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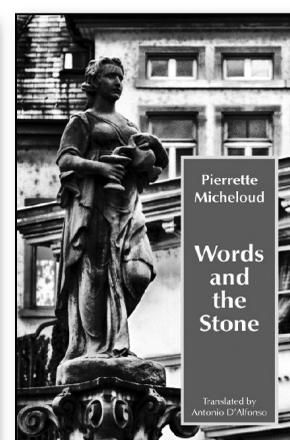
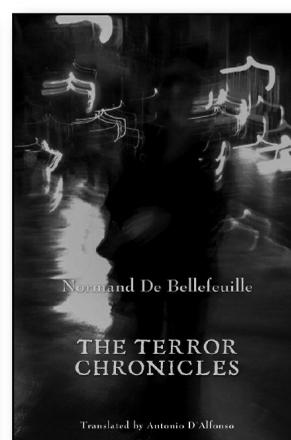
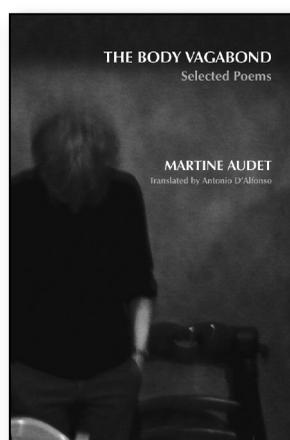
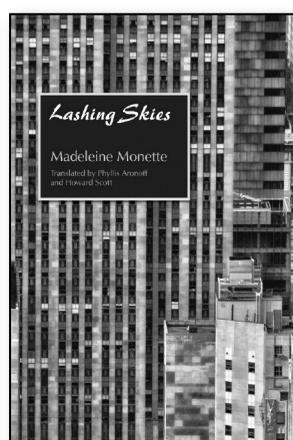
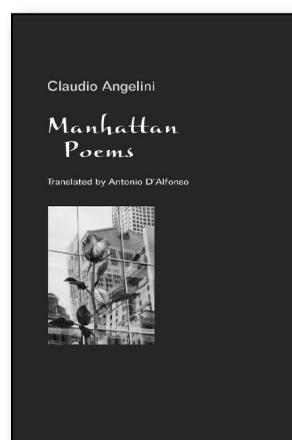
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photo: Antonio D'Alfonso



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# from Manhattan Poems

Claudio Angelini

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

## Central Park

Fantasma passeggiano al Central Park  
in bicicletta o fanno jogging sull'erba,  
sognando la maratona d'un'esistenza fa.  
Vola la vittoria a cercare allori tra le fronde,  
invase dalla luce e dai giochi degli squitter,  
mentre gatti invidiosi tendono trappole  
a uccellini perduti tra le rocce  
e cavalli bavosi scalciano zanzare  
giunte dal Nilo a villeggiare sull'Hudson.  
Forse quest'isola è una finzione,  
un parco giurassico che mi conserva  
assieme ai dinosauri dei rimorsi  
abbandonati in patria,  
con le mummie di parenti e amici morti  
perchè io vivessi qua  
del loro sangue.

## Central Park

Ghosts stroll in Central Park,  
some on bikes, other jogging on the grass.  
Some are dreaming of being in a marathon  
held a lifetime ago.  
Success fleets by in pursuit of  
laurels in the foliage,  
saturated by light and the games of birds,  
as jealous cats lay traps  
for sparrows lost on rocks.  
And horses salivate and stump on mosquitoes  
that travelled all the way from the Nile  
to visit Hudson River.  
Perhaps this island is an invention,  
a jurassic park that keeps me alive  
among the dinosaurs of regret  
left behind in a motherland  
where mummies of relatives and dead friends  
permitted to live here on their blood.

## Ghost Town

New York è la terra  
dove si affollano i morti.  
Sento richiami elettrici  
da mondi lontani  
e vedo affiorare  
dallo Stige dell'Hudson  
cari amici che volano  
nei ricordi.  
Sono piu' giovani  
da quando li ha persi il mio radar  
perchè la morte dona  
nuovi lineamenti  
e documenti  
a chi entra nel suo regno.  
Li saluto e loro piroettano

sulle street e le avenue,  
aiutano handicappati e vecchiette,  
poi fuggono al tramonto,  
frammenti della città d'oro,  
riflessi dei frattaciel  
dove si sono specchiati.  
Talvolta volo con loro  
per qualche blocco,  
sono i miei fantasmi ad horas,  
gli angeli custodi della tristezza.  
Stendono su di me un manto di rughe  
per proteggermi  
dalla tentazione di non morire vecchio.  
E poi mi porteranno via  
nel territorio della poesia.

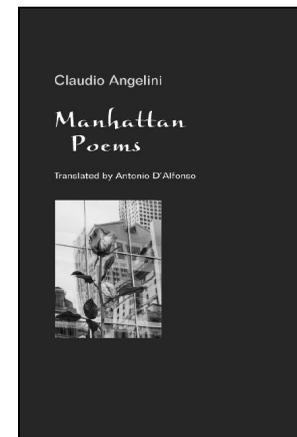
## Ghost Town

New York is the land  
where the dead gather.  
I respond to the electric calls  
come from distant worlds,  
and I see rise to the surface  
of the Hudson River Styx  
the dearest of friends who take  
cover in my memory.  
There are younger  
now than they last walked into my radar.  
Death offers  
new features and paper works  
to those who glide into its reign.  
I welcome them and they start to do pirouettes  
on the streets and avenues.  
They help the elderly and the handicap  
and off they vanish into the sunset,  
figments of the golden city,  
skyscrapers against which  
they look at themselves.  
At times, I fly with them  
for blocks.  
They are ghosts as horas,  
guardian angels of sadness,  
stretching a clock of wrinkles over me  
to ward of the temptation of  
not dying an old man.  
Tomorrow they will carry me  
away into the land of poetry.

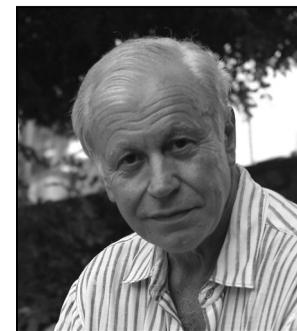
## Tavern on the Green

Ho dissalato il pianto  
per non morirne avvelenato  
e l'ho bevuto nella taverna delle fiabe,  
alla Tavern on the green,  
gustandolo come un Apple Martini.

Ekstasis Editions  
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*Claudio Angelini was born in Italy where he has made a career as a writer and a journalist. His first collection of poems, Prima della fine, edited by the Nobel Prize winner Salvatore Quasimodo, won an Italian award for the best first book. He published many other books of poetry, novels and essays.*



*Claudio Angelini has been living in New York, with his wife, for the past twenty years. There he became bureau chief of RAI-TV for America, director of the Istituto Italiano di Cultura. Currently, he is director of the New York Dante Alighieri Association and chairman of Poetry Capri Awards board. Claudio Angelini was the first journalist to broadcast for an Italian audience the 9/11 terrorist attack, a tragedy that inspired many poems collected in this book.*

## Tavern on the Green

I've desalinated my weeping  
so that I would not die poisoned.  
I drank in a fairyland bar  
called the Tavern on the Green,  
and swallowed tears like apple martinis.

## Ti abbraccio, Manhattan

Ti abbraccio, Manhattan,  
e possiedo la luce del mare  
e il soffio dei fiumi che ti creano,  
mentre crei l'affanno  
della mia giornata.

## Let Me Embrace You, Manhattan

Let me embrace you, Manhattan.  
Let me grasp the sea light  
and the river murmurs that give birth to you,  
as you give birth to the many worries  
awaiting me today.

# from Lashing Skies

Madeleine Monette

translated by Phyllis Aronoff & Howard Scott

## Mouth Full

from the nothing of space,  
a gust tears him from his desk,  
thunderbolt of rubble and shards,  
he's impaled from every side,  
propelled into a crazy framework,  
sudden sepulchre, half cave  
half mural, bristling with  
beams, machinery, rods,  
pipes, broken bits of furniture,  
where disembodied murmurs  
filter in, quivering waters  
that beg dumbfounded, open  
breaches here and there,  
making death an echo

eyes dulled, what's keeping  
his heart in? he is surprised  
to think, separated from himself  
except to suffer, a dry wave  
has surged into his head,  
this overflow from his mouth,  
a handkerchief full of dirt, a gag  
of mortar between his jaws,  
cruel premature embalming

in the acrid wad,  
fragments of teeth cut  
his tongue, stones uprooted  
among those half-swallowed,  
need to spit cough, but the cement  
has set, in this vise the slightest  
movement is only intention,  
to breathe is miraculous

from his neck, throbbing  
fracture bent on his shoulder,  
to his feet a hundred floors  
below, he is nothing but  
a seething pool of pain, a mess  
of exposed nerves electrocuting  
him slowly, savage irony and  
unfair reversal of events

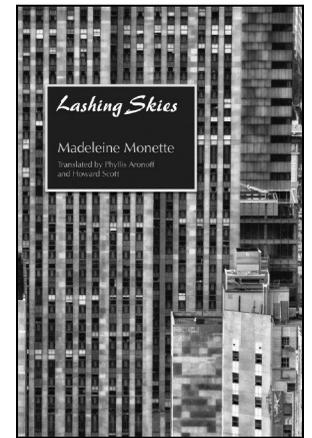
ten years earlier, he stepped  
over sandy corpses, an ocean,  
to come here to type numbers  
without measure or pleasure,  
long accounting tapes with  
fanatical cross-checking,  
flow of onerous fine print  
that wore him out, eagle eye  
numbed mind, driven by  
cravings with claws drawn in,  
dreams of money to burn

sludge from his cheeks,  
with the swollen taste of blood,  
swamps his skull, his tongue is  
a formless clod yearning for  
articulate sounds, words to bite into  
tenderly, to call up faces from before,  
far from the obsessive processions  
of quotes and dividends

after the displaced childhood,  
the country crossed on knobbly  
legs, from sun to sun in a skin  
of baked bark, his mechanical life  
as a data entry clerk, abstract minutiae,  
will come down to this, neither victory  
over fate nor salvation, air-conditioned  
detour on the path of an unlucky star,  
perverse springboard for the dawning,  
out of all proportion, of a destiny  
of stones, of dry storms

in his mind he says the names  
of his mother, of his shy  
teenage love, he rails against  
his tongue, wood tenon jammed  
in a mortise, the will of the muscles,  
their micro-efforts stop here,  
like the occasional reflexes of speech  
while reading, trussed wavelets  
of syllables against the palate

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A novelist, short-story writer and poet, **Madeleine Monette** was born in Montreal and lives in New York City where she wrote her first novel, *Le Double suspect* (1980, Robert-Cliche Award). Monette's first book of poetry, *Ciel à outrances*, came out in 2013. Short-listed for literary awards such as



the Marguerite Yourcenar Award (USA), the Prix France-Québec Philippe-Rossillon (France), the Prix Molson and Prix Ringuet de l'Académie des Lettres du Québec, and the Prix Elle Québec (Canada), she was awarded the first grant from the Fonds Gabrielle-Roy in 1994. Many of her texts were broadcast on radio; others were published in collections of short stories and literary magazines in Québec, English Canada, the U.S., and France. Madeleine Monette is a member of the Académie des lettres du Québec.

limbs gone astray, he spreads  
out of his skin boundless,  
pressed into dense brambles  
with broad precarious balance,  
I'm shutting down, he thinks  
furious with himself, stunned  
by his own words, I'm dying!

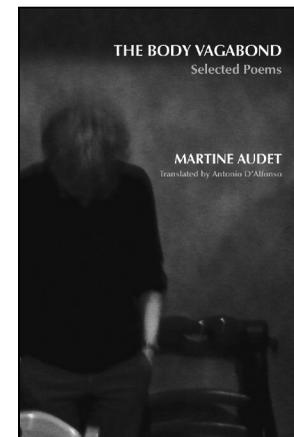
his cage eating him alive,  
he feels the heat of a blast furnace,  
sees himself as a brittle mummy  
no longer held by anything, charred  
crumbling of ancient linen, when  
everything gives way in a sigh  
that pales the sky, a din of solid  
mists, then at full speed he slides,  
dispersed and monumental,  
from the heights of the collapse

# from The Body Vagabond

Martine Audet

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

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Poetry  
100 pages  
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from Tables

one lamp in one location  
poorer in light source  
than your mouth  
acquainted to bread  
components of our fatality

fly birds fly  
take care of the sky

I'm walking towards the table  
love keeps me strong

\* \* \*

I linger at the table  
with food

inventing air and darkness  
the ways our hands are positioned

no matter how hard I wait  
every word's a shadow of astonishment in being  
and non-being

how I wanted to read my name  
on your lips

\* \* \*

On the table  
a bowl of shadows  
your hands

I set down  
one by one  
your heartbeats

I am no longer alone

to be alone  
no longer means  
I am without you

\* \* \*

In the vividness of your eyes  
the rising of us  
the sky converges  
sooner or later  
into existence

shuddering I gather  
whatever I thought I saw  
a window a table  
a poem perhaps

life locks itself in life

things in the end  
share their hearts

sooner or later  
the sky  
gathers  
the heart

\* \* \*

My voice has been left open on the table  
this voice of mine is memory  
disorder of birds  
is oblivion  
is lost  
in the body's water

I create a fault  
that finally drops me

I move away in my mind  
more absent than you

the table  
is  
a mistake

\* \* \*

With the slightest movement of lips  
twelve o'clock quivers without reason  
everything is leaning against life  
lowering its eyes on the table  
looking  
my fingers no longer frisk the waft  
neither your eyes  
nor your dogs

my hand cannot dream anymore

I take a walk outside  
and unleash my shadow

things lean against  
the table  
dogs  
begin to dream

\* \* \*

Now  
only bread is  
on the table

Born in 1961, Martine Audet is the author of seven books of poetry. Her work has been published in the most important anthologies of French-language poetry in Canada. Her poetry has garnered illustrious awards, including the Prix Estuaires des Terrasses St. Sulpice and the Prix Alain-Grandbois. She has been a finalist for the Governor General Award of Canada three times. Audet also co-wrote a book of poems for children with Michel Van Schendel. She is presently on the editorial board of the poetry magazine, Estuaire.



Antonio D'Alfonso is an award-winning writer and filmmaker. He was also a publisher for thirty-three years. He lives in Montreal and Toronto. His latest collection of poems, *The Irrelevant Man*, appeared in 2014.

I erase the poem's alphabet  
like someone who conceals a piece of evidence

why this need of transparency  
and my concern for it

what threat comes before the question

to one side of the eye  
the sky gathers effortlessly  
in the craziness of the eye of a rose  
into which you dip your hands  
life will not write love

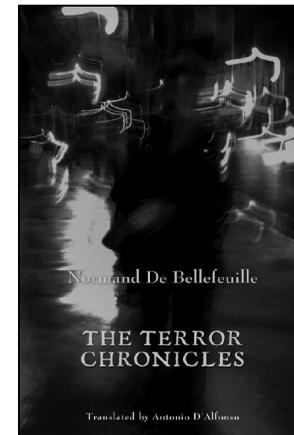
on the table  
a poem  
a transparency  
on which  
the eye  
begins to write

# from The Terror Chronicles

## Normand de Bellefeuille

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

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### CHAPTER III

#### Information on the non-definition of pain

there is no definition of pain  
yet there is information on pain:  
there is a great rhythm to pain  
which is not that of grief  
nor that of the night spent with a woman,  
unidentified survivor  
there is a specific colour to pain  
that is oddly different  
from the tints and tones  
of grief  
or from the more secretive colours  
– for example, of her groin and armpit –  
of the woman, unidentified survivor  
because I have got information  
on this non-definition of pain:  
“there is too much insolence and restlessness  
to play the definition game”  
this is what this information tells me  
which also speaks of pain in these terms:  
“strangely it is not without a hint of desert dust nor the  
fever felt in the lover’s journey, for pain does not know  
the  
meaning of difference and pole; besides, it mistakens  
sand  
time with embrace time”  
to think of pain  
is  
at times  
to remember  
the slow pace of opposites:  
this too is what information hints at  
this too murmurs  
for delicate is my information  
unwed, pagan, fugitive; it is without a people, Slavic,  
Slovene, half-Arab  
my information  
it knows the stuff of stranger  
it knows the weapons of lascivious destruction:  
it knows the small corners of memory unattainable to  
pain:  
and so  
there, a conversation with Paul-Marie Lapointe  
there, the oblique glance from your very young eye  
there, this émincé of rhubarb and water spider  
on this terrace overlooking the gorges of du Loup  
it knows quite a bit, the information  
and it recognizes  
you  
untying the scarves  
of pain one by one  
forbidding it  
all definition  
because there is no definition of pain  
that is not first of all the opposite of plenitude

that is not first the singular idleness of your plenitude  
in a town under the Tuscan sun  
or in the reluctant rain as you are eating haggis  
in Edinburgh  
just as Paul-Marie Lapointe smiled at you, saying:  
“don’t worry; never will he ever write a poem about this  
meeting, in what could be called Autobiography; what an  
idea, wouldn’t you agree?”

### CHAPTER IV

#### The wake of the whale

it speaks  
my life, the truth  
being made up of all that I don’t remember  
it speaks  
this photograph of my life is awful  
and memory, a lying magician  
because memory has many enemies  
it speaks  
inasfar as secrets are mistaken  
inasfar as thumbing one’s nose at truth  
and prewars of a new kind  
with powder and alcohol  
it speaks  
true freedom made up  
of everything I remember  
just there:  
between legend and table conversation  
it speaks  
just there:  
between the pounding desire to dance  
and the charms of motionlessness  
because  
two things  
well, there is love  
and there is death  
and without talking of the wake of the whale  
and the unbearable guests  
that show up at the wake of the whale  
it speaks: of course  
there are signs of true existence  
as many as grievances  
as many as witnesses for the defence  
as many as what will they say? what will they say?  
then again two things persist:  
well, there is well love  
and there is death  
will they say I  
was not invited to the wake of the whale?  
will they say that lying did not stop?  
that love (a thing)  
that death (a thing)  
are just a parade?

*Normand de Bellefeuille’s first book appeared in 1973 and DeBellefeuille has never stopped writing important books since. He is the author of essays and novels, but it is his poetry that has brought him fame. In 2000 he won the Governor General’s Award for Poetry. He has been a literary critic, a professor, and an editor. He is presently the Editor in Chief at the Éditions Druide.*



*Antonio D’Alfonso is an award-winning writer and filmmaker. He was also a publisher for thirty-three years. He lives in Montreal and Toronto. His latest collection of poems, The Irrelevant Man, appeared in 2014.*

it speaks  
love and death are unable to  
be to the maximum  
well, there is lying  
well, there is parading  
less enough in the words  
of love and death  
than the *not-to-be-to-the-maximum*  
in love and death

because the verb *to be*  
exists only in the present tense

and there is drama  
maybe it is not *collectable*  
in one instant  
this verb *to be*

that is what it speaks:  
*laps*  
*laps*  
*laps*  
till the deep side of my biography  
you alone know too well  
this final step  
of this dance  
painful jubilation!

# from Words and the Stone

Pierrette Micheloud

translated by Antonio D'Alfonso

## Deux poèmes construits avec les mêmes "pierres"

Pierre violette des aubes fauves  
Quand tu léchais les pieds du chevreuil  
Quand les yeux s'ouvraient face aux montagnes

Elle transparaissait de bonheur  
Vêtue à peine rien que son châle  
De premier soleil sur les épaules

Elle osait les mamelles suaves  
D'un lait de sauge (essentielle fleur)  
Elle osait ne pas être un mirage.

Pierre avant le soleil ce mirage  
D'être et cette aube de lait suave  
Quand s'ouvrait la fleur de ses mamelles

A ses pieds son châle, violettes  
Et bonheur dans les yeux. Au premier  
Chevreuil à peine osant transparaître

Face à l'essentielle montagne.  
Vêtue de rien comme ELLE mais fauve  
Tu léchais de sauges ses épaules.

La bise de mai quand elle était  
La fillette vive enrubannée  
De sa jeunesse et de parfums fous

Robe toute en fleurs de cerisier  
Couchant l'herbe à légères brassées  
Quand elle faisait surgir les fées

En capeline avec leurs secrets:  
'Beaux chapeaux de rires gardez-vous  
De laisser vos ailes s'envoler!'

Pierre au fond le plus secret du chant  
Où l'on te croit silence, je sais  
L'abrupte rumeur des voix éteintes.

La Mort embaumeuse aux doigts distraits  
Toujours se méprend à les empreindre  
De leur passé charnel obsédant.

Pour la Vie, onde qui n'a pas d'âge  
Est-ce davantage entendre, ou voir?  
Ombres fumées frissons nuages.

Pierre éclat de mousse mes étés  
De longue amour chaste un son de miel  
A coté de moi Diane déesse

Son souffle en suspens dans l'air doré  
Suscitait en foule des lycènes  
Ces papillons bleus presque irréels

De ses yeux divins sortaient en fraude  
Les Engendrés du Temps éternel  
L'hermine à mon front resterait fauve.

Pierre comment ont-ils fait les gnomes

Et les vulcains broyées dans l'incube  
Durcissement du courant de vie

Pour ôter une côte à la Terre  
Et d'icelle lui faire une lune  
La plus amoureuse des amies?

Imaginons l'écoute assidue  
D'un virelai arrivant des sphères  
Célestes chanté par les éones.

## Two Poems Carved with the Same Stone

Stone as purple as dawn's wildcats  
As when you licked the roebuck's hoof  
As when your eyes scanned mountain faces

She glowed with joyfulness  
Covering herself with a shawl only  
The first sunrays on her shoulders

She dared expose her smooth breasts  
White as salvia milk (an essential flower)  
She dared not become a mirage.

Pierre avant le soleil ce mirage  
D'être et cette aube de lait suave  
Quand s'ouvrait la fleur de ses mamelles

A ses pieds son châle, violettes  
Et bonheur dans les yeux. Au premier  
Chevreuil à peine osant transparaître

Face à l'essentielle montagne.  
Vêtue de rien comme ELLE mais fauve  
Tu léchais de sauges ses épaules.

Stone before the sun this mirage  
Of beingness and smooth-milk dawn  
As when the flower of her breasts blossomed

Purple at her toes her shawl  
And in her eyes joy. The morning roebuck  
At first too shy to stand on  
T  
he essential mountain. Like HER  
Dressed with nothing but the wild  
Your tongue on the salvia of her shoulders.

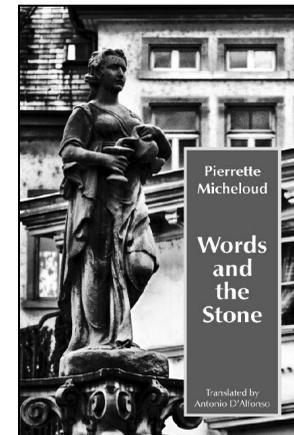
North wind of May when she played  
As a young lively girl with the ribbons  
Of childhood and wore wild perfumes

Cherry flowers patterns on her dress  
Lying on her back arms full of grass  
As she called fairies to storm out

With secrets in their wide-brimmed hats:  
'Lovely hats provoking laughter  
Be careful, your wings might free you!'

Stone of the deepest secret of song

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*Pierrette Micheloud discovered poetry at sixteen years old, reading the works of Villon, Lamartine, and Baudelaire. Between 1945 and 2004, she produced about twenty poetry books. She abandoned her more classical approach to writing verse for a more subtle and musical versification. Considered a troubadour of modern times, Pierrette Micheloud often rode her bicycle and recited her poetry throughout the Swiss countryside of Valais. She moved to Paris in the 1950s, where she developed a love for painting. She had more than ten major exhibits of her work during her lifetime. She passed away on 17 November 2007, at ninety-two.*



We take you for silence, I know about  
The overbearing rumours of muffled voices.

Death the embalmer with clumsy fingers  
Mistakes everytime the imprints  
For their past obsession of skin.

For a lifetime, ageless wave  
Is it better to hear or see?  
Shadow smoke shiver cirrus.

Stone froth sheen my summers  
Lengthy and chaste loves sound of honey  
At my side stood the goddess Diana

Her whisper hangs in the golden wind  
Inciting flocks of butterflies  
Blue almost unreal butterflies

From her sacred eyes fraudently flew out  
Time's eternal Begotten Ones  
The ermine moth on my forehead is wild.

Stone how could they create incubi  
With gnomes and crushed red admirals  
Hardening of life's current

Remove one of Earth's vertebrae  
And change it into a moon  
The most loving of friends?

Just imagine the diligent listening  
Of the virelay come down from  
The celestial spheres sung by the eons.

# from Autumn Leaves

## Manolis

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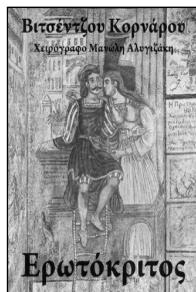
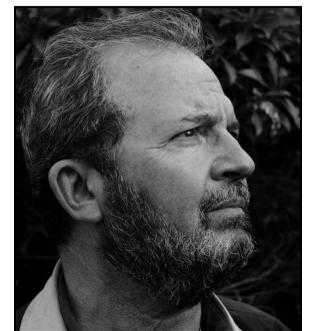
### ΚΑΤΑΙΓΙΔΑ

Επειδή πολλές φορές αναρωτηθήκαμε  
 γιατί γεννηθήκαμε χωρίς στον ήλιο μοίρα  
 ξέραμε όλοι τη σημασία της καταστροφής  
 που ζούσαμε απ' τα πανάρχαια χρόνια  
 κι η αθωότη των παιδιών σηματορρός μας  
 την ώρα που τόσο τρομαγμένοι κρύβαμε  
 τα μάτια πίσω απ' τις προαιώνιες μάσκες  
 κι αλήθεια ποτέ δεν μάθαμε  
 το νόημα της αλληλεγγύης  
 κι ακόμα καλύτερα  
 που ποτέ δεν σκύψαμε  
 μπροστά σου άλλους, εκείνους  
 που `λεγαν πως είχαν τα κλειδιά  
 της ευτυχίας μας στις τσέπες τους  
 κι εκείνος, με το ακρωτηριασμένο χέρι,  
 έπιασε την κιμωλία κι άρχισε να γράφει  
 στον πίνακα συνθήματα ανέγνωρα  
 και `μεις δεν έμενε τίποτε άλλο παρά  
 να υψώσουμε και πάλι μπαϊράκι  
 και να πάρουμε τα βουνά μέχρι  
 που να περάσει κι αυτή η καταιγίδα

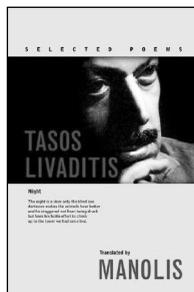
### STORM

Because time and again  
 we asked ourselves why we were poor  
 we knew the meaning of destruction  
 we had lived since the ancient days  
 the children's innocence remained  
 our guideposts when in horror  
 we kept our eyes  
 behind primeval masks and  
 truly we never learned the way  
 of fellowship and even better  
 we never bowed our heads  
 to the others, those who said  
 they kept the keys  
 of our happiness in their pockets  
 while him,  
 with the severed arm,  
 grabbed a piece of chalk and started writing  
 on the board undecipherable messages  
 and we had nothing else to do save  
 to again raise the revolutionary  
 banner and take to the mountains  
 until this new storm had passed

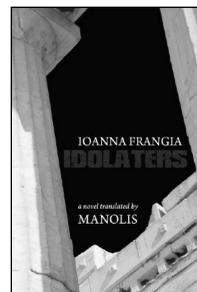
*Manolis is a Greek-Canadian poet. His translation George Seferis: Collected Poems was shortlisted for the Greek National Literary Awards, the highest literary recognition of Greece. He was recently appointed an honorary instructor and fellow of the International Arts Academy, and awarded a Master's for the Arts in Literature. Born in the village of Kolibari on the island of Crete in 1947, he emigrated to Vancouver in 1973 where he worked as an iron worker, train labourer, taxi driver, and stock broker, and studied English Literature at Simon Fraser University. He now lives in White Rock, where he heads Libros Libertad, an unorthodox and independent publishing company.*



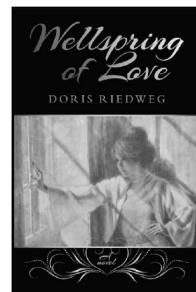
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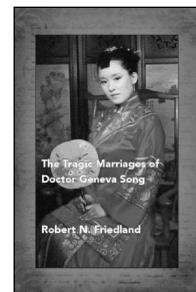
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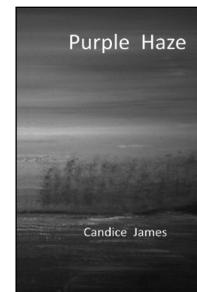
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