

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

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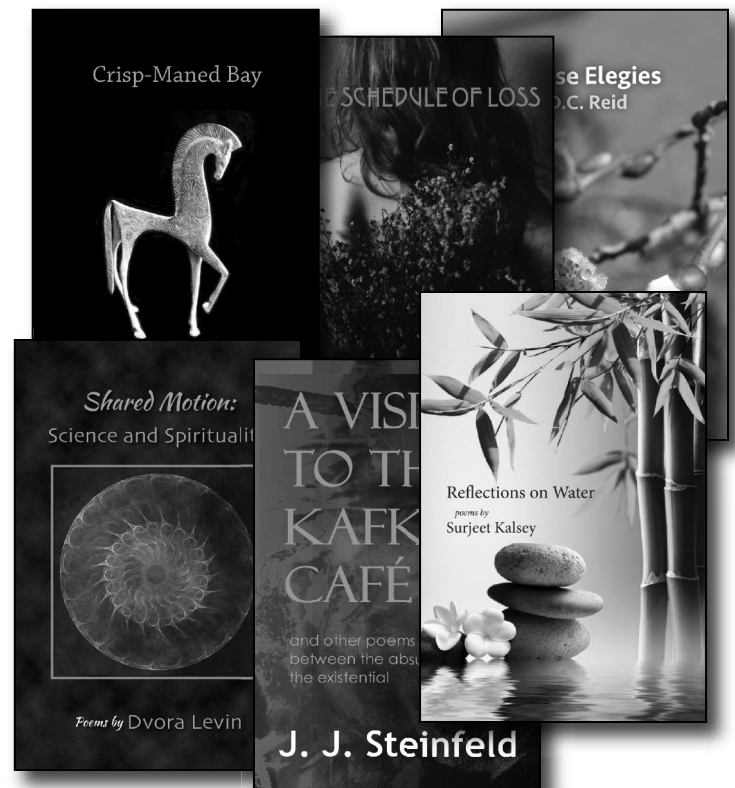
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Photo by D.C. Reid



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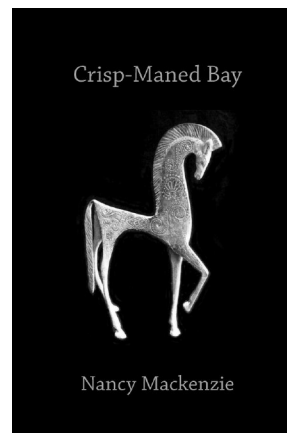
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from Crisp-Maned Bay

Nancy Mackenzie

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Poetry
96 Pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Laguna Beach

You watch your mind melt,
relish the long, slow maw
of the ocean's refrain
as sand slips from beneath your feet.
On your fingers are rings you inherited.
Their power, like shooting stars,
a few ticks of the second hand.
Only beauty like the horizon
with sea fog shades of blue
could turn you from contemplation of diamonds
and gold,
glinting on the sets of waves, eclipsing your need
to know a thing.

You herald the beginning of this change
with your offer to enter the waves alone
float there out past the breaking point.
As if that were all there were to it,
to change a line of thought
that holds you, line and sinker.

Your freedom is a bliss spun out of threads such
as these
and walking up from the beach, mid-morning,
the long, slow wind to the apartment
gathers people, who act as if audience to your
conundrum
and plant themselves outside the windows
where babies cry
and below, where pelicans fly,
the waves wash away the footprints
of a little beach girl.
She carries equal measures of water
in each hand, to your door, sets the water down
and joins the throng beneath your window, where
their paeon to the sea, lilting, achingly pure
lures you out of doors. You
dive in through this opening aria
lured now by sand and sea in the waves;
a dolphin heartbeat arching wonder on breeze-
blown ephemera.

All day you coil like this and spring
gills filled with breath, body a glistening tribute
under the sun.
Then wind, atmospheric scarab
flown in on the night, a blue-green gift
from the sea, marks day's end, and journey's end.

A beach-pang at the airport before lift-off
centres the turns of your mind like a spine
scramble, twist
this California asana vedic course in miracles,
anchor, sand, and sun.

What but the practical application of sailor's
knots,
dingy anchors, and tide charts, (the things you
use to stay home)

makes you navigator of the sudden impulse?
What is this hunger for living a no-nonsense
wish-list
with the sun gone, a sand dollar in your hand?

As the seaplane lands on a northern island
near Desolation Sound, you step onto the beach
hold in your arms the last breath
of the second-hand's sweep and then it's gone.
All you have left
as the sea plane departs
is the eternal beauty of the girls diving into the
waves off Laguna Beach,
their voices, and a sailor's knot to slip at the skiff
in the bay.

Viriditas Ambush

'What happened today is over now.'
A lie. It didn't end until you died.
Life was an ambush, wounds waiting
for you.

— Guy Gavriel Kay, *Sailing to Sarantium*

The air is full of beauty
even traffic roar fits
melodrama to drama,
scores this Winter Étude
as a Spring Sonata.

I'm driving, matching robin's wings to
moodswings
birdsong to grace. There is
no need to understand this knowing
apprehending beauty in defiance of the pulsing
within my blood.

Roadside snow transfigured into Hildegard von
Bingen's greening.

Driving, with a wonderful sense of what is now
and forever and ever only a season, passing by,
only a fleet fox across the flush field
a gray horse over the snowmelt wet culvert
a pair of sunglasses, the car centred
on a gravel road between two flocks of poplar,
willow and spruce, a grove of geese, a heckle of
cranes,
a full, full neighbourhood of robins. A season.
Like this one
eclipsed by the red-roan sun through gravel dust,
and me, moving too fast to still the strings of my
soul,
reverberant with the lies someone's singing.

Nancy Mackenzie is the author of several books of poetry and books for children. A dressage enthusiast and long-time fan of horseracing, Mackenzie lives in Edmonton, Alberta where she operates a professional writing service called Bronze Horse Communications. A novel, *Nerve Line*, was published by Ekstasis Editions in 2014.

On the Island

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.

The way a woman parents grandchildren
five weeks out of six, and stays fit.

The way a woman nervously greets a neighbour
she sees but once a year.

Those gulls squarking where the current shows in
the waterline.

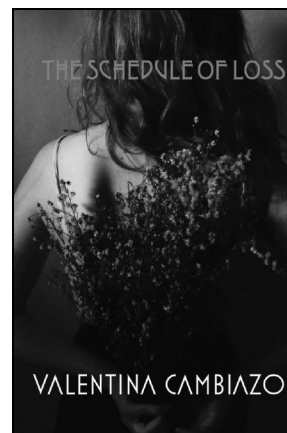
The shoreline, its lips, and this feminine island
inside me.

Listening to my daughter's wisdom
harkening to the arch of her brow.
The fine, fine bones of my sister-in-law
coming ashore, even now
as the August sun dances its lion feet
across the Pacific Ocean
to my quenched and sated body
on the beach.

from Schedule of Loss

Valentina Cambiazo

Ekstasis Editions
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Poetry
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6 x 9
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Himalaya

In the spring,
take me across an unfordable river
beyond the tree line
up to the caves
in the crumbling hills.

Let me climb the golden mountain
beneath the rock falls.

Slip a turquoise bracelet over my brittle wrists,
and kiss my fleshless lips.

Bury me in the deepest hollow,
cover my bones,
let me sleep,
out of reach.

Song Cycle

Once the wreckage was complete,
I exchanged my heart with that of a nightingale:
it was small,
easy to hide,
unbreakable,
and all it wanted to do was sing.

The nightingale was left to dwell
on all the grief in the world,
all the suffering she'd seen,
and was silenced.

I didn't care.
My heart and I now soared
up to a bright, blue sky;
we saw the world from a great height
cleansed of pain and poison.

And we sang, how we sang.

Stay

If any night could hold me
it would be this night,
this perfumed night.

Is it jasmine? How could it be?
Yes, it must be, the night-flowering kind,
and rose petals soft with sunshine.

How they breathe life into this night.
Of all nights, this one should hold me here.

The Schedule of Loss

After the fire,
there is the usual reckoning.
A philosophical adjuster
sends an account
of things beyond help,
beyond even the redemptive powers
of the recovery room,
of things best listed
under the schedule of loss.

If we could apply the same cool logic
to our lives,
what lists we could draw up
of loves lost
of those never undertaken or imagined,
of tattered and disheveled hopes
stained with soot and singed around the edges.

Would they cover decades in progression?
From the first dawn of sanguine youth,
through various bewildered disappointments,
to the eventual trudging through adulthood
with its bill-paying drudgery,
until the decanting at the other end of work,
abject pension in hand
and a clear view
of the next trip-wire.

What did I leave behind?
All those decades are clouded in fog
I made decisions, but can't quite remember why.
As in a labyrinth, each one led to another blank
wall and
another forced turn, each one had its consequent
effect.

I was a sleepwalker,
as confused as I was on the morning of the fire.

A light in the closet smouldered,
white smoke heaved into the room
as if a worn-out dragon had taken up residence.
This day is going to be full of surprises.

It was the quilt and the feathers and the bare
bulb.

Didn't Emily say "hope is the thing with feathers"?

What did I leave behind?
I wish I had a list as clear as this:

A yoga mat (was I hoping for spiritual enlightenment?

I had forgotten it was there, so I can't claim any
clear purpose)

A suitcase (was there an escape plan I didn't
know about?)

Gardening gloves (what were they doing in the
closet? Was I planning a crime?)

Empty binders (was I saving them for some
future outburst of administrative zeal?)

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*.

Balls of wool for unfinished scarves (too many
scarves, always too many scarves)

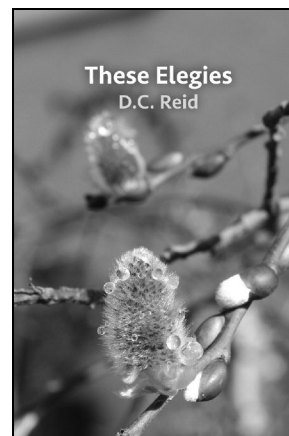
Back then, when there was still time,
there was no adjuster,
no one to write it all down,
no one to say,
"You've lost a friend, or lover, or another
decade."
"You've just missed your one chance to shine."
No one to say, "You've mislaid your soul."

What I needed was a Greek chorus, or a chorus
line,
a warning of some kind,
that eventually there would be a reckoning,
that one day I would have to come up with a list,
the list of a lifetime.

from These Elegies

D.C. Reid

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D.C. Reid's poems have been published widely in 50 literary magazines in Canada, and just as many around the world, with his work translated into Spanish, Chinese, French, Greek, Hindi and Bengali. His sixth book of poems, *You Shall Have No Other*, has been made into web-based movies on www.sandria.ca – fifty-five so far. Reid is a past president of the League of Canadian Poets.

Mule deer

Two deer and maybe more
resting in the rain
of the yard. They have
left the wild for people
and rain that craters the urban face.
At their edges, the small work
of us goes on. Rain is a cleansing,
as it is meant to be, and the
voluminous apples spill
harmlessly to a turf
so servile it lets itself be halved
by the small blades of man.
Mouths that break the stalks
don't leave anything at all.
Small brown worlds are sown
among the legs in flower fields.
And this epistolary frame of nature
is man's grappling what cannot be held.
The ponding grass, the deer, the rain
that falls where souls need washing
away. We are the non-corporeal
turned to the un-human: the deer
and wildness come to save us.
Water is time and the earth changes.

The thorn

...as when you lean over me and lift up your skirt,
passing through the membrane of evening
~ Brian Henderson

Let us lay a persuasion
that takes a person line

to line, to the last
word, the last thought,

in the last head.
I have no worries now,

as when you lean over me
and lift up your skirt,

passing through the membrane
of evening, the yellow of Hydra,

the pensione of refuge
where none of the artists

die. Sun washed rock,
blue and white homes

like linen on a hill,
an island detached

and moving east where
humans went. Wine

ferments with lazy insects.
They come their nearest

in evening when you
find the simple thorn

roses wrought in long travail
to keep a man from harming

women. The beautiful orifice
of roses. I unfold my hand

and kiss the thorn of them.

How unfortunate the slippers

A woman like that woman isn't a woman,
quite.
I have been her kind.

~ Anne Sexton

How unfortunate the slippers.
How unfortunate the hour, and the late

wet grass. Her feet are small, and she
unheard in evening. I am ears with sea

falling through nets of hair to inform
my transitory thoughts. How her leg

pulls itself forward. The rasp of my chin,
the coarse of it grown from shaving.

Watching the casual steps where she
has moved from the path we all follow,

and holds her hair aside, watching
my tulips light-up her face. I received

a century of cold tubers. How then
do flowers come tipsy, drinking scent

from slippers, the wayward step
of simple red shoes? Perhaps she is

a deer, and I a lion. For her I crouch
and do not sit, so she will never see me.

Cassandra

Could it be you had nothing to say, and so
like the face of a dog you invented

power so terrible, it made even you go mad?
Were you crushed by good intentions?

And those prophecies, did they come
unbidden, unwanted, irresponsibly?

That sun so across graves its eye burned
tombstones into nothing? And the spit in your

mouth, did it leave you feeling diseased
or merely head? What were you so thinking

you could only live a life of a few short
years? As though you have a choice in what

you will become. Is death more natural
than life? Like leaves that do not return

with green flowed into them?
And innocence. Are we deluded

about our going across and the return?
Are babies left in cribs to pass over

before they control their own eyeballs
and assume that terrible beauty of the

top-heavy heads we heave about?
We all live and when we open the

door to the earth are we not bidding
it take us home? Oh, the faceless, nameless

beauty of fruit, the peach in its goodness,
rotten on its espaliered arms on walls

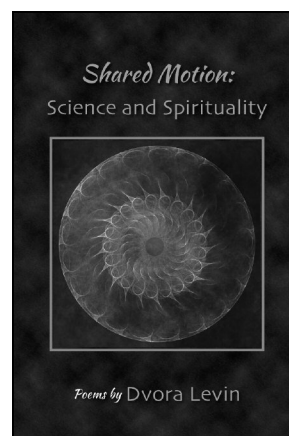
south of the Earth, the good sun melting
it into what dirt is and has always been.

World without end. Amen.

from Shared Motion

Dvora Levin

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Vestiges

I lie unnamed, in a cradle
with no hand to rock me –
an orphaned Amen.

An appendage of a forgotten blessing,
some unremembered prayer,
its source evaporated long ago.

As I stride through the procession of quarks
and neutrinos, supernovas and black holes,
I hear myself whisper Amen.

Reminding me there is something there,
some thread of connection
to the unknowable, but still,

a thread knotted at the end,
a thread to stitch up my tattered mind,
my gaping questioning.

Clutching my briefcase stuffed
with footnotes and formulae,
I hear a rustle of blessings,
a murmured Amen.

High Flyers

In the orbiting centre ring,
the cosmic high wire glints
above the circle of speeding light.

Rope ladders suspended
from two pedestals
with barely enough room to stand.

A drum roll – two aerialists emerge
from behind the curtain
and bow to the crowd.

Slipping off his foot-noted cloak
stitched with proofs and publications,
he flexes his muscles, tattooed
with mathematical symbols, advanced formulae,
Racing upwards, he unhooks his fly bar,
leaps and twirls, hangs by his knees
upside down, ready to catch.

She slips off her diaphanous cloak,
stitched with holy texts,
glittering with sequins of faith.
Climbing with transparent grace,
she leaps beyond gravity, triple twists,
to fly so high she disappears, reappears,
then summersaults to grab his wrists,
lets go, spirals back to catch the bar,
swings up to land on her sacred pedestal.

Two daredevils flying together and apart,
catching hold and letting go, a double act
swinging in and out of sync, catapulting
dangerously with no harness, no safety net.

Seated below, self-appointed judges keep score,
to decide which acrobat demonstrates
the most skill in the extreme sport
of high flying.

Tyranny of Time

Time warped by gravity,
warps both science and theology.

Time interrupts theory and intuition,
leaps us into new discoveries.

Time separates past and future,
insists on forming a straight line.

Time declares the a-temporal
a conjurer's hoax, a childish joke.

While the Source amuses her non-self,
reverse-warping the essence of time

into dimensions of the unknowable.
The enigma is almost detectable,

perfectly timed for those of us
whose time is about to run out.

Beyond Our Means

Beyond the frontiers of theory, proofs
Beyond measurement and reasoning

Beyond prototypes and precedence
Beyond hierarchy and lineage

Beyond belief, submission to the One
Beyond ancient texts, hymns and prayers

Beyond chaos and order
Beyond knowing and unknowing

Stripped of eccentricities, foibles
Stripped of all our imaginings

Something so simple, so elegant

TIMELESSNESS

a wild rose petal floating on the wind

Once having been a Director for Social Change Projects in Victoria and Israel, **Dvora Levin** now devotes herself to poetry. She has published four collections of her own work: *To Bite The Blue Apple*, *Sharav*, *Ragged Light* (published by Ekstasis Editions) and a unique hand-bound book, *Zeroing In On Nothing*. Dvora also edited two poetry collections written by the homeless, sex workers and addicts in recovery: *Voices From The Edge* (Ekstasis Editions) and *Victoria On The Banks Of The Mainstream* (funded by the City). She continues to lead weekly poetry writing sessions with federal parolees living in a halfway house.

Night Vision

While scientists sleep with heads stuffed
with a restless confection of unresolved
formulae, unsolvable theories,

and *religios* churn in their dreams, exhausted
with sweeping up fragments of incomprehensible
texts,
gritty grains of faith.

Eyes of owl, raccoon, feral cat,
glitter the dark. Senses wide awake,
they go on the hunt,

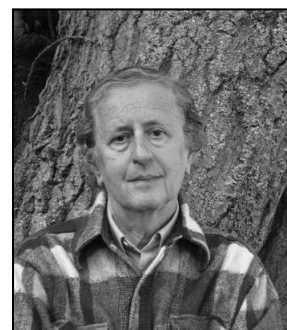
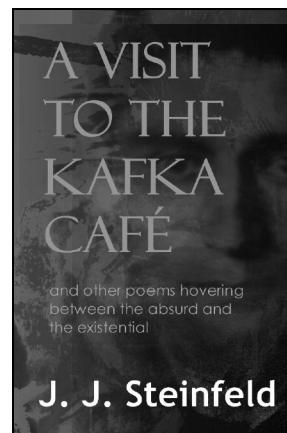
having perfect faith in themselves,
in the order of things,
just doing what they do

in their own time –
mindlessly unfolding
their murderous fate.

from A Visit to the Kafka Café

J. J. Steinfeld

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A Dreaming Ghost Chances to Pass a Dreamless Ghost

In one of those murky spaces
where death and imagination mingle
a dreaming ghost
chances to pass
a dreamless ghost
and the second sneers at the first
knowing its shortcomings.

*It's not all that horrible
my time is well spent
eternity can be filled with dreams
and though the sadness doesn't disappear
the interminable regretting is diminished
the dreaming ghost says.*

The second ghost tries to say
that dreams are extraneous
where death and imagination mingle
but the first ghost is already
on to another one of those murky spaces
where lives long past
can be dreamed about
again and again.

An Unnamed Artifact

What do you do
when you find an unnamed artifact
so preternatural and elusive and odd
that no words adhere to its contours
or promise of meaning?

Do you make up words
or do you scream wordlessly
or cry wordfully
or pound a fist against a wall
hoping the wall and your pain
mysteriously or miraculously
turn into words?
Do you open a dictionary at random
and start reading words until
that unnamed artifact informs you
of its pleasure?

Or, night approaching,
do you remain in silent awe
and let it speak for itself?

The Fabric of Words

Why, after a fitful night
without solace or explanation
and a morning walk down
the cruellest pathway
of rumour or fact,
do you question
the authenticity of beauty
of the strange creature
standing just outside
your garden?

Why, after a quiet afternoon
full of reflection and meditation
and a sudden run into a rainstorm
of malice or kindness
do you not question
the poison of deceit
of the massive statue
appearing just outside
your despair?

Why these questions
caught in the fabric of words?

No Louder Than a Faint Whisper

You choose only one sound
from a night of dissonance
of sounds like knife thrusts
defensive wounds
on your mirrored body

images and symbols and secret messages
as sharp as those sounds and knives
but what to make
of the sounds and dangers
not even an adequate biblical reference
nor an unpretentious miracle
that can be interpreted
a million different ways

the sound cupped in your hands
in defiance of sense or acoustics
you wait until you are
completely overwrought
then you open your hands
and you listen
to what you were certain
was the voice of God
but it is no louder
than a faint whisper
in a night of dissonance.

Fiction writer, poet, and playwright J. J. Steinfeld lives on Prince Edward Island. He has published nineteen books. From 1981, when Steinfeld published his first short story, to 1986, when his first one-act play was produced, and 2001, when he published his first poem, to the publication of his 2018 Ekstasis Editions poetry collection, more than 400 of his short stories and nearly 900 poems have appeared in anthologies and periodicals, at least one piece in every Canadian province and internationally in eighteen countries, and over fifty of his one-act plays and a handful of full-length plays have been performed in Canada and the United States.

Miscalculation

In the middle of a terrifying night
of calamity and confusion
a scientist jumps out from the annals
of science history
banging his brainy head against a kitchen wall
of miscalculation as hard as remorse.

On the kitchen table
the scientist with the sore head
and a textbook case of amnesia
finds a device of his earlier devising
sad to say, the scientist unscientifically forgot
he had invented the most dangerous death ray
the world had ever known.

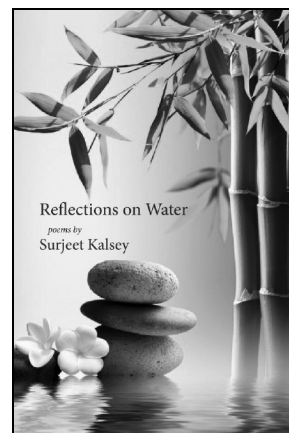
Tinkering, explaining, diagramming
in an eager scientific way
like out of a big-budget film
about a scientist from the annals
of science history
tinkering, explaining, diagramming.

The scientist, ever curious,
ever scientific,
picks his invention up
steps outside, and points it at the moon
reciting a poem he suddenly remembers.

from Reflections on Water

Surjeet Kalsey

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Reflections on Water
poems by
Surjeet Kalsey

Reflections on the Water

My roots I carried on my shoulders
and crossed the green black waters.
Dug out all the roots from the soil
called my motherland and
brought them with me to replant
in the land of promise a new life
growing my own leaves, blooming
my own flowers on my bare branches.

I left a full nurished life behind
my home, my friends, my learning
to learn again from a scratch.
The reflection of the blue sky was
visible from the above in the wide
spread waters of the ocean.
One day I would see my reflection
in the mirror of this land.

Saffron is the colour of the leaves
of my replanted roots in the soil
dotted with maple and oak trees,
watered with my sweat and blood,
my being, my culture, my food
my dress, the exotic ethnicity
my accent and my translation.
The reflections of the multicolored
flowers under the velvety canopy
of race-relation, cultures and diversity.

Inconsistent, wavering and shimmering
would remain our reflections in the water.

The Inner Silence

There are moments
when mind becomes numb
with the stillness after pain
the outer noise becomes calm
with this noble silence of
the mind, body and soul.

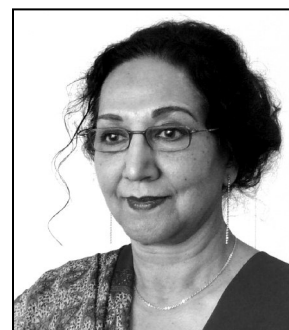
The silence teaches us
to contemplate
on these matters which
we think are simple, so that
we can understand the source
of sadness, pain and grief
and remove the fog from our eyes
and begin to see the path.
The inner calm illuminates senses
to get through this world –
blinded by superstition,
hatred, and fear – and to reach
a new world of light, love
friendship and understanding
which bring dignity for us all.

One Zero Zero Change!

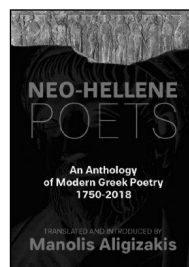
(At the hundred years of Anniversary
of Faiz Ahmed Faiz – 20 November)

100 years of poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz:
"Speak up, speak up your lips are free
Speak up; the tongue of yours is still your own!"
Thoughts are still yours

Surjeet Kalsey is an outstanding South Asian Canadian writer. Surjeet writes both in Punjabi and English and is the author of 19 books of poetry, short stories, drama, and translations.



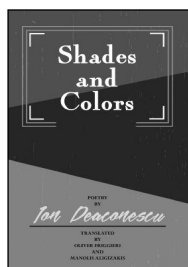
bring ideas of change
Language is still yours
bring words of change
Voice is still yours
speak up loudly
and make your voice
heard for a change!
Don't be afraid
let your pen write the change
and let your voice become
the change to be
and say today whatever
you want to say might be!



Neo-Hellene Poets

translated by
Manolis

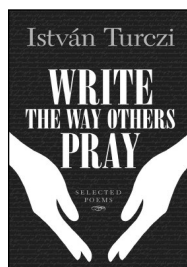
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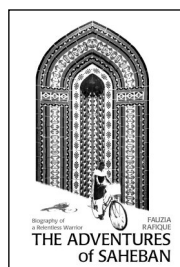
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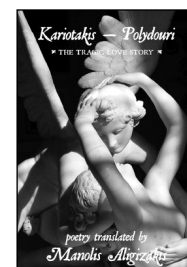
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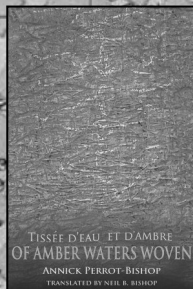
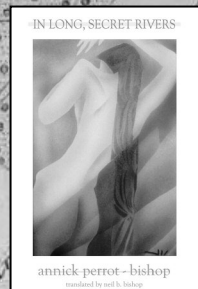
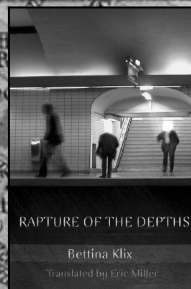
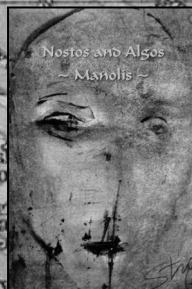
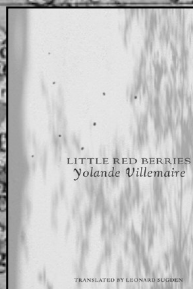
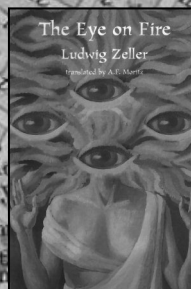
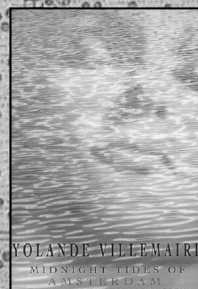
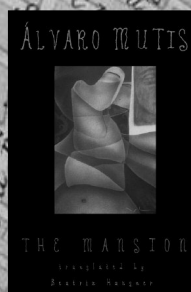
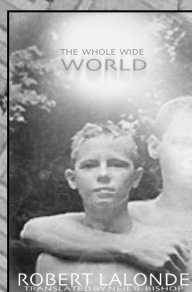
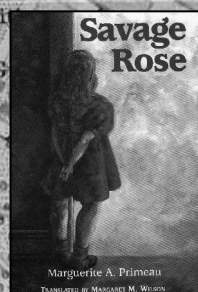
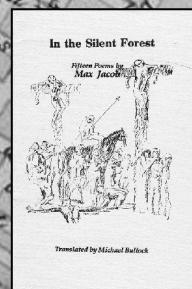
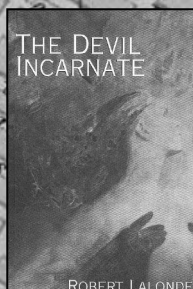
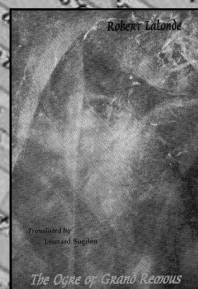
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