

CPR

*Resuscitating the art
of Canadian poetry*

CANADIAN POETRY REVIEW ISSN 1923-3019 JAN 2019 VOL 9 ISSUE 1 \$3.95

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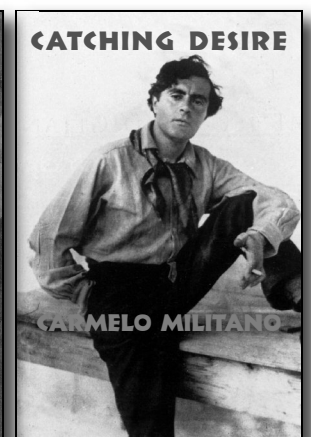
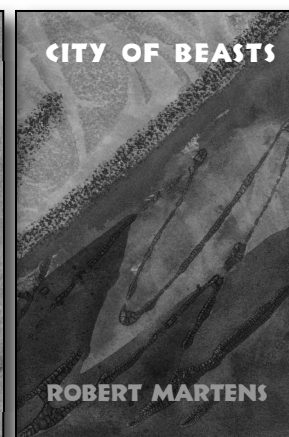
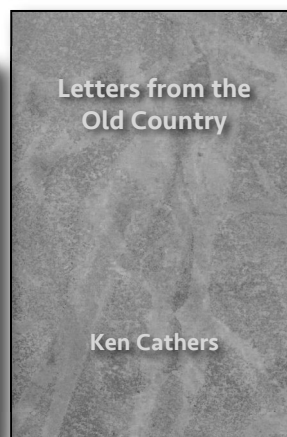
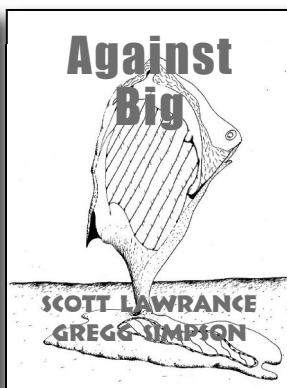
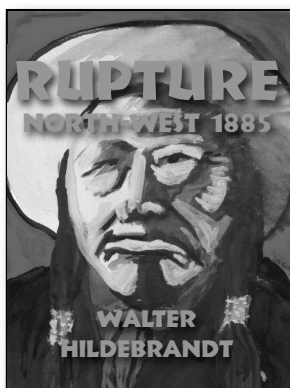
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Published by CPR: The Canadian Poetry Review Ltd.
Publisher/Editor: Richard Olafson
Editors: Candice James & Stephen Bett
Circulation manager: Bernard Gastel

Legal deposit at the National Library of Canada, 2014.
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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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from Letters from the Old Country

Ken Cathers

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-344-3
Poetry
80 Pages
6 x 9
\$23.95

Letters from the
Old Country

Ken Cathers



Ken Cathers is married with two sons and lives with his family in the town where he was born, Ladysmith, B.C. He has a B.A. from University of Victoria and an M.A. from York University in Toronto. His earlier books include World of Strangers, Blues for the Grauballeman and Missing Pieces (Ekstasis Editions). He has published six previous books of poetry.

sons

my father left
no words
to relieve this
emptiness.

a quiet man
from a silent
country

he left no stories
to grow on
no dreams
to believe.

my sons
I come from
a dark settlement

know only the music
of cries
& whispers:
a sad inheritance.

my sons
I have spent
a whole life
rebuilding

constructing a shelter
of words
against the storm
I cannot escape

part of everything
you have
so easily
left behind.

the far country

near the end
you were always
cold, curled

against the darkness
like some lost
explorer dying
in his tent.

I wanted to
tell you
how close you came
dead reckoning

but you were
already smaller
worn away by years

eaten up with
waiting, talking
all night

to those long gone
unseen. the end
getting closer.

even then
I could tell
you were travelling forward

sure the next clearing
next breath
would reveal wonders

while I could only
wish you
a blanket of sleep

bedroll tucked up
against the cold
covering

the bruises, those
unpatched parts of yourself
I never accepted

knowing there were
no secret routes
no hidden passages.

the maps
you lived by
fading to nothing

frail, tentative
as the touch
of your hand

wanting to be led
back somewhere
toward morning.

lure

how delicate
the hands must be
to feel the soft touch

of the unseen mouth
against
the barbed lure.

to let time slow,
the held breath
release, sense

the line drag free
through numb fingers.

one becomes fluent
with the river's
dialect

becomes one with
some unprayed faith
that curved steel

will fasten bone
to the quick twist
the wrist
trebles with. . .

it is a dream
reflected
in cold light

a nylon line
balanced
on the dawn river.

I wade into
a trance
of perfect ripples

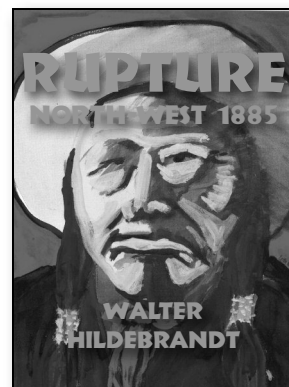
redrawn around
some unborn thing.

believe a shadow
rises to the cast
forever

& the charmed flesh
sings

from Rupture: North-West 1885 Walter Hildebrandt

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-328-3
Poetry
160 Pages
6 x 9
\$24.95



Historian and poet Walter Hildebrandt was born in Brooks, Alberta and now lives in Edmonton. He was the Director of University of Calgary Press and Athabasca University Press. His long poem Sightings was nominated for the McNally-Robinson Book of the Year in Manitoba in 1992. Another volume of poetry, Where the Land Gets Broken, received the Stephan G. Stephanson for best poetry book in Alberta in 2005.

this is the lake
that began
it
forward
into the past
the fire raging
a hundred years
an ancient place
traces in the air of Suknaski
that three legged coyote
on his winding road
to the lake
where caked and
brown red
farmer's blood
collected in a ditch
furrows
of cemented soil
where tattered clothes
no longer keep
birds away
and scarecrows scare men
scarecrow men
face down
on spiked wheat
rows neat even
lines where
seeds hope
returned as four
inch spikes
from grey-brown
earth
watched
by the men of Pointeix Cadillac
Eastend Val Marie
men with promises
of the bible
of the god
of the land
go forth and multiply
no word of drought
in bible
green looks grey
on the rolling hills

distant Vs of dark
thick bush
fecund earth
tinder dry
fuel
approaching
this grey
lake
white caps
peak
and fall
rusty swings
squeal
steel on steel
rocket slide
into dust
vestiges
of space age
imaginations
children squint
in seething heat
dirt
sticking
to throats
everywhere dry
Cypress Lake 1985

from city of beasts

robert martens

the contented cow

she remembers the early days,
the pendulous udders, the clover

so aromatic that even the breeze
tasted green. she remembers the

moist nudge of her mother's muzzle.
her youth was a river of milk,

sweet and thick and oh so slow,
and the languorous clip clop

of hooves surrounding her with
love. so how bad, really,

can the city be? she lows
softly to herself, her tail

swinging in the breeze, she's
filled with the milk of bovine

kindness – and if the young don't
look her in the eyes, and sirens shriek,

and butchers are on the prowl –
still, how wonderful it all is!

she stoops to lick from a block of salt.
the city is a pasture of plenty.

the pesky mole

they usually work
in teams, but he has
lost them, he is
digging alone,
he hears the faint
skritch of his brothers
somewhere in the earthy
distance, digging,
scraping, subverting,
oh yes the
streets will tremble,
already they are
bulging and cracking,
he chortles, he snortles,
he digs, and he's
blind, never will see
the sinking
city, but worry
will he not, he digs,
legs flailing, heart
bombasting, they
will pay, they
will fall for the
deeds they did,

the drowning water, the
noise, the anti-
molism, the city
will shake and roll,
tumble into the
peaceful silence of
cold black earth, in the
end we will all be
moles – and

oh he needs a
breath, just one
quick gulp, he
pokes his head into
open urban air,
he will never see
the sun, he will
never know the
red and green
rush, the towering
babble, the coffee
and smoke and
mirrors, but
worry will he not,
he smiles –

and bang!
and black
black pain!
oh his aching!
is it the police? –
no, a cow has
stepped on his head,
oh my dear, she
says, *i'm so*
sorry, here love,
let me help you up –

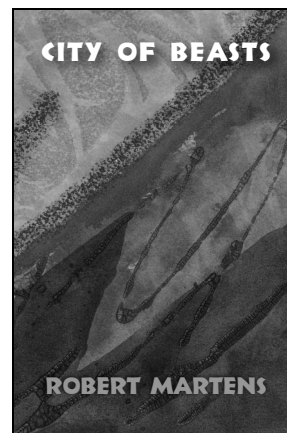
busy as a beaver

he slaps his tail
he scutters neat
it shall he thinks
this city so frail

it shall be clean
i will build a dam
and all the mean streets
will no longer be mean

i will slap and cram
and scutter neat
i will dam the vices
the cruel devices

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-346-7
Poetry
80 Pages
6 x 9
\$23.95



Robert Martens
*grew up in a vil-
lage founded by
Mennonite
refugees from the
Soviet Union.
Still in his teens,
he leapfrogged
several centuries
into the postmod-
ern milieu of stu-
dent politics at
Simon Fraser University. Robert subsequently set-
tled in Abbotsford, BC, where he writes poems and
enjoys the spoiled existence of the wealthy West.
He has co-written and co-edited histories,
anthologies, and periodicals. Robert is grateful for
poetry, music, movies, friends and family, and for
his cat, who sleeps soundly through the injustices
of this world.*

i will dam disorder
and all my kin
we of the order
will build a lodge

we will terminate sin
and our beastly city
shall banish sludge
and grime and gritty

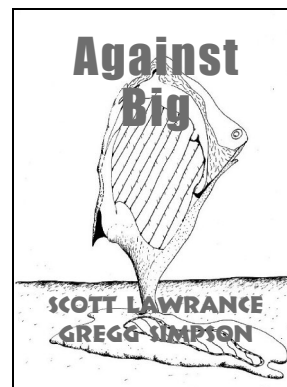
and the moles' false tremble
no more shall dissemble
by beaver fiat
their mounds shall be flat

he slaps his tail
he scutters neat
his busy busy feet
and a city so frail

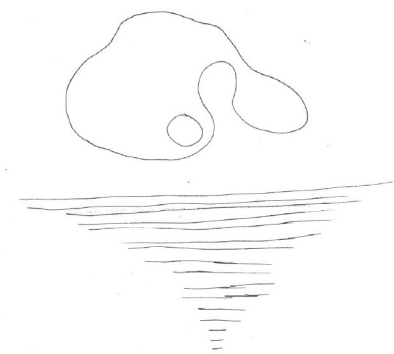
from Against Big

Scott Lawrance & Gregg Simpson

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-350-4
Poetry
52 Pages
4 x 6
\$23.95



Not worth
The paper it is
Netted upon

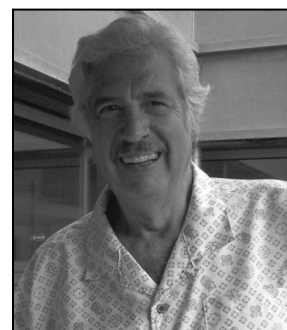


Scott Lawrance is the author of four books of poetry and has, in the past, edited two poetry magazines, "Raven" and "Circular Causation". As well as teaching, Dr. Lawrance has a background in both mental health services and employee assistance counselling.



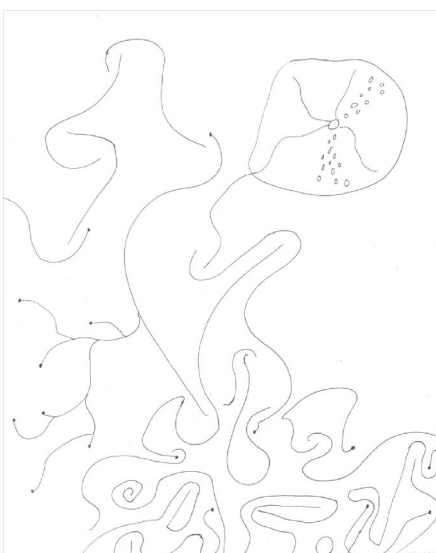
Upside
Down
The passengers & crew
Go down with the ship
While the captain
Floats
A-way.

Born in Ottawa in 1947, **Gregg Simpson**, has been active in visual art, music and multi-media performances since the mid-1960s. He was instrumental in early developments in Vancouver's 1960s "golden age" of multi-media, including the Sound Gallery and Intermedia.

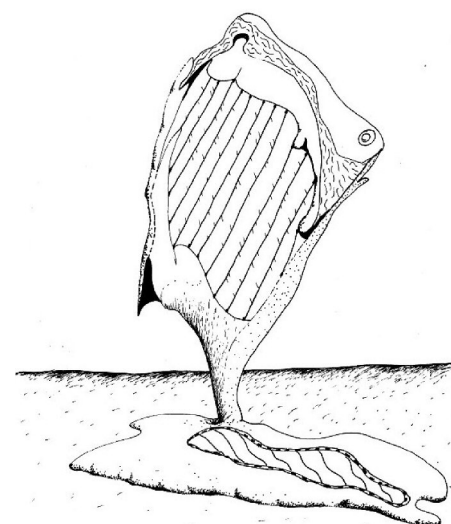


Condensations: Chemically, distillation is the boiling and condensation
Pf the fermented solution to increase it's purity,
which is why this is known
As the white stage of alchemy.

I know where the
Battleship is & the Destroyer
But I can't
Find the submarine



Beach
Bubble (washes) up on
beach

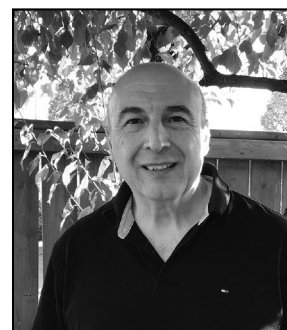
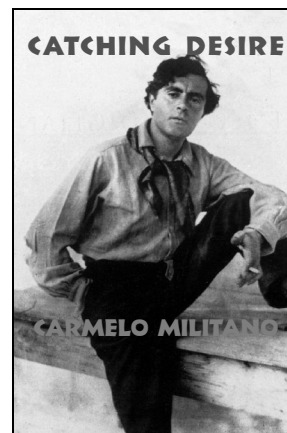


This skeleton
By gravity propped
Dreaming on
Buckwheat husks

from *Catching Desire*

Carmelo Militano

Ekstasis Editions
ISBN 978-1-77171-348-1
Poetry
150 Pages
\$23.95
5.5 x 8.5



Carmelo Militano is an award winning poet & writer. He won the F.G. Bressani award for poetry in 2004 for his chapbook *Ariadne's Thread*. His poetry includes the collections *Morning After You* and *The Stone Mason's Notebook*. Militano's novel *Sebastiano's Vine* was short-listed for the Margaret Laurence fiction prize, as was his book of stories *Lost Aria*.

A Son of the Stars

He declares early in his typhoid-induced fever that he wants to be an artist. His mother, Eugénia, however, notes he has not done so well on his exams of late and worries he is "chasing a shadow," this interest in art. She is uncertain whether to encourage or discourage his curiosity, his desire, his obvious ability.

Before Amedeo's birth, the family faced financial disaster. Eugénia's husband, Flamino, did not inherit the Modigliani family's financial skills, or luck. His banking shares and schemes collapsed. The mines in Sardinia, the lumber and charcoal trade started by Flamino's grandfather—an advisor to Napoleon, no less—failed. Eugénia concludes her husband has no business sense. Then new stresses and strains on the marriage. Silent distances emerge between them.

In her notebook Eugénia uses the metaphor that Dedo (the family nickname for Amedeo), at this point is like a "chrysalis," and it is impossible to predict what will emerge. Spiritually powerful, intellectually brilliant, charismatic and famous? Eugénia notes with pleasure her Amedeo is intelligent.

Eugénia is thoughtful, observant, protective, intellectual, pragmatic, and detached about the life gathering at her feet. Her family both a harbour and oasis from the turbulence outside the home but by the time Amedeo reaches the age of three, her and Flamino no longer share the same bed yet they have produced three children.

She picks up Flamino's nightshirt from the bed in the back room of the apartment facing the garden (she thinks that he be the one to deal with the constant yapping of the dog next door in the neighbour's garden in the middle of the night) and looks it over at arms-length. Her face is expressionless. She does not know him when darkness falls like a silent thud, when the candles are all snuffed. She shakes her head. She cannot not know him anymore. It is a mystery to outsiders what goes on in their marriage.

She knows she must be strong if she will save the family from Flamino's miscalculations, his carelessness, his repeated aloofness, his desperate silent pride.

It is not the first time she has been called upon to be resourceful and resolute, to save the family from the cruel verities of the street.

One time, Eugénia had piled everything in the apartment on top the bed where she lay pregnant with Amedeo, just before the bailiffs arrived to collect on the family debts. She directed Laure her sister, to stack the kitchen chairs in one corner of the bed in front of her, and in the other corner stack the family dishes and cutlery. They placed the table over her and on top of the table placed books and clothes. The bed sagged under the successive waves of belongings carefully heaped onto

the bed; it eventually looked like a vast 19th century junk heap with a female head sticking out at one end, beaded with sweat. They both knew the law of the land prevented bailiffs from possessing anything on a bed from a pregnant woman.

Eugénia remembers hearing shouts from the street below drift up through the open window before falling asleep. Laure kept the flies off her sister's face as she slept.

Shortly after giving birth, Eugénia and Laure start a private language school to put food on the table. The Garsins—Eugénia's family name—are intellectually and culturally superior to the Modigliani family. Eugénia can speak three languages: Italian, French, Spanish, also some Arabic. The Garsins see money as a necessity, but it is not to be valued for its own sake. The life of the mind and spirit is superior. The private language school prospers. She no longer needs her husband.

Dedo is her star pupil. Amedeo learns to read and write French quickly, the language of art, of love and seduction.

Later, as a young man in Paris, he reads the poetry of Villon, Baudelaire, Lautréamont, Verlaine. Drunk, he can declaim, in Italian with a perfect Tuscan pitch, Dante's *Inferno* in the cafés of Montparnasse: La Rotonde, Le Chat Noir, Café Danzig. Beatrice Hastings, poet and Amedeo's lover at the time, thinks he makes up the verses. She thinks it is impossible for him to recite so much poetry after so much wine and hashish. Plus, no one gathered around the café tables understands Italian or has read the classics.

The rumour is that Beatrice speaks French with her British tongue in Modigliani's cheek.

Garsin Blood

Isaac, Eugénia's father, suffered from a nervous breakdown
Felt the gardeners were persecuting him
Became an embittered, irascible old man
Could shout in Italian, French, Spanish, or Greek perfectly.

Aunt Laure lived in and out of institutions
Convinced men waited patiently to rape her.
She could tell by the way a man stopped to light a cigarette
Cupped a match in the shape of her vagina
It twitched when he struck the box.
Or she once saw a man step off a tram
He held a black umbrella on a sunny day, twitch.
But she especially feared poets
Overcome with passion at any moment
Would grab her weak wrists
Pull her into the dark corner surrounded by trees
At the edge of the park where she walked.

Aunt Gabriella did not have a persecution

complex,
Instead she killed herself in Rome
Threw herself down a flight of stairs
After, her apartment started to fill with blood.

Uncle Umberto asserted progress was devaluing
All his achievements in engineering
Decided it was futile to go on
And locked himself up in his studio.

But it was a multilingual family
Everyone spoke two or three languages
Read Nietzsche, Emerson, and Moses
Mendelssohn
Bergson's *Matter and Memory*
Brought home like a captured eagle.
Eugénia proud of her family neuroses
Proved their intellectual and spiritual gifts,
Connection to Spinoza.

2

Beatrice Hastings, amazed at Modigliani's psychic powers
Superstitious, he claimed kinship with Nostradamus.
He could feel foul weather approaching
Sarcastic, offensive, he raged at friends, foes, and lovers
Slashed canvases, self-destructive without touching a drop.
When rain finally came, he became soft and gentle
Touched her right cheek with three fingers, cooed and kissed her neck
Modigliani in Paris, all Garsin blood

BEYOND ELSEWHERE

Antonio D'Alfonso

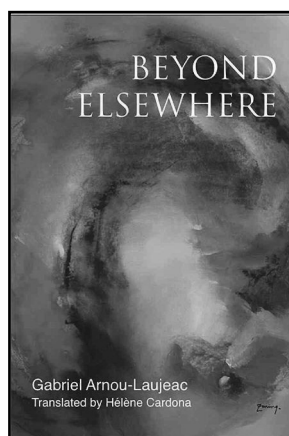
Every so often the French produce poetry brimming with spirituality. It begins with Eros but soon Agape flows in and sweeps reality into metaphysics. Such is Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac's undertaking. I quote Hélène Cardona's painterly words: 'Beyond this day-to-day too narrow for our wings exists a place revealing the supreme star.' The stuff contemplated in such a literary project goes beyond content, if such a visualization is appropriate.

Like a prayer, like a psalm, the form takes over and becomes its content. Words become diaphanous and what we read is sound, image. Whatever the reader wishes to use in order to appreciate this moment of religiosity.

In the Afterword, Basarab Nicolescu mentions William Blake as an inspiration. There is also Dante, George Herbert, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, William Everson. There are many, many more who explored this experience. Paul Schrader called it transcendental style. I like that. Something special occurs when you open any page of this long prose poem. It is like looking at the dark paintings of Georges Rouault's *Miserere*, 'the painter of original sin'.

'This is the absolute dawn... Everything here is an Elsewhere', writes Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac. I use the verb 'writes' but 'writing' is the last action a poet produces when embarking on such an adventure.

'Where is the burnt toast?' asks the realist. There are no kitchens, no living rooms, no fast cars, no quickies. 'Love tucks you in bed one last time and gives you the big night kiss.' Even passion is a vast hunger and its end



Beyond Elsewhere
Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac
Translated by Hélène Cardona
White Pine Press

devastating (Arnou-Laujeac's imagery used here). Clearly we are guided into a parallel world with its correspondences with this one.

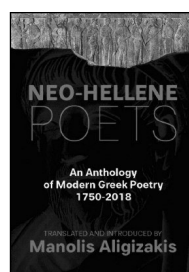
In her Introduction, Hélène Cardona mentions how the poetry 'conveys a wild carnal and sensual body, animal and glorious...'. Don't see paradox where there is none. No contradiction here. I mentioned parallelism but it is more like superimposition, an overlay of sorts. A pellicle-film covers the thing we thought we saw. 'All this warm flesh drunk with the wine of oblivion nauseated me.'

This is a short book, sixty-seven pages, which includes the Introduction and the Afterword. The intensity of the prose poetry took my breath away. I had no idea how to explore such a fine work without having to look elsewhere for explanatory concepts. That is the nature of the beast translation is. We are in unknown territory. Translators are guides to these foreign lands. Hélène Cardona is a masterful pilot.

Antonio D'Alfonso is a Canadian writer, editor, publisher, and filmmaker, and was also the founder of Guernica Editions.

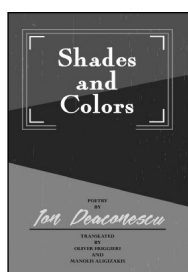


Gabriel Arnou-Laujeac



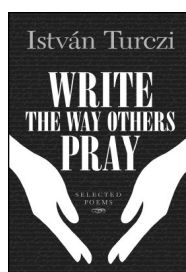
Neo-Hellene Poets
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Shades and Colors
poetry by Ion Deaconescu

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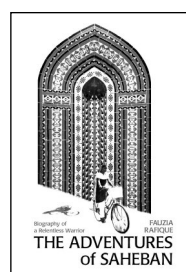
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libros libertad

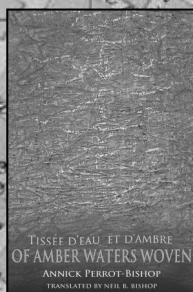
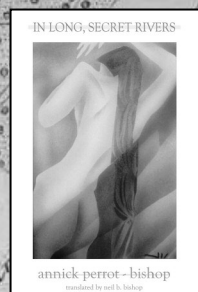
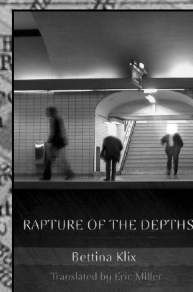
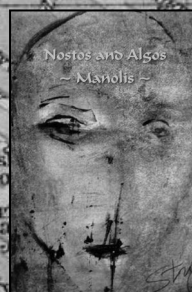
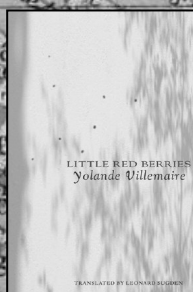
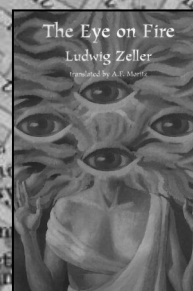
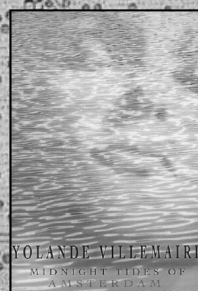
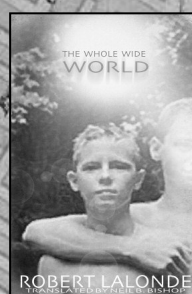
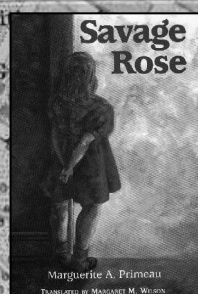
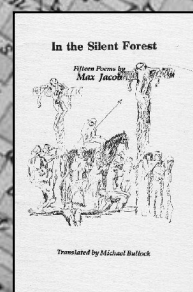
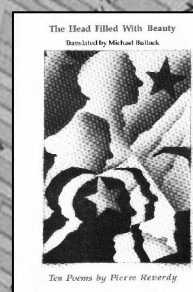
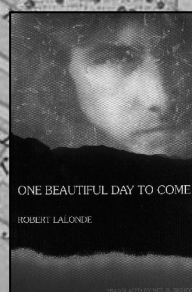
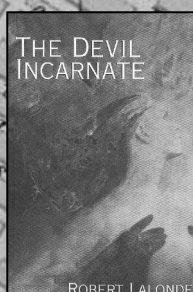
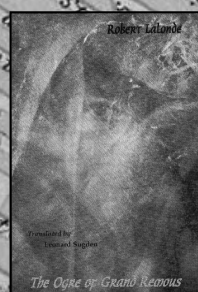
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