



CANADIAN POETRY REVIEW

ISSN 1923-3019

SEPT 2018

VOL 8 155VE 5

\$3.95

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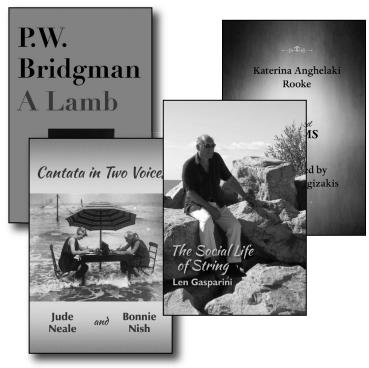
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Published by CPR: The Canadian Poetry Review Ltd.

Publisher/Editor: Richard Olafson Editors: Candice James & Stephen Bett Circulation manager: Bernard Gastel

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The CPR is published six times a year. Back issues are available at \$4.00. A one-year subscription is \$20.00. Please send a cheque payable to the PRRB.

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

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Glosa Stephen Bett

Ken Cathers: the sum (for Ken)

are we no more than skin sewn over desire

unremembered flesh

the serial husband — Ken Cathers (with the slightest nod to WCW)

are we no more than the sum of the heart's frailest missing pieces

than skin
if it comes to that
stretched cruel
& unusually thin

sewn over desire which cuts a thousand ways like lingchi's slow dice dance across flesh

unremembered flesh awake now to a descent that lashes endless & at odds with desire

Robert Creeley: Company of Others

why not, buy a goddam big car,

drive, he sd, for christ's sake, look out where yr going.

I Know a Man — Robert Creeley (with lil' nods to Dylan & the Creel himself)

why not, buy a goddam big car, question for the dummies & generic Johns: was that a real poem or did you just make it up yourself?

drive, he sd, for yr own caution: hair-trigger turns, small fist of words, elliptically, on impact ... see the light come shining ...

christ's sake, look apropos that circumstance, that possibility, momently, like they say any day now, a·n·y day now ... out where yr going. surrender, its own unfolding drive, he said, we know this blessèd company of others

Patrick Friesen: Dear Harmon

miles davis cupping his trumpet with a mute, a slippery sound, almost an escape, a caesura, hold, hold what? my breath, yes, but the watery applause in some club as well, bill evans having

mri — Patrick Friesen (with nods to a better bet)

miles davis cupping his trumpet with a mute, dear harmon: that full round tone / & sound bites /... can break / the heart in / every / single / groove (doo bop bop

a slippery sound, almost an escape, a caesura, a pause mid-zone or modal, like so what in the gut

nothing left ... that / freakish, frenetic / cartoonish / bop (we stack & cheat the poem

hold, *hold what? my breath, yes, but the watery* choked 'n dented mute, hold yr breath in the mri, mr. b

yes, release molly b, & hold again for a count of

exquisite interjections / into blank space (spunk tube

applause in some club as well, bill evans having flown the dupe, beel i'vaanz (en paree) weird & wired...

we had, by then / like totally / fused (post-bop & cool blue u

bpNichol: these are my words

look at you this way noun then verb these are my words I sing to you

song for saint ein—bpNichol (with nods to Stein, of course, & to Zukofsky; with back nods to Davey & Scobie; & an enterprising nod to Nota Bene: A Journey 1)

Stephen Bett has had more than twenty books of poetry published, as well as a memoir, So Got Schooled. (Ekstasis Editions).His work has also appeared in well over 100 literary



journals in Canada, the U.S., England, Australia, New Zealand, and Finland, as well as in three anthologies, and on radio. His "personal papers" have been purchased by the Simon Fraser University Library, and are, on an ongoing basis, being archived in their "Contemporary Literature Collection" for current and future scholarly interest. Reviews of his books can be found at www.stephen bett.com. He lives in Victoria.

i look at you this way her voice in my head almost 50 years, infectious ... like yesterday

noun then verb
St. Able deferring... if he told her would she like it, what history teaches

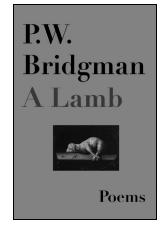
these are my words
"Joe in the old coach house on Walmer"
that v. same one, Hey Joe! where you goin'
down Kendal that ol' map in your hand ²

i sing to you
"a song / entirely in my head" ³
comme l'amour
in its moment ⁴

- ¹ Stephen Bett, Nota Bene: A Journey
- ² This very coach house sat right smack in the back between Walmer Rd & our old 83A Kendal Ave, in "the Annex" (Toronto). I was too young for McCaffery & nichol's TRG, but old enough for a few nichol dinners at the Miki's a few years later
- ³ Zukofsky, "To my wash-stand"
- ⁴ These last two lines from *Nota Bene: A Journey*, p. 37

from A Lamb P.W. Bridgman

Ekstasis Editions ISBN 978-1-77171-273-6 Poetry 120 Pages \$23.95 6 x 9



No Writers Were Harmed in the Making of This Whiskey

I.

"Now here's a fine, square-shouldered whiskey for you. You'll like this one."

Giving Art a nod, Jack twists the bottle cap slowly and with exaggerated care,

and with exaggerated care,
like a sapper extracting a fuse cylinder
from an unexploded artillery shell.
Reading from the label at close range,
his eyes crossing with concentration,
Jack permits his voice to fall to a rough whisper,
signalling a reverence for the precious golden liquid
within:

"Writers' Tears. Pure pot still." He at last frees the bottle cap and fills two small glasses to the brim.

It is eleven-thirty in the morning, or so says the quartz clock that hangs crooked on the wall

in Jack and Kathleen's small kitchen, next to the Sacred Heart

and the framed picture of Fionnuala—their only—photographed at birth, thirty years ago.

The brothers toss back two whiskeys in quick succession.

They bang their glasses back down hard onto the table. "The advertising says 'No writers were harmed in the making of this whiskey," Jack adds.

Art nods, slowly. "Aye, Jack. That's a brave one. Clever."

It's a merciful release to have the women out of the house,

getting their hair done in the next town.
"It would be no trouble for us to keep an eye on the wee

Jack had said to Kathleen and Fionnuala. "No trouble at all."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

Art picks the bottle up from the table, squinting at it, *his* eyes now crossing as he struggles to read over the top of his glasses: "Distilled and b-b-bottled in bond," he says, a stammer restored to his thickened tongue, a tragic echo of a tragic boyhood. "Good stuff." "Right, yeah," Jack says. "Made in a copper pot still. None better."

A minute passes. After swallowing more whiskey, Art tries to say something but most of his vowels and consonants slither back down his throat. Giving up on trying to read the finer print on the label, he shifts his gaze back to Jack's crimson face.

Television sounds filter into the kitchen from the parlour—

popguns and unruly trombones and cartoon voices in a high register—punctuated here and there by the laughter of 20-month-old Téadóir, son to Fionnuala, grandson to Jack and Kathleen and grandnephew to Art and Valeria.

"Will y-y-you allow us another?" Art asks, gesturing toward the bottle with his hand before reaching into a shirt pocket for his packet of Viceroy Lights. "Of course, yes, but there'll be no smoking," Jack replies, an almost-forgotten tone betokening an elder brother's authority creeping into his voice. He unscrews the bottle cap again, his fingers now less nimble. "But the w-w-women are gone," Art protests. "True enough, but the boy's not." "He's in the next room, Jack.

No harm will c-c-come to him. We'll clear the smoke away with a b-b-bacon fry long before they're back."

"All right then, Art," Jack says after a pause.

"A little whiff now and again won't kill him."

Blue plumes soon enwreathe their nodding heads as glasses are refilled again. And again.

Pure pot still.

II.

Losing interest in his cartoon, Téadóir sets off for a wander. a red plastic ball clutched in his hand. The telephone rings. Looking up, startled by the sound, he remembers what must be done. The boy runs unsteadily to the kitchen, points to the telephone on the wall and pulls on Granda Jack's shirtsleeve: "Ello! Ello! Ello!" Pointing earnestly at the "ello"—his word he keeps on, more loudly: "Ello! "Ello!" But there is no waking Granda Jackor Uncle Art, whose cigarette has burned a glowing red hollow into the kitchen table. The smoke from it joins the greasy fug that is beginning to rise up from the blackening bacon in the pan on the cooker.

The ringing finally stops, as does Téadóir in his effort to wake Granda Jack.

He looks up at the smoke furls beginning to obscure the ceiling, then back at Granda Jack, and points again: "Uh-oh? Uh-oh?"

Unheeded, his little brow knit with worry and incomprehension, the boy resumes his travels.

This time it's his red ball.
Having slipped his grasp, it now
bobs on the surface of the water in the toilet,
just out of reach.
Téadóir leans in and thrusts his hand forward.
He strains and stretches.

"Uh-oh!"

"Uh-oh!"—his singsong universal for all wrongs and troubles echoes sweetly within the small hard cavity of the bowl as he leans in, straining to recapture the floating red toy. P.W. Bridgman writes from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He has earned undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in psychology and a degree in law as well. Bridgman's



writing has appeared in anthologies published in Canada, Ireland, England and Scotland, and his first book—a selection of short stories entitled Standing at an Angle to My Age—was published in 2013.

With a mighty effort he reaches gamely again for it—his little diapered waist teetering unsteadily on the fulcrum of the toilet's white rim—until gravity and laws of physics that he hasn't yet learned to obey quickly combine to pass judgment on his strategy and condemn him. The boy overbalances, tips forward and tumbles in, face first, the full and unforgiving weight of his body forcing

his head beneath the surface of the water and holding it fast there, a nautilus in a porcelain shell.

Jack and Art continue to doze in the kitchen in an unknowing stupor. They hear neither the splash nor the frightened shout that precedes it.

Art's cigarette, cradled in the burnt hollow it has formed in the kitchen table, has expired, its red ember gone dark. The smoke from the cooker, too, subsides as the bacon is reduced to pure carbon by the gas ring's low flame, leaving nothing more to

but the slowly buckling metal of the pan.

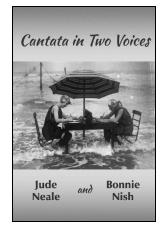
III

Kathleen, Fionnuala and Valeria revel in their unknowing freedom. Glad and carefree, they periodically check their new highlights and twilights in the Vauxhall's rear-view mirror. They laugh and chatter while, as the afternoon fades, Kathleen drives them all home from the hairdresser's in Magherafelt back to Knockcloghrim—to Knockcloghrim where a cheap quartz clock ticks bravely on and where, like an unexploded artillery shell

the end of the world awaits their return.

from Cantata in Two Voices Jude Neale & Bonnie Nish

Ekstasis Editions ISBN 978-1-77171-279-8 Poetry 75 Pages 6 x 9 \$23.95



The Word

There is no happiness like mine.

I have been eating poetry.

Ink runs from the corners of my mouth.

Mark Strand, "Eating Poetry"

I string words like pearls across the verdant landscape of my mind.

They walk with me, every mile held together

with meaning so clear, that the nouns and verbs paint a pointillist painting.

My fingers are slick with rhyme, as I am thrown back into a dizzying reverie of mood and distance.

I catch them like starfish and press each of them firmly onto my fresh page,

where they stand together, sway with context or whimsy.

I write a poem juicy as a wet pomegranate, dripping down hot flesh.

Or find one hiding shyly In the dusty recesses of stubborn memory.

All of this I know today,

when all I asked for was just one good line –

stuck together with the paste of good living and the hardships slow grind.

Only You

When the wind turns and asks, in my father's voice,

Have you prayed? Li-Young Lee, "Have You Prayed?"

I have answered too many questions as the wind blows through the house.

I have bent low on my knees, an origami body folded in with suffering.

The words of the dead imprint on my tongue.

I have flown from knowing your tears, a river of silver, a river of blood,

to wearing your heart on my sleeve.

I call your name beautiful, though it dissolves like smoke behind a mirror of tears.

I have a chalice for this filigreed grief, as the dust of a 1000 dead lilies leaves a bridge

only you can cross.

What Is Not Mine

Inside the box, two flaking albums their pages loose.

John Steffler

How can I see you when the dark is in the way of your perfection?

Your old hand can't even fold tissue into squares

where secrets float.

Now, no one else cares about these black and white photos. Dust covers of memory slipped between our fingers.

I can't capture the silence, the unsung melody, of the Blue Danube Waltz.

The dances of your youth that whirled you into the bright orange sky,

where black-lined stockings and Jimmy Dean hair found you wishing for more.

Your cigarette stuck behind your ear,

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. This piece was published and performed. She loves the log channel.

Bonnie Nish is
Executive
Director of
Pandora's
Collective
Outreach Society.
Bonnie has been
widely published
worldwide in
such places as
The Ottawa Arts
Review, The



Danforth Review, Haunted Waters Press, Illness Crisis & Loss Journal Volume 24 and The Blue Print Review. Her first book of poetry Love and Bones was released by Karma Press in 2013. Her latest book Concussion and Mild TBI: Not Just Another Headline, an anthology of concussion-related stories, was published by Lash and Associates in August 2016.

and your tee-shirt rolled just above your biceps.

A rebellion in dress walking my way.

You tried to hold me in your hooded eyes, but I put you down

afraid,

to take what is not mine.

from Selected Poems Katerina Anghelaki Rooke

translated by Manolis Aligizakis

THE VITOS CALENDAR

To the memory of Nikos Kazantzakis

FIRST DAY

My body became the beginning of a voyage.

Lights on the shore, a funeral procession for the verdure of summer the calls of mothers took an autumnal echo in the forgiveness of twilight.

I walk as the first rain comes from the sea for me the escape — quench of an ancient thirst — was called death.

May the soft winds blow and slowly mark the orchards of the horizon that we, the final comrades, shall cultivate. Silent caiques await the morning twilight in the nightly quietness of the harbor.

The taste of the grape and of the fig belong to memory now.

My body became the beginning of a voyage.

SECOND DAY

There is not a separating line between the light of day and the light of night. The hull and the revelry of the prow squeak the continuance of endlessness. My soul, the fiery whirlwind, promises nothing.

I who dreamed of landscapes where horses galloped unimpeded in slippery paths of sun-downs I envisioned my body in heights in armories and pulpits. Yet I often ended my days at the ancestral well where faces and things of the yard remained with me for many forgotten years.

The beauty of the mountain vanishes if you don't have a vantage point from where to gaze.

I assumed the role of the cloud which won't ever bring a blessing.

THIRD DAY

September noon small talk of the comrades in the gentle sunshine. The afternoon colors prepare autumnal steps. The joy of my fate: death peace is the miracle that mercilessly precedes.

FOURTH DAY

Pale faces of trees vaguely visible in light sleep plain wind without the message of the acacia.

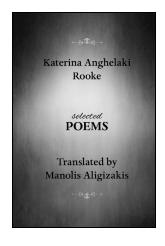
The seven girls close their necks to fear afraid of the light, the rain that their unlearned hands won't get wild of the salinity. They wave goodbye to their names and hair.

SIXTH DAY

Your face extends like the whitewashed rooms of the paternal home.
The doves were taking communion from your hand and they were leaving in your eyes compassion for the crawlers and little earth beings. Your high-noon bloomed like carnation and you saunter among the tall columns decorating them under the night stars.

Now you lean on pride the altar of sighs

Ekstasis Editions / Libros Libertad ISBN 978-1-77171-340-5 Poetry 128 Pages, 6 x 9 \$23.95



Katerina
Anghelaki Rooke
was born in
Athens, February
1939. Her work
has been translated into more than
ten languages
and is included in
numerous
anthologies. She
has translated



from English and French as well as from the Russian works of Shakespeare, Mayakovski, and Pushkin. She's the recipient of the first poetry award Prix Hensch of the City of Geneva, the National Literary Award of Greece, the Kostas Ouranis poetry Award and in 2014 she was awarded the National Poetry Award for the whole of her literary accomplishment.

NINTH DAY

We were making plans for our death tonight and it was as if guessing the songs along with the fishermen distancing themselves from the shore.

The glance of the sun might be bold or would the roots of ancient trees enclose ever tightly or would we sink in endless waters with the weight of the days?

Metal clatter and chirps of wounded birds high up in the air sea made of wheat or would we die of the many sunflowers?

Götterdämmerung

Len Gasparini

Ekstasis Editions ISBN 978-1-77171-271-2 Poetry 74 Pages 6 x 9 \$23.95

1

In 2018, I saw by the false dawn's light the first robin of spring. It lay on my doorstep. Dead. If signs are taken for wonders, what sign was this?

The signs environ us.
As a tellurian of the Anthropocene, can you not tell the signs by sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch? We have damaged Nature with pollution beyond the point of no solution.
We have created a second Nature in the image of the first so as not to believe that we live in paradise. (From Mother Earth to Earth Mother to Mother Nature only women know nurture.) In Nature, nothing is wasted. Nature is full of surprises.

The signs environ us.
Earth, air, water, fire.
We live, and we suspire.
Acid rain, acid rain, go away,
don't come again another day.
We'll go to the woods no more,
the trees have been clear-cut.

The natural world resides in the rhythms, variations, and combinations of certain patterns: the spirals of pine cones, fish scales, seashells; the zigzags of lightning, the geometry of spiderwebs;

the wavy lines of surf, palm trees grazing the horizons...

Is technology conditioning us to become an abstraction? Nobody dances anymore.

For global warming (a buzz word) read GLOBAL WARNING.

We drove past the first sign years ago when gasoline and diesel fuel were cheaper. Climate change: a euphemism that sounds like a video game.

Earth Day 1970. We have met the enemy and he is us

"The poetry of earth is never dead," said Keats.
"The whole earth is our hospital," said T.S. Eliot.
"The earth is an Indian thing," said Jack.
"Nobody owns the earth," said Bill.
The earth is licking its festering sores.

In a run-down city run by hucksters there's a nature reserve: Ojibway Park. Alongside it runs a paved road notorious for its roadkill. While we were watching the incoming tide, a stale, smelly air blew onto the shore from an ocean polluted with plastic.

Wake up, baby boomers, Generation Xers! Have you heard the news?
We are rocking the balance of nature.
At the twilight's last gleaming,
your grandchildren will be gasping for oxygen like herring caught in a gill net.

Being latest in the ascent of life, from the jellyfish to the mastodon, it follows that we must be the least perfect form of life. (Not *Homo sapiens* but *Homo* sap.)

Life seeks to preserve itself, but life seeks also to perish. Do you perceive this chthonic force? I think the world is one big stomach fed by tooth and claw compared with mechanized slaughterhouses and factory farming.

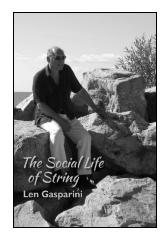
So far, we've succeeded in polluting the planet, dooming ourselves and our creaturely cousins to extinction. Nothing succeeds like success. What planet is next?

INTERLUDE

Earth has few secrets from the birds.
From the poles to the tropics,
birds hold us in their spell;
mesmerize us with their music.
If you ever see the skeleton of a bird
you will know how completely it is still flying.

Once upon a Maytime twilight, in the deepening gloom of a wooded ravine, I heard the eerie song of the veery (a songbird seldom seen) whose liquid, reedy, downward-spiraling sound resonated as if the bird carried its own echo within itself.

Approaching the grasslands near Val Marie, Saskatchewan for the first time, on foot, as the day dawned with a cloudless sky, I saw how time is subordinate to space, and suddenly I longed to be that western meadowlark—a blaze of pure being perched on a barbed-wire fence,



Len Gasparini is the author of numerous books of poetry, including The Broken World: Poems 1967-1998 and a collection for children, I Once Had a Pet Praying Mantis. He is the author of three



story collections, Blind Spot, A Demon in My View and When Does a Kiss Become a Bite?, and a work of nonfiction, Erase Me, with photographs by Leslie Thomson. In 1990, he was awarded the F. G. Bressani Literary Prize for poetry. He lives in Toronto.

singing its melodious song.

Mongabay.com June 23rd FLASH

MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF NORTH AMERICA'S NATIVE BIRD SPECIES ARE AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF EXTINCTION

In North America we live in the shade of the world's biggest, tallest, and oldest trees.

This is the forest primeval; and still it is to MacMillan Bloedel a tree parasite capable of dooming British Columbia to a treeless hell. (1997)

I planted a linden sapling. It will surely outlive me, though I hope to see its yellow flowers attract the first honeybee. (A flower will do anything to get pollinated.)

Medieval alchemists saw the union of opposites under the symbol of the linden tree. (The wind is a tree's only chance to make music.)

GLOBAL BANKS FUNDING DESTRUCTION OF FORESTS

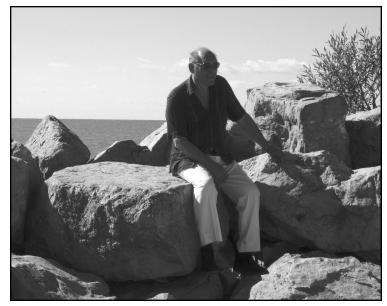
2.

As time and space become compressed, we seldom socialize in the flesh. There will be selective breeding; robot sex dolls for the unchosen; and for dignitaries: deep freezing instead of crowded cemeteries.

The Bible, the Torah, the Koran the vain anthropocentrism of man. Do we need myths? Should these bones live? The computer runs algorithms but the psyche's still primitive.

Reality is said to begin outside verbal language. I suspect that mathematicians know this. The theorems of mathematics prove it. Digit. Digital. Digital divide. Can you dig it? It is the imaged word, the word as art that produces form, which derives from color... A rose is not a rose unless you know how many petals it has.

Let us look at Michelangelo's fresco: The Creation of Adam—an anthropocentric myth of its time, in which the forefingers of two reclining figures almost touch... (At the zoo one day, I proffered a grape to an anthropoid ape. I was amazed at how gently he took it with his thumb and forefinger).

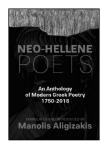


Len Gasparini

As the twig is bent, so grows the tree, as the saying goes—or, genetically, to codify, modify, manipulate the double helix, and dice with fateor, gladly, to embrace Amor fati, or to accept the concept of esho funi.

Warriors will war with warriors via high-tech weaponry. (What is history? Read further: the justification of mass murder.) Workers will work like worker bees and ants. Breeders will breed, as if by blind will, incapable of cognition...

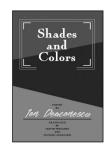
What lives is something other than what thinks. We have stepped out of Nature and into the heart of darkness which is Absolute Reality.



Neo-Hellene Poets

translated by Manolis

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