,
Above the lip of a black onyx lake.

The Drowning

It's raining all over the world tonight.
I hear voices, indistinct whispers
As I lay at the edge of slumber.
The wind gusts softly in musical timbres.
A pale ghost with fingers of glass
Defly strums a satin guitar with a tattered velvet pick.
An age old wisdom shines from the clouds in his eyes.
The night is aglow with timeless stars
Twinkling, sparkling, shimmering,
Oblivious to the approaching deluge.

The voices and indistinct whispers
Grow louder, become clearer
Emulating laughter and cries;
Echoing muted murmurs and moans
That ebb and flow through a hollowed out sky.

Angels, Saints and the Holy Ones
Weave their way through the flickering starlight
Ascending to a realm just beyond the drowning.
It's raining all over the world

After serving two
3 year terms as
Poet Laureate
(2010-2016)
Candice James
has been awarded
the title of Poet
Laureate Emerita
of New
Westminster, BC
Canada, by order
of City Council.
She is also a visual artist, musician, singer/song-
writer, book reviewer and workshop facilitator.
She is the author of eleven previous books of poetry.

And the clinging, egregious damp
Foretells of the drowning... edging ever closer.

The rain has become second nature to me now.

I hear voices and whispers
And watch faces that float in street puddle mirrors:
For a long time; for a short time;
For almost no time at all.

Soon the rain will sink them into the drowning.
It's raining all over the world
And I wonder....
Who'll stop the rain?

Waves Washing

Waves wash on the crux of human emotion

Waves rolling,
Waves ebbing,
Waves breaking.

The tides of human love
Are ever changing.

A raging sea can start love
And end it.

Waves wash some hearts

And drown others.

from A Year of Mornings

Andrea McKenzie Raine

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-184-5
Poetry
100 pages
6 x 9
\$26.95



Spring (excerpt)

A first bird sings to morning light, a tinkling of glasses;
the way we slowly rub one finger along the rim,
arouse our eardrums.

Calculating weeks, looking down the growing beanstalk.

We passed cloud nine many months ago.

The cats look out like coast guards on this soggy day;
watch the birds bathe and squirrels run out of trees.

Spring clean the litter away, sunlight picking up every speck of winter's gray evidence.

The rain has stopped, and I want him to photograph the cherry blossoms, in such a way.

This renovated space falls apart, old pipe and broken balcony; the impermanence of things.

Thoughts shared on an open site – an invitation to write,
more text to read; another angle of the word.

A red flare rockets, a piece of an old ship carries ghosts and artifacts, time and uncertainty.

Paint a picture of a past event; blend the colours. Something imagined, based on story.

Possibilities lift from our pillows, and manifest into real time, a real day – the future not so far.

A phone call can tell you who you are; where you're going next, the weight of those thin lines that connect.

The alarm clock fails to tell him it is morning; a sudden burst of shower and swearing, cats scatter.

A flurry to sign up before deadline; another toss into the hat for some slight recognition.

His ear punctured by morning purrs, head butts – extended claws; her oblivion in being.

On Monday, I have to get rid of the weekend; accept that I've done what is possible in two sun-filled days.

He traces a raised line of cat claws with kisses.
An ointment to draw out the sting, gone down by morning.

Everything I can't think of from yesterday;
what I can't say is caught and tangled in a dream catcher.

I mourn the death of pre-children, a sigh of not quite relief;
my boy cat lies outside the bathroom door, waits with me.

I don't believe this is spring, not yet; still a breeze,
as I walk to work under discarded petals and gray sky.

My cat attacks my toes under the covers,
an unidentified alien thing moving.

Boiled water in a mug means it is morning,
part of his ritual and mine – there is time for this.

I make wet eggs, old eggs. My earnest attempt at breakfast, he glues on a smile and reheats the pan.

We move like molasses – only noon and the day waits;
we emerge into spring, a slow trot down to the water.

Turn your back on the weather and it will shift,
light rain teases, on and off like a switch.

Patches of sunlight or is it false, a stage light or candle beam?
This bluff of rain and spring – the reason, April tip-toeing in.

The idea of work, going out of the house, clogs my arteries;
I fall ahead to thirty years, when I can finish my book.

The time it takes to write a letter and explain to someone
what you can't give them, unless they are dying for it.

Living inside an astronaut's helmet, or a deep sea diver
in this comforter – the juice near my bed, oxygen.

Andrea McKenzie Raine was born in Smithers, BC and grew up in Victoria, BC where she still resides. In 2005, she published her first book of poetry, titled *A Mother's String*, through Ekstasis Editions. Raine has also published two novels through Inkwater Press: *Turnstiles* is her debut novel and her second novel, *A Crowded Heart*, is a prequel to *Turnstiles*. She lives with her husband and two young sons.



He can't recall his broken sleep, early morning risings;
our Houdini cats wait to be found inside the bathroom.

My head is clear enough to process work; a red line across his head is evidence of a small animal's distress.

First barefoot day, gathering sand in toes,
rock heat on my soles; write green poems growing.

Wanting to send my stunt double out,
the minutes tick while I look for the right voice to broadcast.

He stumbles into his clothes, his head full of sleep,
toothpaste kisses – his contracted nose, trying to keep the sickness in.

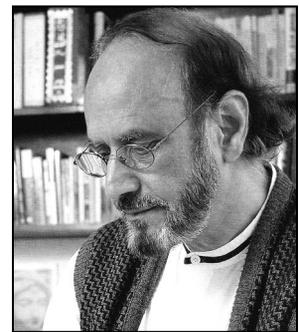
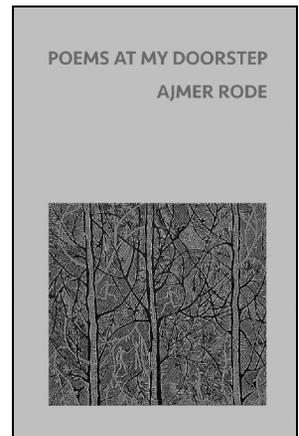
A dream of an old lover's car – the colour, style, speed;
the teenaged debt and driving without a licence.

The way the sun hit the campsite, small planes overhead;
only a few rabbits now – the buildings, smaller.

from Poems at My Doorstep

Ajmer Rode

Ekstasis Editions
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 Poetry
 76 pages
 6 x 9
 \$23.95



Once She Dreamed

Once she dreamed she was Mileva,
 the long haired Serbian girl
 who married Albert Einstein. She
 quietly watched when Einstein twisted
 the absolutely
 flat space with his hands.
 She watched
 when Einstein broke the absolute
 flow of time into pieces and
 spun them around at different
 speeds.

She was there when Einstein
 reconstructed the universe he had shattered.
 He grew greater and greater
 grew modest and tender.
 When finally the world came to
 touch his hands
 Mileva left.
 She said she still liked to live
 in her absolute space
 and move at her own pace.

Once she dreamed she was
 Francis Gilot
 the young woman who married
 Pablo Picasso.
 She saw
 the uneasy calm on the canvas.
 She saw faces turning into cubes
 and cones.

When finally Picasso was engulfed
 in cubes of fame
 Gilot left.
 She said she wouldn't become a cube.

Then she dreamed of Jeannie,
 who married Karl Marx.
 Jeannie read stories to her
 hungry children
 as Marx fed the hungry of the
 world in his imagination.
 His beard curled more and more
 and Jeannie saw Marx grow into a
 prophet trying to unseat the lords.
 When infuriated gods came
 upon him Jeannie stood at the door,
 wondering.

Last night she dreamt nothing
 but a vacuum that
 expanded and burst to wake her up
 The man lying beside her
 had quietly disappeared. She said he
 was confused saw things heard voices
 needed care.

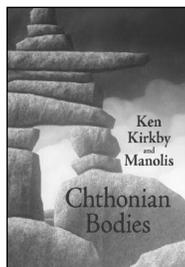
The Maharishi and the Baby

The maharishi whispers:
 the flesh is Maya, temporal,
 the soul is the truth, eternal

Ajmer Rode has published books of poetry, prose, drama and translation in English and Punjabi. His works are included in several English and Punjabi anthologies and prescribed in Punjab and Delhi universities.

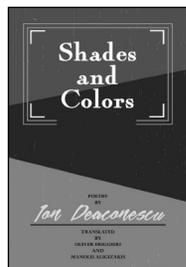
The baby
 inside the starved mother insists
 without flesh it can't come out
 the mother must eat

The maharishi
 and the baby in the womb
 stare across
 into each other's eyes.



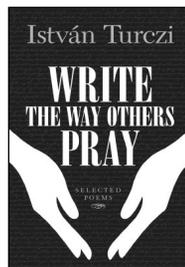
Chthonian Bodies
 art & poetry by
 Ken Kirkby
 & Manolis

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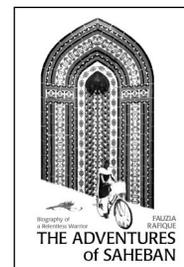
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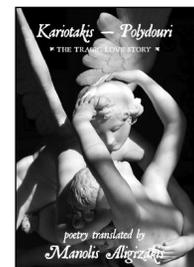
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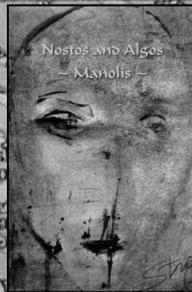
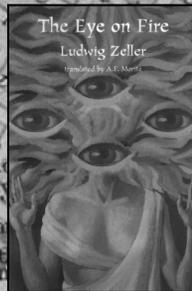
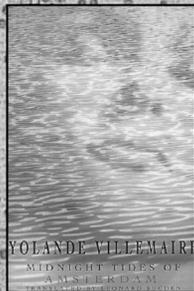
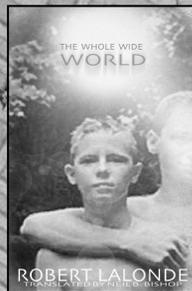
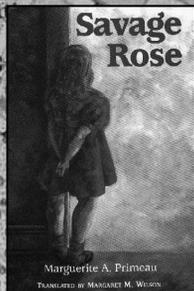
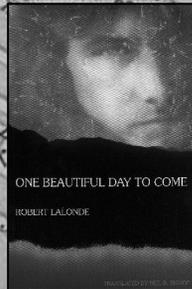
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