

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

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photo: Claire Turcotte



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from A Blooming

Jude Neale

A Blooming

I opened my eyes this morning
and saw you standing there

taking me in.

The soft beginnings of want
fell like snow over my shoulders
and down my empty arms.

Where have I been?
you ask with a grin.

I have been waiting for the heat
to flare just under my breasts.

A tinder of blue flame
stretches its length
and scorches the empty places
that are hidden within
the shy folds of my quiet joy.

Today I will spread my need
like a pool of cool water
over your surprised body.

I will marry you

again and again and again.

The Peonies

The fiery throat of summer peonies
steals colour from my cheeks.

The crystal vase holds a prism of red,
red as the cherries

I pitted, staining my fingers
a maroon glow.

This heat pulls at my skin
just behind my knees –

and I haven't kneeled in a long time.

Now I ask for the cool splash of rain
on the dusty path,

that crosses the bridge
over boulders
and old exposed cars.

The breeze off the long meadow grass
picks up the dust,

casts it haphazardly
onto the shiny leaves
clustered with blossoms.

Their faces exalt.

Ruddy
benevolent
majesty.

The Sound of Bells

Come to me in the silence of the night
"Echo" by Christine Rossetti

When I am folded in
and cannot hear

The bell

The silver sliver of the bell
That rings it course

between hard backed lakes
and the slash of distant valleys

I wait for your child's mouth
to graze my stifled hurt

and lift this mother's pain
from my bruised heart

The sound of your voice
echoes round my head

I lift my eyes to find you

Beside me still
in the framed picture

blue eyes dancing
towards mine

Perfect facsimiles caught

like the distant peal

of bells arcing across
the wind swept lake

I call home

Both of Us Must Cross

You belong to no one.

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-318-4
Poetry
90 Pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Jude Neale is a Canadian poet, classical vocalist, spoken word performer and mentor. She has been shortlisted, highly commended and finalist for many international and national competitions. Jude has written seven books, but enjoys giving readings most. Her book, *A Quiet Coming of Light, A Poetic Memoir* (leaf press) was a finalist for the 2015 Pat Lowther Memorial Award. In 2018, Jude and Bonnie Nish started an online collaboration which lead them to write *Cantata in Two Voices* (Ekstasis Editions) in fifty challenging days. Her forthcoming book *We Sing Ourselves Back* (leaf press) will appear in 2019.

You are on loan
to my grateful heart.

I reach across the void
stroke your back,

and remember
the way you once
moved in me –

glorious, unspoken
a moment forever
shrinking my distance.

Now I turn to face
your glad eyes.

I can't show you
my hollow
disappointment.

I hide what's really going on
and don't mention the time

you once scattered my letters,

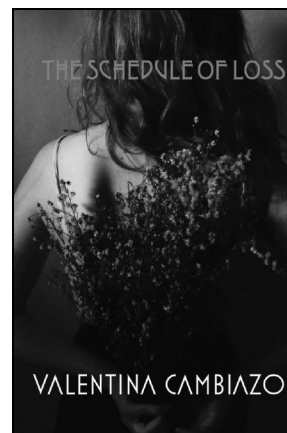
porcelain orchids,

onto the grey circle of stones.

from Schedule of Loss

Valentina Cambiazo

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-265-1
Poetry
94 Pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Valentina Cambiazo was born in Santiago, Chile and has lived in Canada since the age of twelve. She has also lived in Spain, France, and the US. Her travels have taken her to eastern Canada, Chile, Mexico, and Europe. She now lives and works in Victoria, BC. Her first novel, Dark Spirit, is set in 14th century France. She is currently working on a travel memoir entitled Into the Heart of Darkness: Six Harrowing Months in the South of France.

The Garden Next Door

Diggers burrow into the lawn,
and over broken ground
robins drift
and tumble past
each other
like red-bosomed leaves.

It's autumn.
I saw it one morning
from my
second-story window:
painted in chalk
on the long,
grassy lot next door—
the map for a new garden.

The old hedge comes down
scattering tiny sparrows;
tipped out of their homes
they chatter and flit,
nervous of their shadows.

A tree faller
dismembers a large oak.
He prods the last wedge
and stands back—
It falls hard.

A young pine
dressed in sage
takes its place,
and the stump
becomes a perch
for a hunched gargoye.

The garden grows tendrils—
how they all reach up
while the roots grapple the soil:
nurseries, vines, bulbs,
seeds as varied
as the stars—
how it reaches up,
how it strives,
how it soaks up the sun.

Rain in the Garden Next Door

The garden in the rain:
tall cannas rise,
like Martian suns,
by the pond
in the grey light
of a heavy morning.

An abandoned rake,
a hose spiralled on the ground,
pattering birdbaths,
and every shade of green
rises in a convocation
of waves, growing deeper and higher
spilling over the fence.

And now
our barren yard
is crowned with borrowed finery:
creamy peach trumpet flowers
drape themselves over the gate
like courtesans,
while honeysuckle vines,
and scented lilies
cling to them,
the offerings of a watchful suitor.

All the greens nature ever dreamt of
lie beneath my window,
drenched and swaying
in the downpour.

All of this, I could lose:
this eagle's nest,
this bird's eye view,
this universe,
in the garden next door.

The End of Time

I start the last day reading the pain-wracked
poetry
of two fire-churning gods
trying to live the lives of mortals
Is it safe for poet-martyrs to marry and love?

Having fed the soul,
I prepare fruit and fermented milk
to feed the body,
and go back to bed.

The dog needs bathing,
though he doesn't know it.
He curls contentedly in a nest of furry blanket
which he nosed, and pawed, and bit
in a primal daze of instinct last night,
circling round as if tamping down a bed of leaves
in a shallow cave long ago.

I too shall bathe, and wash the linens,
admire my newly-minted desk
by the sun-washed window
with a view of the stolen garden next door;
the garden I enjoy from my second-story
without the sweat of my brow,
or ache of my body—

a gift,
and sometime tormentor of summer nights
with its trickling pond.

And so, on a sunny winter's Sunday
I shall kiss my lover, Time, good-bye
the long languorous stretches of space
of lazy reckonings:
shall I sleep, or read, or write, or study?
To the dog, "Shall we go for a walk?"
The answer always a wagged, "Yes!"

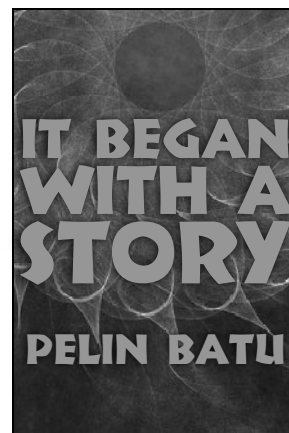
Time, released from its straitjacket,
stretches out in luxury
until it's done,
and is stuffed once again into the ticking box
with its alarms, and once again we take up
the swearing, and the tripping-over-shoes,
and the rushing-out-half-dressed.

The love affair was sweet,
and we shall meet again one day.

from It Began with a Story

Pelin Batu

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-352-8
Poetry
297 Pages
6 x 9
\$24.95



Pelin Batu is a Turkish author, actress, historian, and television personality. Due to her father İnal Batu's occupation as a diplomat, she spent her childhood in many foreign countries including Pakistan, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France and the USA. After starting literature and philosophy at New York University, she switched her subject to history and completed it at Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. Her first book of poetry "Glass" was published in 2003, followed by "The Book of Winds" in 2009.

Salome Whispers (To a Young Poet)

I

Your photograph won't do you justice
the savagery of quiet moments
the polite silvers of late afternoons
all this, and this Salome far far away in furs
in the arms of blood barons and philosophizing
gnomes
try to put aside despite what your lungs say.
Curling Russia into a few hurtful swans,
I swing, a last feather
that is a poem, a fast dream
in the thirst of resplendent stares
in grass and glass
that makes you want
a want with no bound.

II

Cold night gowns have always
in a manner of swans
lured you from the coolest reaches of yourself.
Your mother's face
fades cleanly
to a grander glory
to become yours.

While the preacher screams
on the dance of locusts
a song begins...
Some ship will crash every time.

III

Each word, you see, shines,
especially those unspoken
chiseled in the deep mures of mind,
its ghost mines.
Don't let them see your tears

Don't let them hear torn words.
One day, some day
you can speak and let them alight.
Today let time's coldness come.

IV

What it means to move
to a fast flay
feasting upon feasts
to the foams of yesterday?

Once if a crevice
cooled with the filigree touch of sea,
would forget that moment of
crisp breakage of the glass of yourself
into a new shard
each and every time
to thus be stunned again
each and every time.
This is what they must call a fresh start,
a new sea.

V

In adoration of the fallen,
we have inscribed peregrines
upon the oldest parks of the city.
We have put down our walls
to marvel at antediluvian masks
who will protect us if we believe them
or else they'll save walls from bareness.

VI

I wanted to know only one face,
only one face with its mask-like mouth
standing like a courtyard
a ship, an ore or heart

in the centre of the earth,
a mouth stained with tobacco
brown with life of unspoken words
saying to me
if for a moment
I have run
and in my running become
a god of the owl
elusive
quiet as night.

VII

Speaking from the crater
your song, dear bird, hurt.
It was when I was most alone
I was whole
knowing only myself
a goddess of small things.

Aurora's Aubade

only water
was breathing

no recollection
therefore
no grief
prickled
at this idle hour

white on white
rust to rust
slow like a tree
it rose

I fell
too fast
into love
fast as dawn broke night

I heard roots moving
bird calling to bird to bird
thorns catching the minutiae of day
a dew falling thick, unwrinkled
words being written everywhere

Lotus of Light

I had forgotten how it was to walk
without a thought
turning to White Street
then to Beach
following not a breeze
lured by no light,
and no longer impelled by a hurt
to move fast.

As comfortable as statues of comfortable lions
I stride
each fallen leaf is a red-gold gift. Thank you.
I am as free as you.

The city cracks
open
it's widest boulevards
flow
the pale yellow
of lotus
rested
in my mind
dripping with light.
I am your rhythm now
as you are mine.

James Deahl & Norma West Linder

Linda Rogers

James Deahl begins his book of winds with an astonishing letter to the poet Mark Strand. Grief: for evanescent life, for his wife Gilda Mekler, the invisible but always present Euridyce, and for the world he celebrates in poems that alternate between prayer and praise, is the matrix of this philosophical brief for commitment to the laws of the sea:

And it was from the water a cadence arose into the light as I leaned across the late afternoon strand to touch my companions one by one as they lingered on the edge of evening.

Loss made bearable by the presence of dear companions is the tone of poems offered to those who have walked into the tide and to the tide itself whose integrity is uncompromised by man's indifference. Deahl would fill the silence between waves with devotional language.

The word companion is key to the oeuvre of the poet who mates for life with his literary and intimate partners. The pairings – with Milton Acorn, with Gilda Meckler, with his literary heroes Strand and Levertov and with his later life muse, Norma West Linder – are an acknowledged symbiosis, life on life. For those of us who do not choose to go alone, the mutual nurturing is an essential component of survival. We live to love and converse, to feed one another. Many of Deahl's poems are footnotes to friends and mentors, letters of thanks to those who inspire:

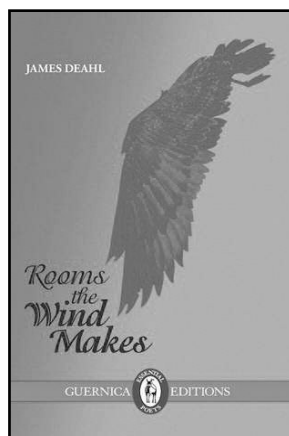
When autumn brushes the human heart
who will summon us? What voice
will coax us to join the dance,
and will we find the faith to follow.

The wind that does not break us, transforms us. Deahl has chosen transformation and these poems manifest the ways in which he bends and sometimes rides the breath of change as anthems of praise are offered in lyrics harmonised by tidal erosion.

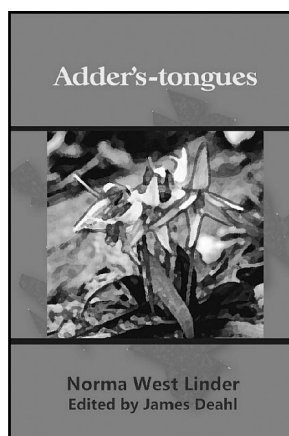
A foot stamps, a guitar plays
and the true night arrives
with its bowl and a new song.

Deahl is courageous, not only in turning personal challenges into the substance of homily, but also in his trust. In his poems for poetry impresario Valerie La Pointe, who died bravely, he reveals the shape-changing sufferer as nurse log to the future:

To life an ailing spirit,
made their most desperate burdens
joyful as the



Rooms the Wind Makes
James Deahl
Guernica Editions



Adder's-tongues
Norma West Linder
edited by James Deahl
Aeolus House, 2012

dawn that melts the cold winter's mist.

Life comes in antithetical movements, change and adaptation. Just as nature must persevere, so must the poet whose father's rest home was a former whore house, a juxtaposition as beautifully ironic as the brothel linked by underground tunnel to the library at Ephesus, where St. Paul lived and wrote his letters, just as Deahl does now. The engine for this dialectic is hope, the fuel is lust, what Deahl describes as "The ecstasy of creation. His gift to us: a prophecy of green come true."

It is all about breath and as man, the planet and the universe inhale and exhale, there are rooms that provide shelter. In these rooms, poems are framed.

The publisher of *Adder's-tongue*, poems by Norma West Linder, is Aeolus, in mythology "Ruler of the winds." This is the segue from poet to poet, the same *ache*, breath of the divine that moves us forward and sometimes endeavours to try us.

Linder's voice is more economical than that of the intensely lyrical Deahl. Her poems manifest an economy of storytelling as she witnesses small miracles nourished by the breath. For the poet, journalist and novelist, less is more: leaves unburdened, dancing in the wind.

give us this day
your silent message
of delicate courage

While her new life partner renders folk wisdom as opera, Linder focuses on the jazz rhythms that articulate her intellectual and emotional connections. There is a lot of space in sparsely furnished rooms that allow interpretation and dancing, since the carpet is rolled up, its patterns suggested, felt but not always revealed. As she says of Count Basie:

With perfect timing, up shot your left hand
to stop each number just where it should end.

Jazz is best appreciated in the dark, where we are ultimately left alone until morning comes with its new convergences. In "River of Lethe," she describes the painful loneliness of life with a partner lost in the darkness of dementia:

How to go on
when all my troubles now
begin with you?

Adder's tongue with its linguistic connection to babble and death by snake carries religious connotations. A common word for Erythronium, the tripartite lily that blooms in temperate meadows at the time of Christian renewal, it is an edible plant, one that fed our First Nations, bulb and leaf, and is only one degree of separation from the death camas. Death and

(continued on page 7)



Norma West Linder

Cantata in Two Voices by Jude Neale and Bonnie Nish Review by Stephen Karr

Two experienced poets, brilliant on their own, have collaborated to create a remarkable book of poetry. I have known Bonnie Nish for over a decade and have always enjoyed her poetry. I've met Jude Neale within the last year and have become a huge fan of hers as well. The poems in *Cantata in Two Voices* powerful speak of love, loss, and longing. They each used epigrams as inspiration for their poems, and cited them at the top of each poem. "A Falling Apart," is the powerful remembrance of a death, a loss, in years past, with the riveting stanza "but what drops from the heavens pushes us further to the edge." Rebirth is a poem that speaks to me as someone who has had his own rebirth. It is about returning to a place and being made whole. It movingly captures the ability to "open and bloom and spread out into the dusk." The title poem is a masterpiece combining both voices, which can be read backward and forward. These are just a handful of the absolutely brilliant, masterful works we can find in this collection. The wordcraft of these two masters is absolutely brilliant. The merging of these poetic voices into one collection is not to be missed.

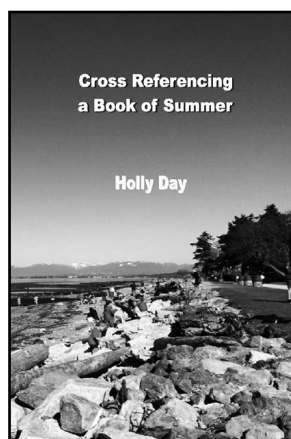


Cantata in Two Voices
Jude Neale &
Bonnie Nish
Ekstasis Editions
75 pages
\$23.95

Cross Referencing: a Book of Summer by Holly Day Review by Stephen Karr

I enjoyed reading Holly Day's new book of poetry *Cross Referencing: a Book of Summer*. It is a starkly honest book of poetry filled with black humour and black reality. It's a powerful read where the mundane meets the extraordinary and the ethereal meets the abrasive. Two poems really stand out to me. "In Flight" achingly recalls the sorrow of a mother missing her son who has gone away to school. "Legacy II" documents her father's peculiar way of handling her misbehavior, and ends with wry humour suggesting the same approach when her children need discipline. I recommend this work for fans of dark, real, honest, and powerfully written poetry.

Stephen Karr is a library technician and poet who writes about social and environmental issues, nature, and personal observations on his life and locating himself in the world. He is a member of The Federation of British Columbia Writers and Royal City Literary Arts Society.



Cross Referencing
Holly Day
Silver Bow Publishing
69 pages
\$21.95

***Critical Mass* by Roy J. Adams** Review by Jeff Mahoney

Critical Mass is a book that fixes you with the sure (but not-too-sure) sound of what I would call a fully formed voice, or almost fully formed; I mean, it's only six years old, right? But it's not. You can feel Roy's whole

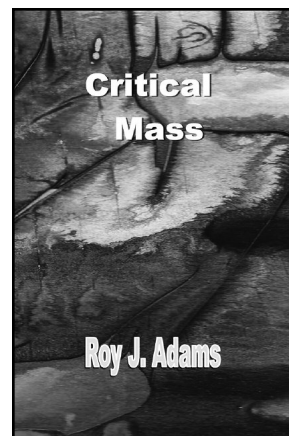
life in it, and if the voice is as old as he is — 78 — it seems younger for it's being put on the page only now, as though being heard for the first time.

The volume is autobiographical but in the only way poetry should be, as an arrow pointing to the universal. Indeed, there's almost a myth cycle quality to his recurring references to visiting his father (divorced from his mother) in California and being rejected by his father's new wife; Roy, in his teens, became for her a symbol and scapegoat for his father's refusal to have children with her, as he thought he'd already "failed" once as a father.

The strong meat of such themes is set against the book's presiding tone, which is one of excitement, and often comic energy, including much wit. The style is varied but generally leaves you with a jumpy bebop beating infectious in your ears, mind and feelings, not just from the play of language, but the organization of the narrative. It's a terrific effort.

(The full text of the article from which this review is extracted can be viewed on *The Hamilton Spectator* website.)

Jeff Mahoney has been a columnist/reporter with *The Hamilton Spectator* for 30 years, writing culture and lifestyle stories, commentary and humour. Now his column focuses on human interest. His passion is to capture the city's flavour through its people and places.



Critical Mass
Roy J. Adams
Silver Bow Publishing
64 pages
\$20.00

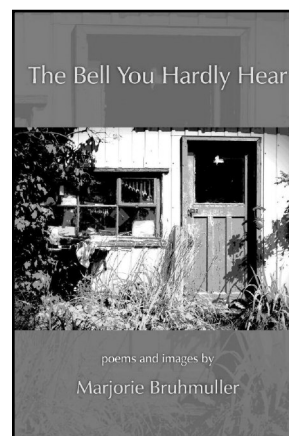
The Bell You Hardly Hear by Marjorie Bruhmuller Review by Bill Arnott

I was tracking Vikings — research for my travel literature — hot on the trail of Canute, King of Anglo Scandinavia, the guy who, along with Alfred the Great, established standardized European currency. Yes, the British-centric EU that worked just fine for a thousand years until a few Keystone Coppers broke up the party. I was in Bosham, where Canute commanded the tides (unsuccessfully). Offshore, a tenor bell stolen from the church slid from the deck of the thieves' getaway ship and sunk. Now, centuries later, when church bells chorus, you still hear the faint call of a watery tenor, ringing from the depths of the bay.

That's what came to mind when I picked up Marjorie Bruhmuller's *The Bell You Hardly Hear*. The notion of echoes, musicality, and memory. From the get-go we're right alongside Bruhmuller, joining her in a wish-you-were-here excursion, "I might have been only a postcard — / if my parents hadn't met, living / an ocean apart, and yet, fallen in love." Together we flip through an album of recollection, and speculation — a selective blur of space, time and sensory experience. "Catalysts for the curious; the buzz and croak / of frogs in the marsh, an eagle's whoosh, whoosh, whoosh / overhead, that steals away my breath —"

Pages, poems become a flight through an Audubon guide: Crows,

(continued on page 7)



The Bell You Hardly Hear
Marjorie Bruhmuller
Ekstasis Editions
76 pages
\$25.95

Words for the Traveler by Hugues Corriveau

Review by Bill Arnott

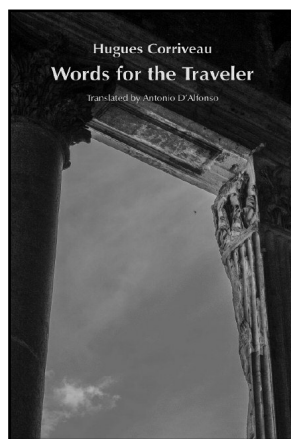
I travel. I've written about it. People have read it. Some even enjoyed it. Like music, travel's one of those remarkable things where individuals in the same place at the same time can have wildly differing experiences. Individual tastes? Different perception? It doesn't really matter. Fact is, that's the way it is.

And that's the way it is with Hugues Corriveau's *Words for the Traveler*. I read the Antonio D'Alfonso translation. Think armchair travel, but a journey in which our guide's thrown a select handful of darts at a map – personal, regionalized experiences – communicated through two distinct poetry styles. The book's in fact bookended within itself – two chunks of time in Rome with a salad-like peppering of Europe, Asia, and a dollop of North America to fill the hoagie.

I like when an author's unafraid to share opinion. A longtime journalist and literary critic, Corriveau does just that. But does so through tidy visual structure. Part I: Rome (the top of our bread roll) lays out vignettes in compact prose. Poetic, yes. Visceral, yes. But not what you may expect from a book of poems. It could be the most tightly edited Lonely Planet ever. But one in which the writer actually travelled to those places. "I'm sitting there while the traffic desperately tries to break the hours into fragments of loud noise. // Then, there, right at the end of Isola Tiberina, the island of the sickly, sitting at the foot of the Ospedale Fatebenefratelli, a couple kiss."

In Part II: Elsewhere, Hugues spreads carefully crafted verse in recurring structure. And through our geographically diverse sandwich filling, a dart strikes Afghanistan. "Mother and child in Kabul are eating / by themselves near the arbor of flowers, / still alive despite the debacle, / resisting to the movement of clocks." While across an ocean – Atlantic, Pacific, you decide – we hit the Big Apple. "Mother and child in New York protect themselves / from the glass thrust like cold knives, / tears quench dry throats, / blood clouds the world's gaze."

Part III: Back in Rome (the base of our handheld meal) blends both prose and verse, neatly served sustenance with a palette-pleasing finish. "There are times when he feels calm. In the cloister of the Chiesa Santa Maria della Pace, perhaps. In the noisy jumble of breaking waves, in between sleep and sleep, fragility of being."



Words for the Traveler

Hugues Corriveau
Ekstasis Editions
90 pages
\$21.95

Crisp-Maned Bay by Nancy Mackenzie

Review by Bill Arnott

I like mythology as much as the next guy, assuming that guy does in fact enjoy mythology. Next to the Norse, the Greeks did a fine job of it, leaving it to those self-important Romans to change every character name in history's most flagrant example of plagiarism. You could read all about it but I've yet to find a publisher for my manuscript Why Romans Lie, Cheat and Steal. Truly sagacious stuff, if I say so myself.

Nancy Mackenzie takes us there – a place and a time – deliciously blurred into the present. And does so with originality in *Crisp-Maned Bay*. Buckle up, or chain yourself to an Argo oar, and let's embark on our odyssey. "Unto the sea. Where the red to purple light / sinks and glows and rises like campfire flames / or an angel performing rights and guarding me, / my heart a luminous stone in the deep sea."

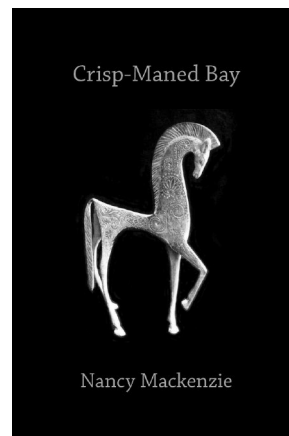
Set into three sections – Marble Island, The Mermaid's Tale, and What We Are Formed By Nature to Bear – Mackenzie's work forms a poetic trip-

tych, finding uniformity in a blend of dreamy introspection, observation, and personal experience. With a toe in the water we peer through a glassless window, a portal to seemingly everyday seaside scenes. "The way a woman folds cloth / patterned with nautical blue // The way a woman rows a dinghy, / her nine-year-old catching serpent fish on the shoreline."

Mackenzie manages a musical playfulness akin to fauns dancing through a glade, or in this instance, Greek hills finding their way into town, as we join the author for Greek Coffee (Metrio) and a Slice of Karidopita. "Clouds gather amid the mountains, / doves coo and a goat bleats. The surf / attending to its needs, erases as it sings its songs. // Mermaids rise / in wrought iron, a recent date – 1998 – / in mosaic at the apartment's lip / and the Mycenae acropolis-symbols / and imagination, temples for ordinary citizens / no matter, no matter, the time of day."

And with pleasing circularity we're brought home by way of water, across time to Alberta, New Year's Day, to a lake just west of Edmonton. "We went inside and shared our stories, / and the grey ghost left me alone / for a little while. Its tattered raiment / fluttering around in Mink Lake air on Renata's deck. / Across the way, cross-country skiers schussing and clipping by, / the sun low on the horizon, / a memory of childhood surfacing."

Vancouver author, poet, songwriter Bill Arnott is the bestselling author of *Dromomania* and *Gone Viking*. His poetry, articles and reviews are published in Canada, the US, UK, Europe and Asia.



Crisp-Maned Bay

Nancy Mackenzie
Ekstasis Editions
97 pages
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DEAHL & LINDER (continued from page 5)

resurrection, salvation are the oxymoronic context of these beautiful lilies.

Consider the lilies of the field. That is the gentle tone of Linder's poems.

Together these companion books of poetry are yin and yang, male and female, wind and breath. Linder rides a different, parallel storm, and her zen stories end with laughter, the ironies gently blown in our direction:

All in all
life is just a bowl
of farkleberries

...and there is no full stop at the end of her book because she knows, as Deahl also articulates in his poetry, life does not and should not end with punctuation, but with possibility.

Linda Rogers revels in the freshness and diversity of Canadian weather and Canadian poetry.

BRUHMULLER (continued from page 6)

Peregrine, Horned Owl, Blue Heron, even Tracking Bees. "Deliberate as a quest, / he hangs in the clear blue sky / perfumed by phlox / wild roses, lilacs. / And finally, / as in the open petals / of the hollyhock, / you find his wings / beating / in your heart."

More imagined postcards and photos are shared as Marjorie brings us aboard for a dreamy, drifting sail, our voyage kinship with everything. "[Y]ou feel a whole galaxy is yours, a family – / that long-lost relatives are still waving / across the channel, the strait, / the ocean, the sky."

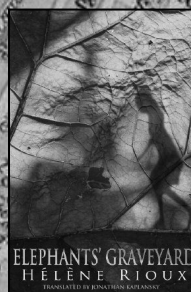
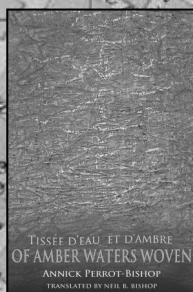
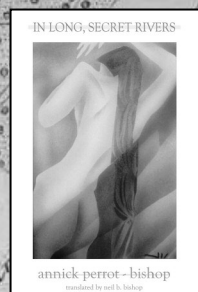
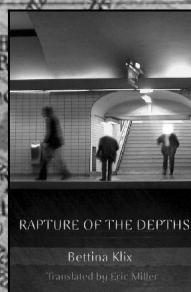
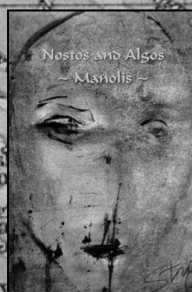
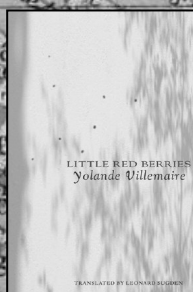
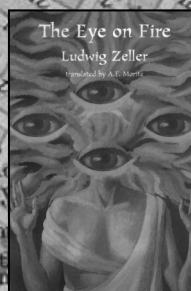
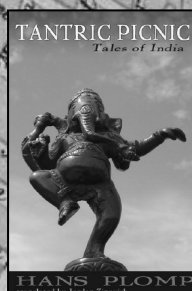
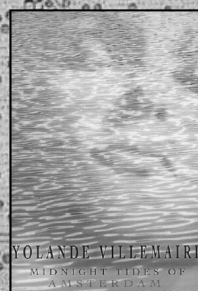
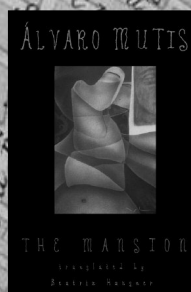
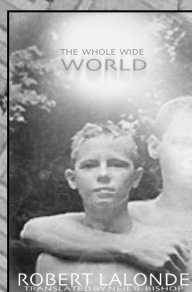
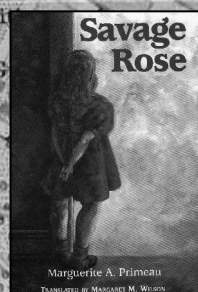
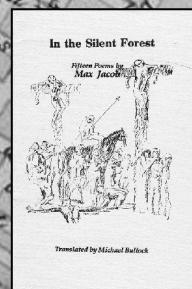
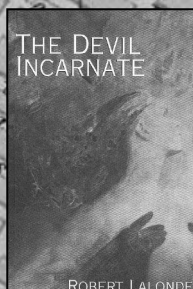
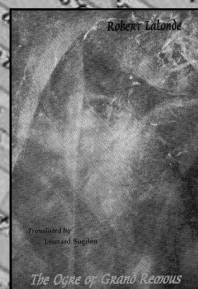
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