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On the Cover: image by Hyperlight
Artwork featured on the cover of
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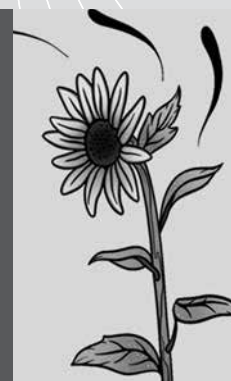


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Steven Ross Smith maintains quirky tone while playing with very short fiction pieces

Third book of prose contains pieces from 125 to 4,000 words long

by Ariel Gordon

GLIMMER

Steven Ross Smith

Radiant Press

\$22.00 pb, 152 pages

ISBN: 978-1-98927-470-5

After a decade in Alberta, Steven Ross Smith is back in Saskatchewan.

He had good reasons to leave Saskatchewan's vibrant literary community: he was appointed Director of Literary Arts at the Banff Centre and then Banff's Poet Laureate.

But the writer and arts administrator didn't get quite the homecoming he'd expected after moving to Saskatoon.

"Within a month of my arrival, COVID hit, and I've had much less 'real' contact with my local and provincial community, which is discouraging," Smith notes. "There have been, though, many opportunities that have come my way, to write and publish in the virtual and 3-D

worlds. That has kept me connected and occupied."

Since relocating, he has published two chapbooks with JackPine Press and is looking forward to the release of *Glimmer*, a collection of short fiction that ranges widely in style and form – set in bars and on beaches, portraying people falling in love and others just falling – but that maintains a quirky tone.



Steven Ross Smith

Glimmer is Smith's 15th book but only his third book of prose. He is known for his seven-book experimental poetry series *fluttersong*, the final volume of which, *coda: fluttersong 7*, was released by JackPine in late 2021.

"In the '80s and '90s, I published one book of short fiction each decade," says Smith. "They were departures from my usual practice of poetry. I thought then that I could aim to do one such collection each decade, but fell off that schedule until 2014 when I retired from the Banff Centre."

In the years since Banff, Smith wrote all 12 of the longer stories in the book. "I wanted to complete a manuscript while I still had some decades left," he says.

At the same time, Smith started experimenting with a different form.

"A quote I read from Italo Calvino led me to think of writing a series of one-sentence 'novels,'" he says.

"I wrote 50 of them, thinking of that concept and also about how people's attention spans seemed to be

shrinking to Twitter and texting lengths; I titled them *Fifty Short Novels for People on the Go*. Thirteen are included here. So my stories range from about 125 words to 4,000 words."

Alternating between short and long, these fictions are often stories about story-making – evidence of Smith's commitment to challenge his relationship to form and narrative.

"I am drawn to the illusive and allusive, to surrealism, metafiction, layers, anything

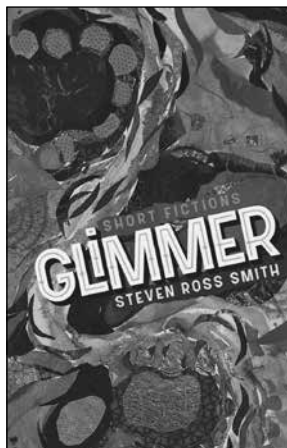
I can think of to shake up the received ways of telling stories (at least as I've observed them)," he says.

Now that *Glimmer* is making its way to readers and fluttersong has been brought to a close, Smith has begun work on new projects.

"I'm just fiddling, poking at the odd poem, jotting notes," he says.

"There's a story brewing, set near the Broadway Bridge in Saskatoon. Now I need to be reading more than I am, to get that particular fuel. I need to get to my desk more regularly, but I've been distracted and scattered by personal and logistical matters and COVID since 2019.

"I'm looking for a new horizon – personal and artistic – and it will be near the ocean." 🌊



Interlocking stories show fictional town of Ezra in different times, through different angles

Town grew from place to escape in Darcy Tamayose's imagination into collection of four stories

by Ian Goodwillie

EZRA'S GHOSTS

Darcy Tamayose

NeWest Press

\$20.95 pb, 288 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77439-047-4

Available as an ebook



Darcy Tamayose

Four stories, disparate in style but connected by key points and narratives: This is the basis of Darcy Tamayose's new book, *Ezra's Ghosts*. It's a collection of two novella-length stories bookended by two shorter ones that weaves its way through some unexpected places to tell an impressively compelling story that shows what loss and grief can do to people.

At the core of the book is the community of Ezra, a fictional place that feels all too real. That's especially true for anyone who grew up in Western Canada. Tamayose admits that "being born and raised on the Canadian Prairies and seeing it through this kind of lens has likely influenced aspects of *Ezra's Ghosts*."

That led to the creation of this spot that has played a large role in her life. "Ezra is an imagined place that I have escaped to for the last decade," says Tamayose.

"It's situated in agriculture country – surrounded by smaller Prairie towns and hamlets. It's formed by a blend of labour diaspora who were drawn from different parts of the world to work the coalmines, railroads, and farmland."

It's important to remember that this is still a fictional place. "Ezra is an imagined world layered with a quiet kind of horror," says the Lethbridge-based author.

While the community of Ezra is key, the complex narrative that plays out over four stories is the star of the show. Through the stories set in different times and

told in surprisingly different ways, the reader sees Ezra and its residents – who include a student, a murder victim, a depressed multimedia journalist who happens upon a very old Japanese man undergoing a fantastical transformation, and a woman in the future revisiting lost love – from a variety of angles.

Tamayose had a clear reason for this strategy. She explains, "Shaping *Ezra's Ghosts* as a collection of

stories rather than as one overarching novel gave me more freedom to explore diverse concepts, investigate variable character developments, and work with pace."

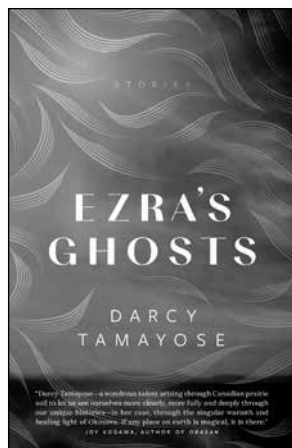
Further to that, the differing structures and narrative voices served another purpose, says Tamayose. "Each of the four stories relate to one another – but can also be read as stand-alones."

The stories are connected through a variety of threads. "Though seemingly diverse in storyline, different parts of the collection do quietly inform one another – the Ryukyu Islands; arrivals and departures circling Ezra; intersections of graphic design and illustration; the academic journey; and an underlying haunting," says Tamayose.

Reading *Ezra's Ghosts* is a journey. Each story follows its own path, and provides its own reward. But the building narrative takes several steps beyond that as the book experiments with structure and flow, leaving gaps and openings, in a way that makes for a deeply personal reading experience.

Ultimately, Tamayose simply wants to welcome her audience to enjoy the ride. "I hope that readers of *Ezra's Ghosts* might find fragments of sentences, passages, or even word groupings that allow them moments of escape (or even bits of surrealistic blur)," she says.

"If you do end up reading *Ezra's Ghosts*, thank you for spending the time." 🌿



Collection of single-panel comics brings *Bogart Creek* back onto paper, where it started

Derek Evernden gratefully appreciates comparisons to classic series The Far Side

by Brock Peters

BOGART CREEK, VOLUME 3

Derek Evernden

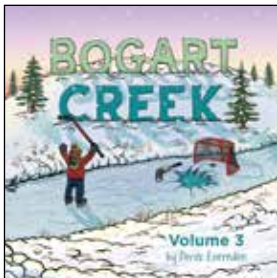
Renegade Arts Entertainment

\$19.95 pb, 136 pages

ISBN: 978-1-9897541-0-8

Available as an ebook

From drawing caricatures at Ontario Place to studying representations of “non-humans” in visual narratives, Derek Evernden has long been a student of cartooning and comics. With *Bogart Creek*, Volume 3, Evernden makes a hilarious and thoughtful addition to his ever-expanding body of work.



Evernden began drawing *Bogart Creek* in 2017, regularly posting the single-panel comics on Instagram, @bogartcreek. His first collected volume of comics debuted in early 2019, with the second volume following in 2020.

Devotees of his work will find familiar elements in

Volume 3: dark surrealism, clever nods to pop culture, and conceptual exploration, all anchored by Evernden’s solid linework and eye for detail.

New readers should have no fear of playing catch-up, however; *Bogart Creek* very intentionally eschews any notion of recurring characters or storylines. “Single-panel comics aren’t tethered to any ongoing story,” says the Alberta-based cartoonist and illustrator. “It’s very freeing. They’re totally conceptual.”

A persistent observation in reviews and descriptions of *Bogart Creek* is its resemblance to Gary Larson’s classic *The Far Side*. Evernden appreciates the comparison. “Anyone who sees my work and says it’s on a par with Larson’s is paying me the highest compliment,” he says. “Some people have actually thanked me for keeping the *Far Side* torch going.”

Evernden’s influences go far beyond Larson and even cartooning, partly due to his education in fine art. “Cartooning is all about expressive figures and efficiently conveying movement and emotion,” he says, citing classical heavyweights like Caravaggio and Rodin as sources of inspiration alongside animators like Chuck Jones and fantasy artists like Frank Frazetta and David Mazzucchelli.

“Not surprisingly, I was also drawn to artists that felt more over the top and fantastical,” he continues. Francisco Goya’s famous painting *Saturn Devouring His Son* “feels very Bogart-Creekish” to Evernden – and those familiar with the strip will be quick to agree.

There is an organic flow to the comics in Volume 3, and many are arranged to create humorous juxtapositions. Evernden confirms that there is intentionality in the comics’ ordering, thanks to his wife Gillian Williamson. “She looks for pieces that complement one another in some way, without being thematically identical,” Evernden says. Her intuitive eye allows her to arrange the comics “so that there is a diagonal sweep into, and away from, the fold.”

Evernden admits that there is an element of tension between the pen-and-paper roots of the comic strip and the inevitability of the digital world. “Reading comics on a screen has never appealed to me compared to books or newsprint,” he says, though at the same time, posting comics online offers “the potential to reach a wide audience and get instant feedback.”

While the first volume of *Bogart Creek* was drawn with pen and ink, since then Evernden’s comics have largely become a digital production. But the genesis still occurs on the physical page: “I dearly miss traditional media and really enjoy the initial ball-point sketches I do when coming up with jokes.”

In addition to working on ideas for graphic novels and a more traditional comic strip, and a crime comic included in the forthcoming first issue of *Alberta Comics Anthology*, Evernden maintains a steady output of *Bogart Creek* comics to Instagram, usually two or three per week.

He reassures his readers, “There’s already a pile of cartoons set aside for Volume 4.”



Derek Evernden

GILLIAN WILLIAMSON

A gift for healing and questions around humanity blend through magic realism

Chris Kelly's latest novel centres on a boy who attracts dying animals

by Margaret Goldik

A KID CALLED CHATTER

Chris Kelly

University of Calgary Press

\$24.99 pb, 326 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77385-264-5

Available as an ebook

A *Kid Called Chatter*, Calgary author Chris Kelly's latest novel, deals with profound themes in a beautifully fantastical story. The short chapters, spare prose, and faultless dialogue propel the reader into a world where it seems possible for dying animals to search out solace from a human.

Kelly wrote *Chatter* "mostly through trying to imagine the life of someone who is so directly confronted by the unspeakable mysteries of existence, and is completely isolated for that very fact." That someone is a kid who becomes known as Chatter.

As *Chatter* opens, a dying jackrabbit comes out of the undergrowth to seek comfort from a toddler. All the child knows is a shiver, a "call-and-answer," as the animal approaches him. Throughout his life Chatter will be unsure whether he has a gift or an affliction, and he has no words to explain this mystery.

A Kid Called Chatter is set during the Great Depression and Chatter has

been placed in a series of orphanages where his gift for attracting dying rabbits unsettles the staff, and his differences make him a target for children's bullying. He eventually escapes into the woods.

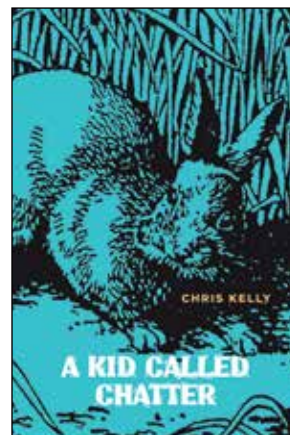
Every time an animal needs Chatter, he feels the "yearn," and waits for the animal to make its way to him. But when an animal has been mutilated by a human, he senses a rot alongside the yearn. And that is how he comes to meet Greaves, a boy who feels a need to mutilate animals, although he doesn't know why.

"Greaves is driven by motivations he doesn't understand," says Kelly. "He has lost much of his humane discretion to the violence he has committed in order for acceptance into his community, and has primarily made his way through the world on instinctual reaction."

Kelly's first novel, *On Quiet Earth*, portrays a zombie apocalypse. While

this new book and its magic realism and grounding in history would seem quite a departure, his first book, according to Kelly, "does share thematic concerns with *Chatter*, primarily about the effects of violence and the isolation forced upon [the] marginalized, and pays close attention to the psychology of those who are faced with circumstances they don't even have the language to explain."

After his flight from the orphanage, Chatter finds a group of children



living in a culvert, and they become his family. When Greaves attacks Chatter's friend, Chatter leaves the woods, and ends up with Ruddy Lou, a moonshiner and con man. Here Chatter comes to believe that he has – perhaps – a real gift for healing.

This belief sends him back to the community in the culvert, where his powers are put to the test. Through it all, Chatter's ability to draw the dying wildlife to his arms is unwavering.

Kelly says, "Chatter can be sure that his presence, his nearness to the jackrabbits in their last moments, is of some degree of comfort. This is virtually his only lasting consolation in the wider mystery of his life."

"This simple act of compassion, of a giving presence, is perhaps the closest anyone can get to the sort of healing power Chatter believes he has." 🌿



Chris Kelly

K. BUBRIC

Fresh, original approach key to tackling terrorist stereotypes, political topics in novel

Idea for tale came out of Zarqa Nawaz's own experience after publishing memoir

by Paula E. Kirman

JAMEELA GREEN RUINS EVERYTHING

Zarqa Nawaz

Simon & Schuster

\$24.99 pb, 320 pages

ISBN: 978-1-9821-7737-9

Available as an ebook

Jameela Green's big wish in life is to see her memoir on the bestseller list of the *New York Times*. However, it didn't seem to be happening. When Jameela seeks spiritual guidance at her local mosque, the new imam (and recent immigrant) Ibrahim Sultan is disturbed by how shallow Jameela appears, and will assist her on one condition: Jameela must perform a good deed.

After accepting the imam's terms, Jameela attempts to help an unhoused man, who ends up getting recruited by a terrorist group. What follows is a chain of interconnected, bizarre, and tragic events that make up the story of Zarqa Nawaz's new novel, *Jameela Green Ruins Everything*.

Regina-based writer, film and television producer, and journalist Nawaz is best known for creating the immensely popular CBC comedy series *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, as well as her memoir *Laughing All the Way to the Mosque*, which was shortlisted for the Leacock Medal for Humour.

Nawaz's first novel was inspired by personal experiences. "When ISIS first emerged, I was very discombobulated. Where did this group come from? What was going to happen?" she says.

"And I was also in a vulnerable state because my memoir, *Laughing All the Way to the Mosque*, didn't make it to the *New York Times* bestsellers list and I was licking my wounds, so the two ideas merged. A

disgruntled writer accidentally joins a terrorist organization and brings it down through incompetence."

Nawaz brilliantly and carefully balances contemporary social issues, such as Western imperialism and racism, with satire – without losing the seriousness of the issue or compromising the hilarity of the story.



Zarqa Nawaz

"I believe that the key to finding balance is to write in a fresh and original way about a topic that's been demonized for so long, which in the case of the novel is Muslims as terrorists," she explains.

"I feel that if you bring context to the issue and don't portray people as stock stereotypes, and instead give them nuance and complexity, you can bring something new and innovative to the story."

Nawaz wrote the novel over a decade, and along the way, some political content was removed and some

shifted with the times. "When Trump got elected, it changed the narrative of what a terrorist looked like, so I was able to incorporate the issues of white supremacy and hate crimes against people of colour in a way that was more relevant during his tenure than before when all the attention was on Muslims," she says.

Jameela Green Ruins Everything provides readers with a fresh sense of hope and optimism. "No matter how bleak things are, if you have faith and believe, it'll be okay. I am an observant Muslim, and we have a mantra, seek help in patience and prayer and always trust that you are being taken care of. And that's ultimately the core

theme of the book," says Nawaz.

"I want readers to know that it's okay to laugh at and with Muslims," she continues. "We have the same foibles as everyone else. And yes, some of the themes in the novel are uncomfortable, but sometimes it's good to live with discomfort and work your way through it."

"Keep Calm and Carry on Reading the Novel, as they say." 📖



Former research scientist blends crime and climate research in latest novel

'Contact with deep time' inspired Jaspreet Singh to confront realities of changing world

by Bev Sandell Greenberg

FACE:

A Novel of the Anthropocene

Jaspreet Singh

Brindle & Glass-Touchwood Editions

\$22.00 pb, 256 pages

ISBN: 978-1-92736-697-4

Available as an ebook

“As a novelist, my focus is to create remarkable fictional characters,” says Calgary author Jaspreet Singh. “In *Face* [*: A Novel of the Anthropocene*], I was interested in the voice of a concerned science journalist.” Part mystery and part ghost story, his third novel is a thought-provoking tale about science, duplicity, climate research, and narrative.

Singh is a former research scientist who has published six books. His writing has been translated into several languages and has received international attention.



Jaspreet Singh

His 2021 memoir in essays, *My Mother, My Translator*, takes up the manuscript his mother began, and explores the family’s migration story from India to Canada as well as the long-term impact of historic events on them.

Set in Calgary and India, Singh’s new novel involves two women in their 30s who meet in a creative fiction writing course. Though Lila once studied geology at university in India, she now writes award-winning articles for an Alberta science journal and is developing a crime novella. Lucia is also working on a crime story based on real events but hasn’t yet committed pen to paper. Lila and Lucia bond, and often meet for coffee to discuss their literary projects.

The plot thickens when Lucia’s husband, a climate researcher named Amitabh Ghosh, meets Lila, and she

recognizes him as Vikram Jit, the inspiration behind her crime story. Not only did he and Lila attend the same university years ago in India, but he and Lila’s best friend Gauri were lovers before she unexpectedly died. The police considered Gauri’s passing accidental, and Vikram Jit was soon after assumed to have committed suicide. Yet now Vikram Jit appears to have reinvented himself and does not admit to ever knowing Lila.

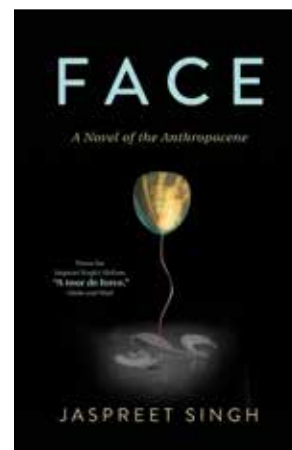
Singh was inspired to write *Face* after visiting some climate labs in Germany. He shadowed a glaciologist who gave him a tour of the ice-core archive. He was allowed to touch an ice core and its traces of a volcanic eruption several thousand years ago.

He also shadowed a deep-sea scientist who showed him a sediment-core archive and encouraged him to touch one of those cores. It had shown traces of the mass extinction 66 million years ago that wiped out 75 per cent of plant and animal species. Singh says, “The contact with deep time was something of a turning point, the beginning of *Face*.”

The novel’s first-person narrative is written in succinct, lucid prose from Lila’s point of view. Singh says, “Perhaps she is a stand-in for a lot of people who believe in critical thinking and want to engage in the discourse and overwhelming emotions connected to climate change.”

As for the word *Anthropocene* in the subtitle, Singh asserts that *Face* is the first of his books in which he properly acknowledges that we all live in the present geological epoch known as the Anthropocene.

“My characters – aware of the new condition – are haunted not just by the past, but also by the future,” he says. “While they do the detective work and engage with memory, history, and speculative solutions, they also try to convey that sense of awe and wonder.” 🌿



Story in form of letters allows ‘eavesdropping on people’s lives’ across an ocean

Idea of writing a novel was formed through Kelly Kaur’s involvement in Writers’ Circle

by Margaret Anne Fehr

LETTERS TO SINGAPORE

Kelly Kaur

Stonehouse Publishing

\$22.00 pb, 352 pages

ISBN: 978-1-9887543-9-0

Kelly Kaur, in addition to teaching at Mount Royal University and Athabasca University, has many and varied literary publications to her credit, including poems, stories, and anthology contributions.

But the challenge of writing a novel had eluded her over her 35-year career. Now, as the Calgary-based author prepares to launch her first novel, *Letters to Singapore*, Kaur shares what she calls the “pure terror” that led her to this untested format.

When she was selected for the Borderlines Writers’ Circle through Alexandra Writers’ Centre and Writers Guild of Alberta in 2019, and given Aritha van Herk as her mentor, “I had to come up with something to write, and having no idea what to do, I figured I would write a novel.”

The juxtaposition of Kaur’s homeland Singapore, an exotic hothouse flower, with Calgary, a Rocky Mountain “rough-around-the edges” cowboy- and oil-dominant culture, was rich fodder for her to explore.

Kaur chose an epistolary form – a series of letters to and from protagonist Simran and her friends and family back in Singapore over three years. The letter format proved to be an excellent literary device, says Kaur. “I could go back and forth. I could fill in gaps. I could delete it. I could carry five stories in intriguing ways.”

Kaur admits she loves that this form allows “eavesdropping on people’s lives, the forbidden act of reading private thoughts, secret lives, and confidential letters.”

She continues, “I think of the delicious unfolding of events that tumble onto the page and the excruciating

wait between one letter to the other as they travelled from country to country, continent to continent. How much would have changed in those time gaps as one waited for the letters to arrive.”

Letters to Singapore was drawn from Kaur’s own history as a foreign student in Calgary trying to navigate not only the challenges of a university education but also those of a new environment and cultural standards that often left her flummoxed.

Kaur is emphatic that while she is drawing on her own experiences, this book is not autobiography. She says, “Readers might assume this was my life, my family, and my friends. But it’s not. It’s fiction. I realized that as a writer, I had the artistic licence to create and recreate. Soon, I got bolder and made the stories flow and come to life.

“Of course, there are bits and pieces that are my experiences – like the skiing misadventure, the weather, and the Calgary Stampede. In the end, I figured out that all my careful spying, observations, listening, and watching people’s lives around me had been very useful, then and now.”

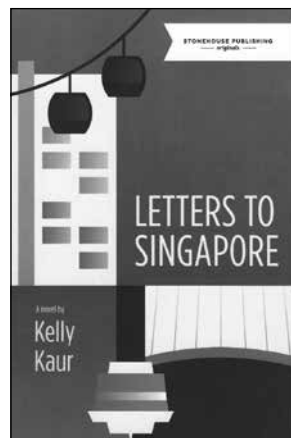
While the theme of her novel was developed around the contrasts of diverse cultures, many situations described in the Singapore correspondence reveal universal issues, including domestic abuse, grief, marital infidelity, unwanted pregnancies, and the feeling of being on the outside.

“As a BIPOC woman and immigrant, my stories were true to my background, culture, and tradition. I wrote these letters with the authenticity, vigour, and honesty the women deserved,” says Kaur.

“We may come from different worlds, backgrounds, and cultures, but we are all the same; we are connected by life. That’s what I want readers to take away.”



Kelly Kaur



MORE FICTION

SHORT FICTION

BODIES IN TROUBLE

Diane Carley

The stories in this collection capture precise moments of awareness, portraying a variety of characters, such as teens with divorced parents and couples disengaging, who are coping with those relationships – family, neighbours – that can't be avoided, navigating without obvious landmarks. (Radiant Press, \$22.00 pb, 152 pages, ISBN: 978-1-98927-473-6)

THE SCENT OF LIGHT

Kristjana Gunnars

Kazim Ali introduces five novellas written by Kristjana Gunnars between the late 1980s and late 1990s, works that blend fiction, autobiography, literary theory, and philosophy to document a life of perpetual motion in a discontinuous, subversive style that reflects the feminist, nomadic life of the narrator. (Coach House Books, \$25.95 pb, 350 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55245-438-1, available as ebook)

SETTING FIRE TO WATER

Phoebe Tsang

This debut collection of 17 stories illuminates the lives of those outside of the Canadian mainstream, where characters – an Asian artistic over-achiever, a reality TV star, a heartbroken accountant, and even a fairy tale fox – long for home, for love, for artistic achievement, and for spiritual fulfillment. (Thistledown Press, \$24.95 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77187-219-5)

SHAPERS OF WORLDS, VOLUME II

Edited by Edward Willett

This anthology of science fiction and fantasy stories includes new work by authors such as Kelley Armstrong, Marie Brennan, Candace Jane Dorsey, Edward Willett, Susan Forest, and Matthew Hughes. The stories range in tone from humorous to adventurous, in time from alternate histories to possible futures, and in place from Earth, to distant planets, to fantastic realms. (Shadowpaw Press, \$32.99 pb, 546 pages, ISBN: 978-1-9893982-8-9, available as ebook)

NOVELS

ALL THE SEAS OF THE WORLD

Guy Gavriel Kay

A small merchant ship sends two assassins ashore on a dark night – a young woman who has escaped servitude and is bent on revenge, and a man who as a boy was exiled with his family for their faith. This intimate and epic novel evokes a near-Renaissance world, and offers moving reflections on memory, fate, and power. (Viking Canada, \$32.00 hc, 528 pages, ISBN: 978-0-7352-4471-9, available as ebook and audio book)

THE APOTHECARY'S GARDEN

Jeanette Lynes

Set in Belleville in 1860, this novel tells the story of Lavender Fitch, a 28-year-old spinster who resorts to selling flowers at the market after her father, the local apothecary, died and left her the family house and gardens. When famous spirit medium Allegra Trout and her assistant, Robert, arrive in town, Lavender harbours hopes for contact with her dead mother and for a relationship with Robert. (HarperCollins, \$22.99 pb, 304 pages, ISBN: 978-1-44346-466-6, available as ebook)

ARE YOU SARA?

S. C. Lalli

Two women, Sara Bhaduri and Sarah Ellis, connect at the campus bar, and each takes a rideshare home at the end of the evening. Sara wakes up in the car on the wrong – rich – side of town, and walks back to her apartment to discover the police and the dead body of Sarah on her doorstep. Who was the real target? And why would anyone want either of them dead? (HarperCollins, \$24.99 pb, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-1-44346-699-8, available as ebook)

COPPERHEAD ROAD

Brad Smith

It's 1936 in North Carolina, and the molasses business is drying up along with everything else. Except for moonshine – that just might save the Flagg family. Ava, home from the city, takes charge and recruits Bobby Barlow, who is having a hard time staying out of jail, but who can

drive through anything, fast enough to stay ahead of the cops – or so he hopes. (At Bay Press, \$34.95 hc, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988168-62-3)

A CRACK IN THE TEAPOT

C. P. Hoff

Celia, a precocious seven-year-old, her Nan, and her best friend, Archibald, are back in this second book in the Happy Valley Chronicles. Celia has learned from the finest fictional characters how to make the most of her life and take charge, no matter what is thrown at her – or what she throws at others. (Black Crow Books, \$19.99 pb, 250 pages, ISBN: 978-0-9812215-7-1, available as ebook)

DOWN CAME THE RAIN, A ROXANNE CALLOWAY MYSTERY

Raye Anderson

After a relatively peaceful winter learning her new position running the RCMP detachment in Fiskar Bay in the Manitoba Interlake region, Roxanne Calloway spends the spring dealing with a murderer known online as the Culvert Cop Killer, who may be targeting her whole team. (Signature Editions, \$17.95 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-773240-99-2)

IN THE DARK WE FORGET

Sandra SG Wong

Cleo Li is slowly recovering her memories after waking up with amnesia beside a mountain highway. Her parents are missing, and her brother reveals that her mother had just won a \$47 million lottery. The police and Cleo's recurring nightmares are pressuring her to remember how she ended up drugged and abandoned. (HarperCollins, \$24.99 pb, 368 pages, ISBN: 978-1-44346-556-4, available as ebook)

MUD LILIES

Indra Ramayan

Chanie, at 18, has been working the streets of Edmonton since Brenda found her four years ago. With her last arrest, she was given the choice of jail or a program to help her start a new life. She chooses Begin Again, but Blue is not the supportive guy she thought he'd be, and Brenda isn't about to let her go straight. Chanie must draw on everything she has to break free. (Cormorant Books, \$24.95 pb, 392 pages, ISBN: 978-1-770866-40-9, available as ebook)

MY VOLCANO**John Elizabeth Stintzi**

A jogger in Central Park notices a mass of stone in the centre of the reservoir, a mass that grows, in just three weeks, into an active stratovolcano nearly two and a half miles tall. This coincides with an escalation of strange phenomena around the world, and the novel follows a global and diverse cast of characters, including an eight-year-old boy in Mexico City, a folktale scholar in Tokyo, a white trans writer in Jersey City, a nurse working with Syrian refugees in Greece, and a nomadic herder in Mongolia.

(Arsenal Pulp Press, \$23.95 pb, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55152-873-1, available as ebook)

NIGHT IN THE WORLD**Sharon English**

This gentle novel explores the emotional hold of place and the need for humans to reconnect with each other and nature, as it follows three people – brothers Justin and Oliver, whose mother just died, and Gabe, a biologist studying moths and at odds with some of the methods of scientific inquiry.

(Freehand Books, \$24.95 pb, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990601-02-6)

THE RIVER TWICE**John Bemrose**

Set during the First World War, this lyrical and humane novel moves between a southern Ontario factory town and the devastated French countryside where Canadian troops are entrenched. Ted Whitfield returns home to his wife, Miriam, but connects only with Miriam's sister Grace, who is dealing with her own secret trauma, telling her his story from the front lines.

(Thistledown Press, \$24.95 pb, 354 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77187-220-1)

SISTER SEEN, SISTER HEARD**Kimia Eslah**

Set in Toronto in the 1990s at a time when the feminist movement was just beginning to recognize the experiences of women of colour, this novel portrays an Iranian immigrant family – two daughters in young adulthood, and their hard-working parents, all with different ideas of how to live the next phase of their lives. A brutal assault on the younger daughter

and the aftermath add to the struggles they undergo individually and as a family. (Roseway Publishing-Fernwood, \$24.00 pb, 272 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-520-0, available as ebook)

TO THOSE WHO KILLED ME**J. T. Siemens**

Ex-cop now fitness trainer Sloane Donovan finds a close friend dead in her car, apparently by suicide. Something seems off, so Sloane, with the help of PI Wayne Capson, investigates, questioning talent agents, sex workers, tennis instructors, millionaires, and more, looking for answers in this debut crime fiction novel introducing a tough and complex detective. (NeWest Press, \$21.95 pb, 390 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77439-043-6, available as ebook)

WAN**Dawn Promislow**

Jacqueline, a visual artist in South Africa in the early 1970s, starts to unravel when an anti-apartheid activist hides in her garden house. She is a captivating narrator, becoming acutely aware of her privilege, her complicity, and the importance of art, as she negotiates risks in a world that cannot hold.

(Freehand Books, \$24.95 pb, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988298-99-3, available as ebook)

WHAT IS WRITTEN ON THE TONGUE**Anne Lazurko**

This meticulously researched historical novel about keeping one's humanity in the midst of war and colonization follows 20-year-old Sam who, after being released from Nazi forced labour in Holland at the end of the Second World War, is now on the island of Java fighting in the Dutch army, questioning the cause of regaining control of the colony.

(ECW Press, \$22.95 pb, 328 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-619-2, available as ebook)

WHY I'M HERE**Jill Frayne**

Fifteen-year-old Gale is experiencing post-traumatic stress panic attacks, the result of her mother's abuse and, while she is out of immediate danger, she knows her little sister, still at home in Ontario, is not. Helen is the counsellor trying to help Gale deal

with her repressed memories, but unsure whether she can distance herself from her own tragic past. Set in the Yukon, this novel portrays the beauty of the northern landscape and the resilience of two people. (NeWest Press, \$21.95 pb, 280 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77439-049-8, available as ebook)

WONDER WORLD**K. R. Byggdin**

Isaac Funk's hopes for studying music and embracing queer culture in Halifax hit a dead end when he receives word that his grandfather in Newfield, Manitoba, has died and left him an inheritance. He sees no reason not to return to the Mennonite town he left 10 years ago, to the father who disowned him, and the rules and judgments that restricted him – which just goes to show that he's in rough shape, and his self-deprecating sense of humour can only take him so far.

(Enfield & Wizenzy-Great Plains, \$21.95 pb, 176 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77337-073-6)

GRAPHIC NOVELS

THE POND AND BEYOND**Audrey Lute**

This sensitive and poignant book explores the delicate ecosystem just beneath the water's surface and the beautiful creatures that are part of it, and makes clear the peril of ignoring these environments if humans want to survive on Earth.

(At Bay Press, \$32.95 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988168-58-6)

SIEGFRIED DRAGON SLAYER**Mark Allard-Will, illustrated****by Jasmine Redford**

Adapted from the ancient Norse *Völsunga Saga*, this accessible retelling follows Prince Siegfried, who seeks glory and parental recognition by hunting down the most feared dragon in the realm, and the gold and a cursed ring that it protects.

(Renegade Arts Entertainment, \$24.99 pb, 144 pages, ISBN: 978-1-9897541-1-5, available as ebook)

Poet explores displacement, migration, and colonialism in debut collection

Joanne Leow says she relies on instinct, draws from autobiography in writing her poetry

by Kyla Neufeld

SEAS MOVE AWAY

Joanne Leow

Turnstone Press

\$18.00 pb, 120 pages

ISBN: 978-0-88801-753-6

Joanne Leow's debut collection of poetry, *Seas move away*, weaves together narratives of movement, displacement, migration, and return. "This collection is dedicated 'to those who move away,'" she says.

"Throughout the collection, I am thinking about the loss that comes through leavings and migrations. When I first left for college in the U.S. from Singapore, I remember my mother saying to me, 'You know you'll never be able to come back again.' I didn't understand exactly what she meant then, but I think I am closer to an understanding of that now."

Leow, who teaches literature at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, has moved between two continents over the last two decades: Asia and North America. Though Leow wrote some of the poems in this collection as far back as 2001, now felt like the right time to bring the different parts of her life together.

"I think there is definitely a strong element of autobiography in my poetry," she says. "There are also snatches of other fellow immigrants' voices and stories."

Leow wrestles with her conflicting roles as an immigrant and person of colour who is also a settler on Canadian soil, such as in the poem "Rubric," which refers to her work as an assistant professor: "my futile work is / to stem this broken-down chorus / of the imperial language / its rules thrown to the wind / shattered by so many other tongues."



Leow explains further: "The longer poem cycle, 'A Year in Saskatchewan,' is an attempt to convey an uneasy 'settling' or, really, 'unsettlement' in Treaty 6 Territory, which I'm still learning about as I go. I am trying to understand what it means for me to be on these territories. What are my obligations and responsibilities? What am I not seeing and what do I see? These epistolary poems are my way of conveying these mixed emotions."

seas move away also interrogates the nature of power in a section of found poems entitled "When power applies to behavior." These poems quote Singaporean statutes and laws to explore how language is used to control and enforce behaviour.

I am trying to understand what it means for me to be on these territories. What are my obligations and responsibilities? What am I not seeing and what do I see? JOANNE LEOW

"Singapore inherited a lot of laws from its time as a British colony, and the government has since enacted many other laws that prohibit various freedoms of expression, assembly, and media," explains Leow.

Leow, who describes herself as self-taught, has been writing poetry for decades and relies on her instincts.

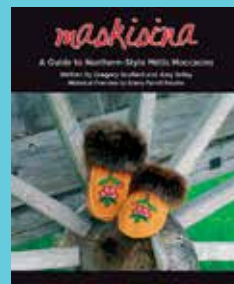
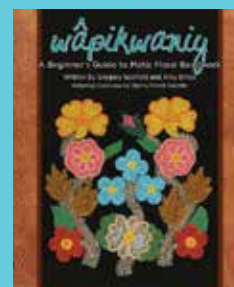
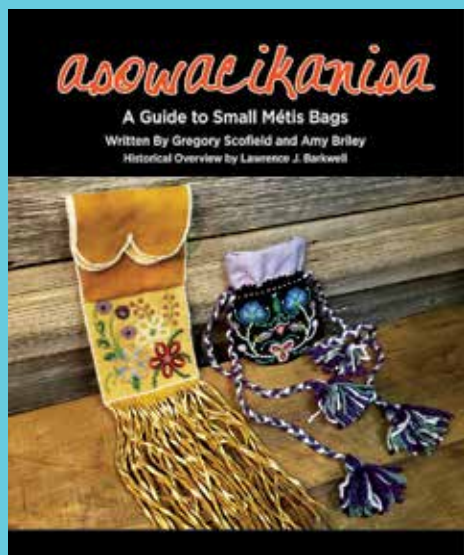
"I often hear my poems in my head before I set them down on paper," she says. "So most of the

time the line break comes naturally to me in my more conversational poems. When I am editing something where I am working out of an existing document, like the found poems, I am more deliberate in my line breaks as they become more visual exercises on the page."

One of the most important things Leow has learned is that her poetry isn't just for herself.

"Sharing my poems with close friends made me understand that my words were for a larger audience." 🌿

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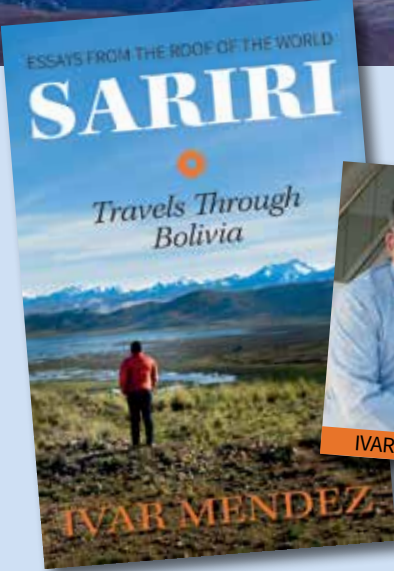
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Brigette DePape's work contributes to the conversation of healing, as others' did for her

Poetry collection explores 'navigating our way back to ourselves' after trauma

by Ariel Gordon

SUN COMPASS

Brigette DePape

At Bay Press

\$24.95 pb, 132 pages

ISBN: 978-1-988168-61-6

People say you'll never forget the launch of your first book. That adage has been turned upside down by the pandemic and its restrictions on gathering the last two years, but Winnipeg poet and playwright Brigette DePape hasn't let that bother her.

"Plays were the first pieces of writing I shared with the world," says DePape, who wrote three plays for fringe festivals across Canada. "I wrote my first play when I was 15, and I remember the sense of excitement on opening night. I feel the same sense of excitement as I release my first book of poetry!"

Her debut, *Sun Compass*, focuses on the poet's unpacking of past trauma. Sparse text on the page uses images of flowers, birds, butterflies, sky, and more flowers, building an accumulative power as the speaker moves into the renewal of spring.

"When we experience trauma or pain, we sometimes feel separated from our true selves, or important parts of us," DePape says. "*Sun Compass* is about learning to trust our own internal compass and navigating our way back to ourselves."

DePape is sharing her journey, hoping that it will bring comfort and encouragement to readers.

"The creative process of writing helped me to move through pain to a place of healing and joy," she says. "So many books have helped me in my healing. I wanted to contribute to the conversation, too."

In this collection, DePape wanted to delve into what the jacket copy calls "the magic of resilience."

"For me there's magic in realizing we have the strength to leave situations that harm us," DePape says. "We have the courage to build an existence that lights us up. Hard situations give us magic powers to know what doesn't work for us, and to illuminate where we want to be."

Once At Bay Press accepted the manuscript, DePape worked with Winnipeg poet and editor Sarah Ens.

"We met up for lunch meetings at Old Market Square and she showed me the ropes of the local poetry scene," says DePape, who studied creative writing at the University of Ottawa.

"She's an amazing editor! A key question she asked was 'How do these poems speak to each other?' Sarah saw patterns in my poems that I didn't see, and encouraged me to build on them."

One of the major shifts in the manuscript was braiding a series of short poems, DePape's go-to mode, into five long poems.

"I like the immediacy of the short poem to express an exceptional moment or powerful emotion, like many of Rupi Kaur's poems," says DePape. "I like how short poems woven together into long poems can tell a larger story."

Another valuable part of the process was that DePape got to have input on her book's cover.

"I loved working with Chief Lady Bird who is the illustrator of the cover image,"

DePape notes. "I love her drawing of a sunflower, which captures key themes of the book: resilience, the movement from hibernation to growth, and the hopefulness in connecting with the sun." 🌻

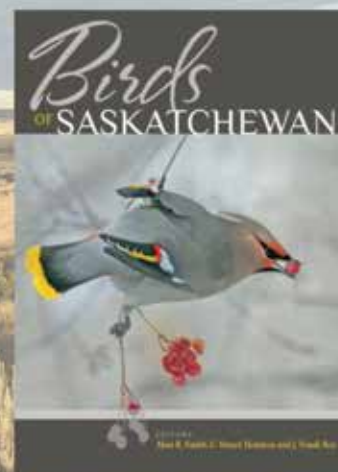
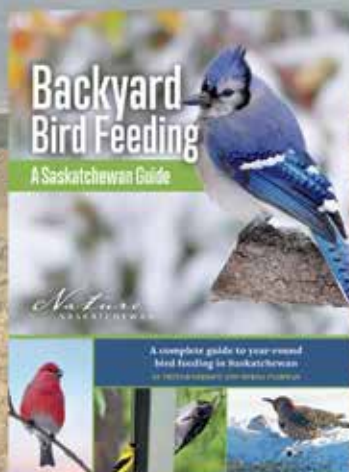


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In forms such as the glosa and the sestina, Gunn's poems travel through place – Burma, Vancouver, Trieste – and time – with concise histories of mask use and spontaneous human combustion – examining absences, artifacts, and accidents of the heart.

(Signature Editions, \$17.95 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-773240-98-5)

AFTER BEOWULF

Nicole Markotic

This fresh and whimsical rendering of the classic Anglo-Saxon story deconstructs it while embracing and challenging the heroics of Beowulf, the man who fights monsters and who practically invented the tradition of entitled bravery.

(Coach House Books, \$21.95 pb, 144 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55245-442-8, available as ebook)

ARBOROPHOBIA

Nancy Holmes

The elegies, litanies, and indictments in this latest collection by Holmes explore the wonder, guilt, and grief of human life and the state of the natural world. Boundaries between humans and nature, between the spiritual and the earthly, are blurred, and the problem of hope in times of crisis is tackled.

(University of Alberta Press, \$19.99 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-602-0, available as ebook)

BLACK UMBRELLA

Katherine Lawrence

This poetry collection – in vows and curses, love poems and elegies – follows a life through childhood, middle age, and into the older years, exploring the complexities of marriage, infidelity, and the mother-daughter relationship with clear-eyed courage.

(Turnstone Press, \$18.00 pb, 106 pages, ISBN: 978-0-88801-747-5)

THE BOOK OF SMALLER

rob mclennan

Concise, impressionistic, elusive, and challenging, these short prose poems

break open syntax to portray the daily work of parenting and/while/as writing, the “unbound capacity of sentences,” responses to the work of other poets, and winter, always and still winter, until it's spring.

(University of Calgary Press, \$19.99 pb, 126 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77385-261-4, available as ebook)

CATASTROPHE THEORIES

Mari-Lou Rowley

The poems in Rowley's latest collection reflect an unstable, surreal, and catastrophic world, exploring the lives and concepts of mathematicians alongside dream imagery and Rowley's love of science and nature. The poems fracture reality, then bring the reader back to small moments of truth or joy.

(Anvil Press, \$18.00 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77214-191-7)

CODA: FLUTTERTONGUE 7

Steven Ross Smith, designed by Brian Kachur

The final book in the fluttersong series revisits the previous six fluttersong books, taking phrases from every seventh line, reducing, weaving in new elements, morphing, and embellishing words and fonts. The design adds a whole other level of play, with pages die cut in the shape of the Roman numeral seven, held together with a metal rivet in one corner, so readers can (as they must) turn and swivel pages to read lines that move in all directions to work around the die cut holes – a visual, aural, and tactile experience.

(JackPine Press, \$30.00 pb, 52 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927035-46-7)

FIELD REQUIEM

Sheri Benning

Through the recitation, chanting, liturgy of names – crops, birds, weeds, animals, chemicals, fish, trees, machinery – and through subtle images of smells, textures, hints of light, and breaths, these powerful poems reveal the social and ecological effects of the change of land use in the Saskatchewan Prairies from family farms to industrialized agriculture.

(Carcanet Poetry, \$22.99 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-80017-151-0)

FLYWAY

Sarah Ens

This long poem combines a narrative of the poet's Mennonite grandmother's flight to Canada with psalms (in a call and response) of Prairie birds and grasses, tracing connections between the Russian Mennonite diaspora and disrupted migratory patterns of grassland birds in a profound exploration of home.

(Turnstone Press, \$18.00 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-0-88801-756-7)

FROST & POLLEN

Helen Hajnoczky

This lush and playful collection is in two parts – the first, poems that merge gardens of flowers with desire in ways both glorious and menacing, and the second, a retelling of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, from the perspective of the environmentally conscious Green Knight. Demanding and rewarding, these are poems to revel in.

(Invisible Publishing, \$19.95 pb, 136 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988784-80-9)

Go

Shelley A. Leedahl

Images of windows, magpies, and oh so many gardens take the reader from the lakes of Saskatchewan to the inner city of Edmonton, the ocean of the West Coast, and the finest travel destinations in Europe, deeply, and humorously, reflecting on losses, loves, and all to be grateful for along the way.

(Radiant Press, \$20.00 pb, 112 pages, ISBN: 978-1-98927-467-5)

KIREJI: PARTIAL PORTRAITS & BIOFICTIONS

Christian Favreau

Made up of fragments stitched together, this long poem represents the process of finding one's poetic voice through others in one's life, mimicking and adapting, but first listening, as some birds do to find their song. The exquisite book design uses a Japanese stab binding with leaves bound into the book at the most fragile moments, demanding a careful reading.

(JackPine Press, \$30.00 pb, 36 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927035-43-6)

Intimacy, 'rural, down-home feel' incorporated into play about dementia on a family farm

Play later had songs workshopped into it, making a big difference, Daniel Macdonald says

by Luis Reis

BLOW WIND

Daniel Macdonald, music by Eileen Lavery
Playwrights Canada Press
\$18.95 pb, 144 pages
ISBN: 978-0-36910-363-5

The wind takes. It breaks. It bends. It harms and steals. But it brings too." So says the character Sarah near the end of Daniel Macdonald's play *Blow Wind*.

Set on the Prairies, Macdonald's drama about a farm family dealing with the decline of the mother, Kathleen, uses wind to great effect, while exploring and echoing themes and storylines from Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

The shifting of time from the present to Kathleen's memories is another important element in *Blow Wind*, poetically capturing Kathleen's growing dementia without sounding researched or inaccurate.

"Some of the action does not rely on flashbacks so much as drifts into the mind of the main character, Kathleen, and her ever-deteriorating memory. While they are memories, they are not very reliable ones. They are simply the imaginings of her life both now and in the past," Macdonald explains.

A similar fluidity is found in the breaking of the fourth wall throughout the play, beginning with the characters introducing themselves to the audience. The original audience was at Dancing Sky Theatre, an intimate space in a small rural town.

"This idea of intimacy, I felt, was an important characteristic in the building of the play for this theatre," says Macdonald.

"And I thought that one of the best ways to create some of that intimacy and perhaps a sort of rural, down-home feel to the play was to have the actors, or rather the

characters, speak directly to the audience as though they were friends and sort of knew each other."

The playwright, who also runs the New Voices program at Gordon Tootoosis Nikaniwin Theatre in Saskatoon, says his creative process typically involves listening to music or reading related works, in this case, *King Lear* and other works exploring Shakespeare's themes.

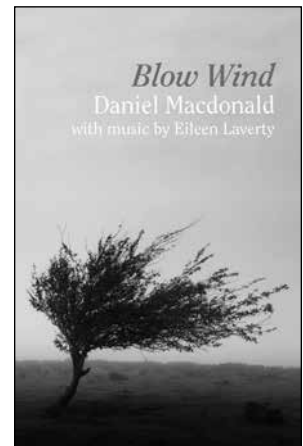
Blow Wind required some additional work, including researching Prairie farm stories to get the family right – "the way people talk, the way they think about the farm, the conflicts they might have with each other, and just the sense of the struggles that a farm family have both economically and emotionally" – and working with Eileen Lavery on the musical ideas.

Music was a big part of *Blow Wind* from the beginning, as Dancing Sky Theatre always brings on musicians to play during their productions. Once Macdonald knew he had a talented singer-songwriter on board, he invited Lavery to write a few songs for the play and sing them live, beginning a collaborative process of incorporating them directly into the action of the play.

The published play will include lyrics to the songs, chord charts for the music, and a link to a website to access a recording of the music by Lavery.

Macdonald is grateful to Lavery for her brilliant songwriting work. "While the play is not, technically, a musical, the music really does change the way you appreciate the play, and it would be a very different piece of theatre without it," he says.

"It was originally written without songs in it, and then slowly workshopped in order to work the songs into it, and it made all the difference in the world." 🌿



Daniel Macdonald

MORE DRAMA

CANADIAN PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTS AND DEBATES: A SOURCEBOOK

Edited by Anthony J. Vickery, Glen F. Nichols, and Allana C. Lindgren

This volume collects play scripts and archival material such as photographs, petitions, performance programs, and musical scores to explore what these documents tell about the values, debates, and priorities of theatre artists and audiences and the significance of plays, dance, opera, circuses, and other performance genres in Canada from the 17th century to the early 1970s.

(University of Alberta Press, \$89.99 pb, 816 pages, with images, thematic table of contents, foreword, index, ISBN: 978-1-77212-604-4, available as ebook)

I AM WILLIAM

Rebecca Déraspe, translated by Leanna Brodie

It's 1577, and Margaret Shakespeare, age 13, must hide her remarkable writing or be persecuted by witch hunters. Her

not-so-brilliant brother William discovers her talent, and the events that follow change their lives forever. This strikingly original play with music tackles the big feminist questions.

(Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$15.95 pb, 48 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927922-95-8)

INTERDEPENDENT MAGIC: DISABILITY PERFORMANCE IN CANADA

Edited by Jessica Watkin

This book by, for, and about Disabled theatre artists features four plays – *Deafy* by Edmonton playwright Chris Dodd, *Smudge* by Alex Bulmer, *Access Me* by Boys in Chairs Collective, and *Antarctica* by Syrus Marcus Ware – as well as an interview with Niall McNeill.

(Playwrights Canada, \$24.95 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-0-36910-286-7)

OUT THE WINDOW

Liza Balkan

This documentary theatre project interrogates police violence, mental illness, racism, witnessing, and theatre through an examination of the aftermath of the

beating death of Otto Vass in August 2000. Balkan, a witness to the death, draws on verbatim court transcripts, and audio, video, and text from interviews with lawyers, police officers, family members of the deceased, activists, and artists to create a highly theatrical play and a public forum. This book chronicles its evolution over the years.

(Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$15.95 pb, 72 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927922-92-7)

TWO OF THE BEST IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD: AN ANECDOTAL HISTORY OF 2 PIANOS 4 HANDS

Richard Greenblatt

The story of two “piano nerds,” and a backstage account of the creation and continued life of the stage hit *2 Pianos 4 Hands*, this book includes contributions from the co-creator of the play, Ted Dykstra, and tells how the beginning of an idea became an international success.

(Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$24.95 pb, 300 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927922-98-9)

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Experimental novella grew out of years of performance pieces, plays, and monologues

Confronting conformity arises as a theme for John Brady McDonald

by Serge Desrosiers

ELECTRICITY SLIDES

John Brady McDonald

BookLand Press

\$16.95 pb, 96 pages

ISBN 9781772311495

Born and raised in the West Flat area of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, John Brady McDonald is a Nehiyawak-Métis multidisciplinary writer and artist, a celebrated poet, and a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. He currently lives, works, and writes on the edge of the Northern Boreal Forest near Prince Albert National Park, and is the only reliable guide through his curious new novella, *Electricity Slides*.

"*Electricity Slides* is the story of a man whose world has been reduced to the loosely connected, dreamlike vignettes he finds himself having to struggle through, all the while chasing the muse he didn't ask for, and being simultaneously chased by the world he left behind," explains McDonald.

Inspired by works such as Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* and Hunter S. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, McDonald says "the major influence for this book has to be William S. Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*. The non-linear, oddly paced set-up of his book made a huge impact on me when I read it for the first time."

One influence in McDonald's work, you may not have guessed, is Robbie Robertson's song, "Somewhere Down the Crazy River."

"I would play that song over and over again while writing, trying to get that same languid feel," McDonald shares.

Much of the source material for *Electricity Slides* came from McDonald's performance art pieces, one-man plays, and monologues that he had been performing for years.



John Brady McDonald

KYMBER RAE PHOTOGRAPHY

He drew on his own life experience as well, even if unintentionally.

"At moments in my life, I have found myself or my work conforming just to survive, while struggling with PTSD, with addictions, with my sexuality and with chasing the dream of having my work published when, for twenty years, it felt like no one wanted to hear what I had to say and not trusting enough in my own muse."

Confronting conformity as a means of survival is a prominent theme throughout the story, which for McDonald has functioned as a sort of catharsis.

"There is absolutely immense pressure as Indigenous people to create solely 'Indigenous art.' That pressure is part of the allegory of *Electricity Slides*, as the main character feels put upon to return to a role he was unable to fit into at the time, and the feelings of mental isolation and imprisonment that it brings has the potential to either drive him off the edge or walkway," McDonald explains.

These personal experiences are felt in the melancholic struggles of the characters as they try to make sense of the bizarre world they're bound by.

"That, with the struggle against the limitations of the publishing industry, contemporary Indigenous society, and being a liberal, bisexual, light-skinned Indigenous man in rural Saskatchewan, all unintentionally came out in the book."

While the identity of the protagonist is mostly kept a mystery throughout the fever-dream-like narrative, the challenges faced by the character represent the humble victories of the writer.

"I see *Electricity Slides* for what it is – an experimental work given little chance of publication, let alone success, that has seen the light of day. The fact that its very existence is a result of sacrifice, determination and being willing to take a risk can stand as an example of Indigenous resiliency." 🌱



Speculative fiction highlights perseverance and resistance, imagining a Métis way of life in the future

Chelsea Vowel's collection part of writing the return of ancestral ways into being

by Dallas Hunt

BUFFALO IS THE NEW BUFFALO

Chelsea Vowel
Arsenal Pulp Press
\$21.95 pb, 340 pages
ISBN: 9781551528793

In *Buffalo Is the New Buffalo*, a new collection of Métis-influenced science fiction short stories by Chelsea Vowel, she carefully situates herself between three lakes: Lake Isle, wâpamon sâkahikan (Wabamun Lake), and manitow-sâkahikan (Lac Ste. Anne).



Chelsea Vowel

Vowel states pointedly, “I locate myself geographically between these lakes and note their interconnections to creeks and rivers because these boundaries make much more natural sense than range

and township roads, highways, and hamlets that have only existed for a hundred years or less.”

From manitow-sâkihikan, Vowel emphasizes that she has a “responsibility to, as much as is possible, accurately portray the history, kinscapes, landscapes, and waterscapes of [her] community.”

However, the paradox of so heavily situating oneself in a particular territory while writing about space and other dimensions is not lost on Vowel: “This might sound strange, given that



I’m writing speculative fiction – but I cannot accurately imagine otherwise if I’m not rooted in the reality of these spaces.”

This locating of oneself is not only critical for Vowel as an Indigenous person, but it comes to influence and inflect the engaging and incisive sci-fi stories housed within her book: a superhero named Michif Man; the use of Métis metaphysics; the development of nanotechnology to save Indigenous languages, among many others.

Indeed, as Vowel states, these stories are not just about dominant narratives of the Métis in the past and present, but rather an imagining of “what living in a ‘Métis way’ could look like in spaces and times we haven’t (yet) been.”

In focusing on Indigenous characters *already* in the future, which is to say not relegated to a distant past, Vowel not only highlights the perseverance and resistance of Indigenous communities, but how they do so in an environment of “ruinous extraction” – including the extraction of resources, knowledges, and identity itself, which settler colonialism enables.

As Vowel writes, she is not interested in the logics behind a phrase like “pipelines are the new buffalo” – a take on the well-worn phrase “education is the new buffalo” – but rather wants to focus on the buffalo themselves, as they are not only her kin, but were integral to Métis communities historically.

“If we accept the narrative that the only possible future is one in which we sacrifice our relationality with our human and more-than-human kin, with the lands and the waters, in order to profit ... then we truly have no future.”

Luckily, *Buffalo Is the New Buffalo* is a testament to survival, and offers ways to imagine otherwise, now and into the future – it is a gesture to new horizons. Or, as Vowel puts it bluntly, “instead of accepting that the buffalo and our ancestral ways will never come back, what if we simply ensure that they do?”



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Character's search for identity reflects losses of Sixties Scoop, celebration of relationships

Sheryl Doherty wanted to give Izzy the unconditional love she missed out on

by Melanie J. Murray

FINDING IZZY

Sheryl Doherty

Wood Dragon Books

\$19.99 pb, 306 pages

ISBN: 9781989078662

In *Finding Izzy*, the title character awakens in a hospital with amnesia and few clues to her identity. Her appearance indicates she is possibly Indigenous, and her often unexpected journey draws a reader in. Author Sheryl Doherty notes, “this story might just be a story, but there are truths that run through it.”

Izzy’s process of self-discovery takes her through experiences familiar to anyone coming of age, while incorporating the fantastical. Describing her work as “inspired by Indigenous ways of being,” Doherty organically intertwines traditional practices alongside the contemporary Indigenous experience.

Real-world problems including racism, ecological disaster, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Wet’suwet’en land defence, and the foster care system all come into play in meaningful ways. “I included these problems because I don’t want people to become

complacent or ignore that there are real problems. I don’t want readers to escape reality easily,” says Doherty.

This grounding comes, in part, from the author’s own lived experiences. Born in Saskatoon, Sheryl is registered with Saddle Lake, Alberta, and her ancestors are from Ahtahkakoop, Saskatchewan. Doherty, who is a survivor of the Sixties Scoop, acknowledges the parallels between what Izzy goes through and Doherty’s own experiences.

“Izzy waking up with no clues as to her identity is directly related to the Sixties Scoop experience. There

are so many Sixties Scoop adoptees who experience the same type of amnesia, especially if their parents refuse to share anything about their heritage.”

Izzy works to find peace with this, in part, through finding a community of those who have come through similar losses and reclaimed their culture.

“The importance of knowing where one comes from is so important in Indigenous communities,” Doherty explains.

What is most refreshing about this story is how Izzy develops a healthy friend group and family, without the toxicity, jealousy, or adversarial relationships readers might expect.

“I come from a really broken family, and I never really understood what



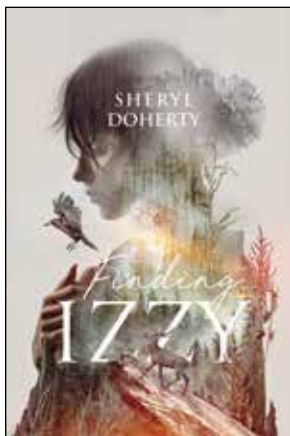
Sheryl Doherty

it is like to have a family who loves unconditionally. I guess I wanted Izzy to have what I didn’t have. I also wanted her to be free of preconceived ideas of what relationships should be and look like,” Doherty notes.

“I wanted to show something different. I’ve seen Indigenous women who have strong ties to each other. These relationships are so important and should be celebrated, even in fiction.”

In all her vulnerability, the love Izzy receives empowers her to claim her true self in unexpected ways. Without spoiling what occurs at the apex of Izzy’s self-discovery, it’s fair to say readers will be left wanting more – and Doherty confirms, there will be more.

“There are going to be four books in total. The second book is going to get a little scary as more of Izzy’s backstory comes to light. That’s about all I can share. Sorry!”



Story of people struggling with sickness a timely reminder of faith and resilience

With support of communities and knowledge keepers, William Dumas shares tale of little people

by Penny Thomas

THE GIFT OF THE LITTLE PEOPLE

William Dumas
HighWater Press
\$22.95 hc, 48 pages
ISBN: 9781553799924

The *Gift of the Little People*, written by acclaimed and award-winning author William Dumas, a Rocky Cree storyteller born in South Indian Lake, shares with us an important and timeless piece of Indigenous knowledge and history of the Rocky Cree People.

Part of The Six Seasons of the Asiniskaw It̓hiniwak Series, which explores the language, culture, knowledge, territory, and history of the Rocky Cree people, *The Gift of the Little People* shows us the alchemic power of overcoming doubt with faith.

As co-leader of the Six Series Team, and with support from many Rocky Cree communities and knowledge keepers, Dumas recounts this enchanting story of the little people.

In this unique book, Dumas envelops the reader with the warmth of traditional oral storytelling. The story gently unfolds, telling us of Rocky Cree Elder Kakakiw,

whose people are struggling with a mysterious sickness.

As more and more people pass into the spirit world, grieving Kakakiw becomes physically, emotionally, and spiritually tired. He seeks guidance through ceremony and prayer. Later that night, his prayers are answered in the form of an unusual visitor: one of the little people.

Dumas had his own curiosity about the little people as a boy. “One character that the Elders always told stories about was the little people. The little people are no taller than your knee, and I think you could compare them to the leprechauns—except they don’t have pointed ears.

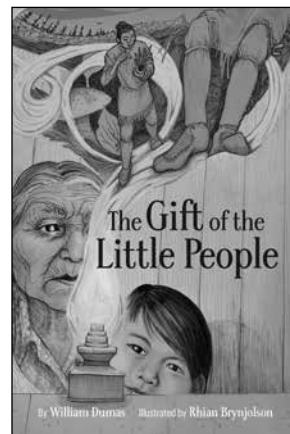
“I had a special curiosity about the little people since I was a kid,

partly because of the stories the Elders told, but also because many of our friends and relatives said they had actually seen the little people at one time or another.”

The story highlights Kakakiw’s doubts, and most importantly, his decision to share those doubts with the people to decide if he should follow the visitor

on a magical journey to receive the medicine the people need.

Accomplished artist Rhian Brynjolson captures with accuracy Dumas’ and the Six Seasons team’s vision of 17th century history, life, and community of the Rocky Cree people.



Warren Cariou, co-leader with Dumas of the Six Seasons project and director of the Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture at the University of Manitoba, shares the journey and perseverance of the Six Seasons team to bring us this story.

“We feel that the end product has been very much worth persevering through the difficulties that we encountered along the way. Since the story is about the Rocky Cree people’s struggles to deal with an epidemic in the past, there is something fitting about the way that we had to overcome the challenges posed by a pandemic in our own time,” Cariou explains.

This beautifully told and illustrated story, suitable for all ages, celebrates the strength of community and offers us a timely reminder, during our own pandemic, of the power of faith and resilience. 🌿



William Dumas

26 PROJECTS

Poetry collection weaves through and reframes history of lands and treaties

Matthew James Weigel blends archival research with a walk along Whitemud Creek

by Tyler Pennock

WHITEMUD WALKING

Matthew James Weigel
Coach House Books
\$23.95 pb, 168 pages
ISBN: 978-1-55245-441-1



HUEANDJUN PHOTOGRAPHY

Matthew James Weigel

Here the poetry shines, representing the living and personal as necessary, opposing a “state’s move to historicize and archive the treaty relationship, [and] what becomes of the details of the treaties are what the state says they are,” Weigel notes.

Unique visual cues left in the archived documents and images tell of a researcher’s search. For those

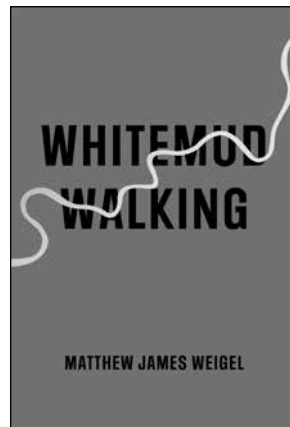
impacted by numbered treaties, especially Métis people, acknowledging the images and words beyond the text, and the impacts that grow out of it are affirming.

Whitemud Walking is a skilled weaving through history and context to unsettle Canadian notions of boundary between past and future, national and individual, land and community. Whitemud Creek, Alberta, is the central knot for all threads, an investigation that “kept coming back to me standing on this little island in the middle of a creek, staring at the water,” Weigel explains.

The text of our lives and current relationships are the bleed-through of a page we’re not supposed to see, or the words of an inverse side peeking through. These deftly add a greater dimension to the words.

The added shape is also one of interaction with its reader, and the land itself: “We all share a relationality to the land, but everyone does so in unique ways. So, I think

that unique and unknown reaction [...] is waiting there, ready for the reader to experience it as they come to it,” Weigel says. 🍃



“Behind this through the middle and out the spine / is the treaty.”

Matthew James Weigel’s debut book of poetry weaves itself around and through words, interrogating spaces beyond the page, and text.

Whitemud Walking explores the interactions between self, community, lands impacted by treaties, all the while shaping the spaces between, and extending from them.

Centred in Whitemud Creek, Alberta, the book entwines maps, historic records, and archives to paint a “paratext of Treaty 6,” and in turn, a nuanced understanding of the relationships the numbered treaties recount.

“It’s about walking along a single small stretch of Whitemud Creek that flows into the North Saskatchewan River. Everything can be connected to that: every bit of policy since treaty, every archival entry, every street corner, and every heritage building,” Weigel shares.

How Weigel represents this relationship is fascinating and impactful, reframing our view by guiding us well beyond the text of those documents.

Weigel sculpts the spaces around the treaties, enlisting the margins and negative spaces with precision. Engaging with historic text and image, *Whitemud Walking* “really ask[s] you to think about the object that you’re holding and to consider how the land is holding you back,” Weigel explains.

Throughout the book, glimpses of the protagonist’s journey through Canadian archives reconnects for us the personal and individual impacts that treaties have.

Trilingual play blends symbolism, documentary montages to gradually reveal message of Amik, the beaver

Acclaimed play by Émilie Monnet, now published in English, also engaging in written form

by Amber O'Reilly

OKINUM

Émilie Monnet

J. Gordon Shillingford

\$15.95 pb, 48 pages

ISBN: 9781927922934

Like a giant beaver dam spotted in satellite imagery, Émilie Monnet's acclaimed play *Okinum* keeps growing. First performed in French in 2018 at Montreal's Centre théâtre d'aujourd'hui, published in French with Les Herbes rouges in 2020; then released as an audio drama, and performed in English at Centaur Theatre and at the National Arts Centre in 2021, the work is now published in English.

"Every new incarnation of the play allows for deeper understanding," remarks Monnet. "I've always been very connected to beavers but my love for them has grown exponentially since *Okinum*."

Monnet is a multidisciplinary artist and activist whose father is Algonquin and her mother French. She lives and practises between the Outaouais and Tiohtià: ke/Mooniyaang/Montreal. Favouring collaborative and multilingual creative processes, Monnet explores identity, memory, history, and transformation while connecting with other artists.

One of *okinum's* literal translations is *dam*. In the play, the word's definition is expanded, referring to a cemetery of tree bones, a blockage in the body, and the spirit and a colonial system of barricades that Indigenous Peoples have long resisted.

The brilliant metaphor serves as the play's undercurrent for lecture scenes on the history of the beaver fur trade from an Indigenous perspective, agonizing experiences in the Western medical system, and a discourse of resistance to colonialism.

Skillfully blending poetic imagery ("A lump in my throat / A knot on the bark / A gift in my palm") with

documentary montages, Monnet succeeds in building a captivating storyline from a variety of materials. Deeply symbolic, the stage directions enrich the experience of the play as a written work.

The work is fundamentally trilingual with Anishnaabemowin taking centre stage. Through a series of conversations with language teacher Véronique Thusky, readers gradually unearth the meaning of phrases spoken by Amik, the beaver, in a recurring dream.

"My dreams are at the heart of my creation or writing process," shares Monnet. "I have a practice of writing them down in a journal and it's fascinating to go back in time and revisit certain dreams, I always find new resonance with them."

"Often, the starting point for telling a story is wanting to decipher what a specific dream is about. For *Okinum*, I wanted to understand Amik's words. I knew it was an important message because I dreamt that same dream three times. I embarked on a quest to find out."

This rhythm allows readers to learn alongside the performer in a refreshing and realistic snapshot of the effort and care that goes into learning and respecting a language.

"French, English, and Anishnaabemowin are the three languages that form my identity," says Monnet. "I wanted them to coexist together — the sounds of the words, the energy each language emanates. I wanted the audience to be immersed in the musicality and cadence of the different languages, and more importantly so for Anishnaabemowin. I wanted people to feel the land, where the beaver lives, alive." 🌿



Émilie Monnet



Story shaped like a conversation evokes Métis ancestor alongside family's healing

In writing, Michelle Porter realizes depth of her hurt after brother was abused in care home

by Emelia Fournier

SCRATCHING RIVER

Michelle Porter

Wilfrid Laurier University Press

\$22.99, 184 pages

ISBN: 9781771125444

Scratching River is unlike most books you've read – but if you're Métis, it might sound a lot like stories you've been told.

Michelle Porter tells the story of her brother, but that wasn't her intention when she began writing. She meant to write about her ancestor, Louis Goulet.

"These physical memories of being in a car going to see my brother kept coming up as I was reading Goulet's very evocative descriptions of travelling various places along the homeland, following the hunt," Porter said.

"As that opened up the space of my brother, I felt like that 14-year-old girl sat down beside me, and said 'I have a story to tell.' And I said 'OK, I'll tell it.'"

Porter is Métis and grew up in small towns around Alberta. While she is now working remotely in St John's, St. Albert still feels like home to her. Her childhood and adolescence were marked by her brother, Brendon, who was diagnosed with schizophrenia and autism and sent to live in care homes as a child.

Despite their physical distance, Porter is close with her brother and describes him as dynamic and effervescent, like a river. This closeness made his experience of abuse at an adult care home – referred to as "the Ranch" – all the more painful. In the process of telling this story, she realized how deep her own wounds ran.

"It never occurred to me that what happened to my brother had not healed for me," said Porter.

Because Brendon is non-verbal, Porter had to get resourceful to make sure her perception of him didn't

dominate the story. Through Brendon's "talent for being remembered," she was able to integrate his caregivers' memories and conversations with her mother and sister.

"It didn't become my story, because it isn't. It's my sister's, it's my mother's. Through that constellation of voices, you get a little bit more of my brother," said Porter.

The book weaves several other stories into Brendon's. It flips back to Louis Goulet's story, offers snippets of Métis knowledge, and has flashes of vivid prairie imagery, all interspersed with news clippings investigating the abusive Ranch.

"It's that Métis need to have everything in conversation with everything else. To have everybody in conversation with everybody else," said Porter.

Scratching River does not necessarily move forward, towards a resolution – rather, it moves in a circle, in conversation with the past, with the present, with memories, with other people, with nature, and ultimately, towards healing.

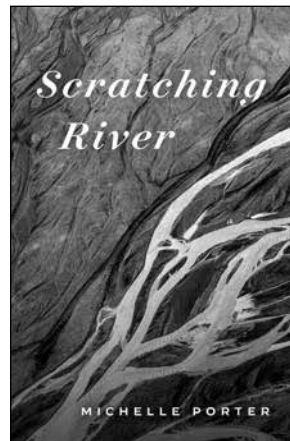
Braiding bison and rivers into descriptions of her family, Porter reminds us that we are inseparable from our environment, our ancestors, and our loved ones.

Porter realized she didn't get to witness her brother's healing from his trauma. Telling this story acted as a healing process for her – and reading it shows that in order to heal, we must embrace connection.

"My brother can't speak, he is for all intents and purposes someone who can be said to have so many challenges. It's unbelievable, but he taught me how to move on from trauma. He taught me how to see it, acknowledge it, and gave me the courage to do that," said Porter. 🌿



Michelle Porter



High rates of Indigenous incarceration can be linked back to residential schools, scholar says

Restorative justice proponent David Milward calls for people to exert pressure on systems to change

by Kam Teo

RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS JUSTICE:

A Search for Ways Forward

David Milward

Fernwood Publishing

\$32.00, 240 pages

ISBN: 9781773635194

In *Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice: A Search for Ways Forward*, David Milward, a University of Victoria legal scholar, builds a case for his claim that the “most critical factor” in the high rate of Indigenous incarceration has its roots in the Canadian residential school system.

Milward uses recent judicial rulings and judicial acknowledgements that generational trauma attained at residential schools continues to reverberate in Indigenous communities, exacerbating high cases of recidivism.

More importantly, it was “to show the limits of working within the Canadian system. The judicial system remains fundamentally committed to deterrence through incarceration, and many of the decisions show that those goals frequently win out against alternatives that would better serve Indigenous people. It speaks to the need to eventually allow Indigenous legal orders to manage crime in their own ways,” states Milward.

Milward is a proponent of restorative justice. The legal scholar

envisions restorative justice as a “horizontal process where persons with a stake in a [legal] conflict negotiate a resolution.”

This method stands in stark contrast to the traditional adversarial justice system, where the interests of the victim “are collapsed into the state’s interests” in prosecuting crime. A restorative Indigenous criminal justice system would have “victim’s agreements” and address their

interests including “personal safety” and healing the victim from trauma.

For Milward, only sustained political pressure will change Ottawa’s incrementalist behaviour.

“Everyone needs to exert pressure in their own ways. Private citizens need to acquire at least a modicum of

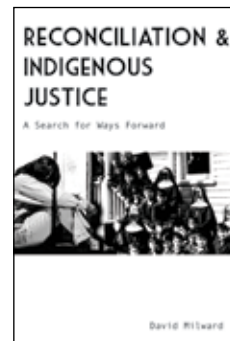
awareness of justice issues that goes beyond the law and order thinking they’ve been brought up with. Politicians can mould public opinion to

become more receptive to alternatives; it’s just a matter of finding the will to get that started,” says Milward.

Indigenous relations may be the purview of the Crown, however, provincial governments play a positive role, Milward says: “Provincial governments have jurisdiction over the day-to-day administration of justice and therefore have a key potential role in shaping Indigenous programs that I describe as part of the transitory phase leading to Indigenous legal orders.”

Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice is a scholarly piece that may not be an easy read due to the topic; however, it is an important and timely tool that can be used to help propel reconciliation in Canada.

When asked where he found hope in all of this, Milward stated, “It’s a refusal to give up when I see how bad things are for Indigenous peoples that fuels a sliver of hope.” 🌱



David Milward

Miskwagoode Annharte

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(ARP Books, \$24.00 pb, 288 pages, with photos, ISBN: 978-1-927886-62-5, available as ebook)

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Carol Rose GoldenEagle

In this latest collection, the current Poet Laureate of Saskatchewan writes love poems to her three children, to whom she

gives all the care and teachings she was denied as a child of the Sixties Scoop. (Inanna Publications, \$18.95 pb, 104 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77133-887-5)

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Conor Kerr

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(BookLand Press, \$16.95 pb, 64 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77231-153-2, available as ebook)

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Marie Annharte Baker

Annharte's usual bite, wit, wisdom, and word play are in full force in this fifth collection that explores mother loss, identity, violence, and the inequalities of persisting colonialism, and that includes a section of retellings of traditional stories.

(New Star Books, \$16.00 pb, 80 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55420-184-6)

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Michelle Lietz

Tom Petty lyrics provide a way to deal with loss and to launch an exploration of the poet's mixed Yaqui, European, and Middle Eastern identity, and her memories of adolescence and early adulthood in this debut collection of poems that are candid and heartfelt.

(At Bay Press, \$24.95 pb, 144 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988168-59-3)

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Michelle Poirier Brown

This debut poetic memoir explores the effects of childhood trauma – incestuous rape and physical abuse – and the poet's discovery of her Métis heritage at age 38, revealing how breaking silence can be part of a journey of hope and resilience.

(University of Alberta, \$19.99 pb, 102 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-603-7, available as ebook)

DRAMA

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Joel Bernbaum, Lancelot Knight, and Yvette Nolan

This documentary musical honestly examines race relations in Canada, mixing interviews by Bernbaum, music by Knight, and dramaturgy by Nolan to create a powerful portrayal of the Colten Boushie killing and Gerald Stanley trial in many voices.

(Playwrights Canada, \$18.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-0-36910-360-4)

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Sue Farrell Holler, illustrated
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(Pajama Press, \$19.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77278-244-8)

GRANDFATHER'S REMINDER

Alberta Bear and Kathleen O'Reilly,
illustrated by Lindsey Bear

Told in the Plains Cree (Y-dialect), Saulteaux, and English languages, this simple tale of traditional teachings and values follows a grandfather and grandchild on a visit to a chokecherry patch, where lessons about respect and gratitude for the earth's gifts are shared. (Your Nickel's Worth Publishing, \$19.95 hc, 40 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988783-82-6)

ICE FISHING IN ST. LAURENT

Gisèle Reynolds

Lucille, a girl from the big city, visits her Métis cousin Jocelyne in the village of St. Laurent, where together they go ice fishing for pickerel, ride in a Bombardier, and end their fun-filled day by making a big snowperson.

(Vidacom Publications, \$11.95 pb, 36 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77461-009-1)

TAKWĀKIN

Cam Robertson

Takwākin, meaning “it is autumn,” introduces young children to basic Cree phrases about autumn including ones about returning to school, duck hunting, first snowfall, and Halloween. Vivid photos depict real objects for easy identification.

(Goldrock Press, \$14.95 pb, 24 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927410-74-5)

GRAPHIC NOVEL

GIJU’S GIFT, ADVENTURES OF THE PUGULATMU’J, VOLUME 1

Brandon Mitchell, illustrated by Veronika Barinova

In this graphic novel for early readers, a Mi’kmaw girl named Mali battles an ancient giant and forms an unexpected friendship with Puug, one of the playful Little People or pugulatmu’j, the original guardians of the land.

(HighWater-Portage & Main Press, \$20.95 pb, 80 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55379-947-4)

EARLY YEARS FICTION

TĀPWĒ AND THE MAGIC HAT

Buffy Sainte-Marie, illustrated by Buffy Sainte-Marie and Michelle Alyn Clement

This delightful story tells the adventures of Tāpwē, a young boy who visits his relatives – he takes in a powwow, hears stories, and learns the hard way from the Trickster about what and who is important in life.

(Greystone Kids-Greystone Books, \$22.95 hc, 152 pages, with b/w illustrations, ISBN: 978-1-77164-546-1, available as ebook)

MIDDLE YEARS FICTION

THE STONE CHILD, THE MISEWA SAGA, BOOK 3

David A. Robertson

Book 3 picks up where *The Great Bear* left off, when Morgan discovered Eli, almost dead, at the base of the Great Tree. She and friends, old and new, have to race against the clock to find Eli’s soul before it’s too late, journeying deep into the northern woods where they face strange and terrifying dangers.

(Puffin Canada, \$21.99 hc, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-0-7352-6616-2, available as ebook and audio book)

MIDDLE YEARS NON-FICTION

SKY WOLF’S CALL: THE GIFT OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Eldon Yellowhorn and Kathy Lowinger

This comprehensive book, covering such areas of knowledge as the use of water and fire, food security, healing practices, and astronomy, reveals how Indigenous knowledge is inherited from ancestors and Elders, coming from centuries of practices, experiences, and ideas gathered by people with a long history with the natural world.

(Annick Press, 120 pages, with colour images throughout, glossary, sources, index, \$24.95 hc, ISBN: 978-1-77321-630-0; \$16.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77321-629-4)

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

THE SUMMER OF BITTER AND SWEET

Jen Ferguson

This debut novel about rage, secrets, and the complexities of people tells the story of Lou, a Métis girl living on the Prairies whose biological father insists on complicating her already complicated life.

(HarperCollins, \$21.99 hc, 384 pages, ISBN: 978-0-0630-8616-6, available as ebook and audio book)

BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR

THE BOY FROM BUZWAH: A LIFE IN INDIAN EDUCATION

Cecil King

From his beginnings on the reserve and in residential school to a 60-year career in education, King’s remarkable achievements include founding the Indian Teacher Education Program at the University of Saskatchewan, becoming the first director of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at Queen’s University, and developing Ojibwe language courses across North America. King tells his story in a lively, reflective, and straightforward manner.

(University of Regina Press, 356 pages, with b/w photos, map, \$89.00 hc, ISBN: 978-9-88977-853-5; \$29.95 pb, ISBN: 978-0-88977-850-4; available as ebook)

BROKEN CIRCLE: THE DARK LEGACY OF INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS – COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

Theodore Niizhotay Fontaine

This commemorative edition of the groundbreaking and powerful memoir of surviving and healing after years at Fort Alexander and Assiniboia Indian Residential Schools features a new foreword by Andrew Woolford. Fontaine’s grace and spirit will continue to touch new readers as they did during his life.

(Heritage House, \$24.95 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77203-415-8)

CHANGING CANADIAN HISTORY: THE LIFE AND WORKS OF OLIVE PATRICIA DICKASON

Darren R. Préfontaine

This biography is the first book-length account of the self-identified Métis woman who overcame obstacles such as poverty, single motherhood, sexism, and mandatory retirement policies to do pioneering work as a journalist and academic, work that changed how Indigenous history is recognized and studied.

(Gabriel Dumont Institute Press, \$30.00 pb, 450 pages, with colour photo section, ISBN: 978-1-92679584-3)

Photojournalist chronicles adaptation, everyday heroes during COVID-19 in Alberta

Leah Hennel navigated private, sensitive moments while documenting health-care system

by Bibi Ukonu

ALONE TOGETHER:

A Pandemic Photo Essay

Leah Hennel

Foreword by Shelley Boettcher

Rocky Mountain Books

\$32.00 pb, 256 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77160-563-2

Available as an ebook

Leah Hennel, a Calgary-based award-winning photojournalist and a staff photographer for Alberta Health Services, has captured memorable moments of sadness, fear, courage, hope, and above all, resilience in her most recent book, *Alone Together: A Pandemic Photo Essay*.



The photographs beautifully illustrate how health-care workers, patients, and other citizens in Alberta have adapted to the dangers of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and found safe new ways to work, socialize, and celebrate during a time of global chaos.

Hennel believes it is important to document this time. She says, “You have to adapt – there is no choice, really. Plus, you realize that everyday people, health-care workers and Albertans in general, turn out to be the heroes that we needed. And this book, in some way, is a historical document – a snapshot, no pun intended, of a moment in time.”

Alone Together includes images of health-care workers collecting nasal samples from Albertans, of patients on ventilators, and of their families visiting from a distance. Subjects of photos range in age from a 98-year-old woman celebrating her birthday, to the young, to even very little babies born during this season of fear and trauma.

“The pandemic affected everyone, yet each individual’s journey was unique. So, we were all in this one thing together, but striving independently in a lot of ways,” Hennel says. Hence the title *Alone Together*.

There are also images of deserted public spaces, of which Hennel says, “It was such an eerie feeling driving around the city. Empty streets, no traffic. It’s hard to believe we’ll ever see that again. I really wanted the photos to convey a sense of loss – the loss of human connection, the loss of hustle and bustle.”

Her job as a staff photographer puts Hennel in a perfect position to showcase the relentless dedication of health-care workers during the pandemic. Yet, she knows that the images do not show everything.

“It would be impossible to capture the range and depth of emotion,” she says. “There are not enough words and images to do justice to what they’ve sacrificed, to their devotion. We all know they’re there to save lives, but when you’re actually on site and you see it first-hand, you’ll never forget it. Health workers on the job, it’s awe-inspiring.”

Even with her role in the health system, there were challenges. Hennel says, “I’m going into territory that is quite private and sensitive. Often – and quite literally – this is the worst day in someone’s life.” She had access to hospitals, but she still had to earn the trust of the health-care teams and the patients on the unit.

This is Hennel’s second book of photographs – *Along the Western Front* came out in 2020. The common thread throughout Hennel’s work? It’s all about human emotion and daily life. “Life is an interesting roller coaster for everyone. I’ve always found people interesting, and I gravitate towards documenting life, whether it’s happy, sad, uplifting, grim,” she says.

Alone Together will have a powerful impact on readers. “For some readers, a behind-the-scenes look at the pandemic might still feel too raw,” says Hennel.

“But the book features a cast of heroes, all of whom should be remembered.” 🌿



Leah Hennel

Critical look at medicare reflects 100-year-old and contemporary Canadian conversations

Editors present program as somewhat flawed, in need of work and engagement from citizens

by Paula E. Kirman

MEDICARE'S HISTORIES:

Origins, Omissions, and Opportunities in Canada

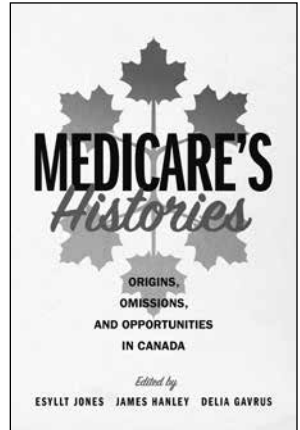
Edited by Esyllt W. Jones, James Hanley, and Delia Gavrus

University of Manitoba Press

\$31.95 pb, 384 pages

ISBN: 978-0-88755-280-9

Available as an ebook



Esyllt W. Jones



James Hanley



Delia Gavrus

Medicare, the publicly funded social program for which Canada is arguably best known, is entering its second half-century, and its cracks are showing. Medicare works differently in the country's diverse communities, with social inequities and inadequacies becoming clear, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In *Medicare's Histories: Origins, Omissions, and Opportunities in Canada*, leading social and health historians explore medicare's roots, development, and current state, including missed opportunities, while also telling stories of specific needs for reform and the essential roles of those who are advocating for these reforms.

"Medicare's past and present is rich, contested, complex, and in part problematic. Its origins were more diverse than we often imagine (it wasn't just Tommy Douglas), and its initial incarnation privileged treatment over prevention. Even that was powerfully shaped by hierarchies of race, gender, and ability, among others," say the editors, Esyllt Jones, James Hanley, and Delia Gavrus, who responded collectively to interview questions.

Medicare's Histories is the first edited collection on the history of Canadian medicare written entirely by historians. The editors are all history professors specializing in health care: Jones at the University of Manitoba, and Hanley and Gavrus at the University of Winnipeg. Sixteen other scholars from across Canada were enlisted to cover critical aspects of health care and how medicare policy has shaped that care.

While this book is by no means comprehensive, it does present critical perspectives not widely considered before. "The collection as a whole tells a dynamic new story about professional and public engagement in medicare history. It's not a celebration – it's a critical look, but it also speaks to the depth of the conversation Canadians have had about medicare for nearly a hundred years," say the editors.

"Medicare has been a powerful instrument of social welfare, and its limitations and exclusions led to ongoing social movements to advocate for a more equitable vision of physical and mental well-being."

These social actions include popular and grassroots advocacy, Indigenous court cases, and broader civil rights and social justice movements in Canada. "Several of the chapters highlight the power and importance of these popular mobilizations," the editors note.

Contributors to the book also explore the role that professional organizations (of doctors, nurses, dentists, allied health-care professionals) have played in shaping this history. "Nurses, for example, have been at the heart of policy debates about medicare," the editors say.

Medicare is, as the editors write in the introduction, "a flawed project – one that needs more work," and with various provincial moves towards privatization and underfunding, people need to demand improvements.

"Continued public and professional engagement in health care is as urgently required today as yesterday," the editors say about the book's overall message. 🍁

Populist impulse, pragmatic values analyzed through history of Saskatchewan politics

Former journalist Dale Eisler tracks influence of events that led to 1982's political shift

by Margaret Anne Fehr

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Saskatchewan's Political and Economic Transformation

Dale Eisler

University of Regina Press

\$34.95 pb, 400 pages

ISBN: 9780889778641

Available as an ebook

As a former journalist covering Saskatchewan and Alberta, Dale Eisler has long believed the political and economic transformation of Saskatchewan is one of the more interesting and under-reported stories in Canada, and he was motivated to contribute to a fuller view of the province's history.

"As someone who came of age in the late 1960s, I witnessed and, in some cases, covered as a journalist many of the events that I believe were critical factors in the province's transformation," says the senior policy fellow at the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Regina.

Eisler's new book, *From Left to Right: Saskatchewan's Political and Economic Transformation*, identifies April 26, 1982, as a tipping point in the political history of Saskatchewan when the province changed its political loyalty from the New Democratic Party to the Progressive Conservative Party.

"There were not many public polls in 1982," says Eisler. "During the campaign, it became clear that a political shift was under way. But it wasn't until the final week that the scope of the groundswell became evident. At the beginning of the campaign, the PC party had internal polls that showed them that a majority was within their reach. In the final days, the NDP vote began evaporating."

While to the rest of Canada, this change in political stripes may have seemed sudden, Eisler fleshes out the

influences of prior national and global events that led to Saskatchewan's political sea change and eventually to the creation of its present-day Saskatchewan Party.

"What my book attempts to do," he says, "is thread those events together using a longer-term and broader view that also considers how populism has been a powerful force for change and remains so to this day. It uses the lens of populism more than ideology to explain the last 50 years."

Eisler notes, "Saskatchewan people are, at their core, pragmatic, having a strong sense of community and conservative instincts. Those values are rooted in the province's history and have been a fuel for populist politicians to emerge."

He emphasizes that this populist impulse remains strong, and needs to be acknowledged and managed carefully by

political figures who are committed to bringing people together, rather than dividing them.

Eisler expects that *From Left to Right* will appeal to anyone interested in the evolution of Saskatchewan and the role that politics has played in its transformation.

"Politics has been the dominant force shaping the province and its identity," he says. "So hopefully, it will provide a bit of a road map showing how Saskatchewan has gone from the birthplace of the CCF-NDP, to a bastion of the conservative Saskatchewan Party."

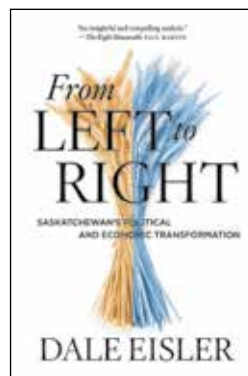
Politicians and political advisors may also gain valuable insights from this book.

"Political and economic change happens gradually over many years, driven by events that are often global in nature and beyond the scope of a provincial government or political parties," Eisler says.

"The challenge for parties is to recognize change and adapt to it. Too often parties are ideologically rigid and seek to resist change, rather than reconciling themselves and their beliefs to the new reality that is beyond their ability to prevent from happening." 🌿



Dale Eisler



Author hopes sharing her infertility journey will help others 'feel less lonely and broken'

Morwenna Trevenen's first book also aims to foster empathy in others

by Liz Katynski

CHASING BABY: *An Infertility Adventure*

Morwenna Trevenen
Great Plains Publications
\$24.95 pb, 168 pages
ISBN: 978-1-77337-075-0

One in six couples will deal with infertility, and the journey doesn't always end in a baby. Some struggle for a short time, some struggle for years, and some will never succeed in having a child. Yet all of these journeys are worth it, says the Winnipeg author of *Chasing Baby: An Infertility Adventure*.

"You don't dream of this as a kid. You just deal with it," says Morwenna Trevenen. "Whatever you need to do is valid and real. You may feel you are not heard or seen, but you are not alone. Be proud of how strong you are."

This first book by the real estate agent and former actor and decorator shares her own deeply personal experience. Like many people, she assumed pregnancy and parenthood would just happen once she and her husband decided to pursue it. "We tried, and failed, for seven years," she says. "We tried to adopt (and failed) for five years."

While they were working to secure an adoption, they were also undergoing fertility treatments with many hormonal and emotional ups and downs. "We tried all routes to parenthood and then, when we were ready to be done with all of it, my in-laws paid for a round of IVF [in vitro fertilization]," says Trevenen.

"That was a very generous gift, worth about \$24,000. And if it didn't work, we could say we had left no stone unturned."

In all, Trevenen's infertility "adventure" cost about \$40,000, a price that puts such efforts well out of reach for many couples, especially given there is no guarantee they will succeed. As well, the process included nearly unbelievable moments of being poked and prodded, and turned into a roller coaster of hope and disappointment, with the couple feeling intense grief with every failure and loss.

"I am a very emotional and sensitive person," says Trevenen. "This is my experience. It's pretty raw. Writing it was terrifying and freeing. I am an open book, but for many people, their struggle is incredibly private. You feel broken. You don't want pitying looks and unsolicited advice. I would like to educate people not to do that."

Yet the author manages to maintain a lightness of tone. "When you step



Morwenna Trevenen

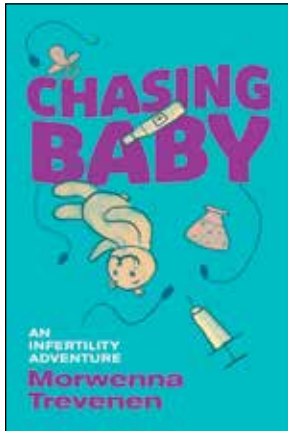
outside of yourself, you can see how ridiculous and humorous some situations really are. You have to laugh," she says.

The book began with a blog her husband, a teacher, urged her to write. In putting herself and her story out there on the Internet, Trevenen would learn how many others, even people she knew for some time, had endured or were enduring similar struggles. She ended the blog and her story when her round of IVF was done, because it was about the process regardless of the final outcome.

Trevenen hopes her journey helps others.

"I hope that anyone experiencing infertility reads my book, so they feel less lonely and broken," she says.

"I hope that others read it too, for insight into what we go through, to think twice before they ask inappropriate questions about having children without knowing what a person's story is. You don't know if you are sending someone home in tears." 🌿



Essay collection contemplates all that art has to say, and the imagination of Winnipeg

Meeka Walsh's collection draws from 30 years of essays published in Border Crossings

by melanie brannagan frederiksen

MALLEABLE FORMS:

Selected Essays

Meeka Walsh

ARP Books

\$29.95 pb, 480 pages

ISBN: 978-1-92788-660-1

Available as an ebook

In *Malleable Forms: Selected Essays*, Meeka Walsh, long-time editor of the art magazine *Border Crossings*, has collected just under half of the essays she's published over the last 30 years. Choosing the essays involved a lot of reading and "a sort of travelling back through the incidents of my life and the world around me," says the member of the Order of Canada.



Meeka Walsh

Walsh attends to that world and renders it vividly throughout these essays. The world around her begins with Winnipeg, as explored in the first essay, "Dream City Shimmering."

"It sounds, from the title, that I am ascribing to Winnipeg an awful lot, seeing it as ideal and shimmering, but in fact, artists who inhabit the city have created it as a myth and to some small extent – at least as it is seen in the larger cultural world outside

of Winnipeg – that is the city. But it is a made place, an imagined place that I am referring to," Walsh says.

"I love the city; it's my home, but it houses less imagination, now, I think, than it did when it grew at the forks of our two rivers, on the plains around the rivers. I believe it grew from ideas and dreams of what was possible. Those ephemeral generative essences seem perhaps less valued now."

In these essays, Walsh's observations are both broad and deep, landing on the city, yes, but also on the

poem or the painting, and, more importantly, on what lies behind or above or underneath these magnets for her notice.

"I think," she says, "when we make something, we are drawing from our own experience, our own perceptions, responses. I'm not so interested in the distant objective stance. We are not ciphers, even though institutions and bureaucracies would like to wedge us into uniform measurable sameness."

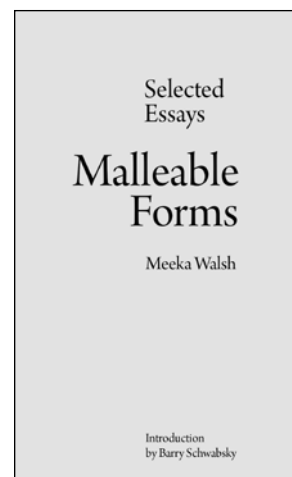
The 45 essays in the collection stand in contrast to the final two pieces, which appear in a section titled "Parables." Different in tone and in scope from the rest, "The Woman Who Ate Money: A Parable for Our Times" and "Say Bird: A Consideration of Interspecies Romance" punctuate the essays and bring the urgency of them into sharper focus.

Walsh explains, "I placed them at the end as though to say: 'and also.' I had some other things I wanted to say. They are almost instructional, sort of allegorical lessons, but not in a big moral sense."

Among the many themes threading through *Malleable Forms* is the question of what art gives us in this contemporary moment, and what art requires of us.

"I refer in a few of the essays to Cynthia Ozick, an American essayist [and] fiction writer, and she speaks of 'a moral corona of purpose' by which she means that there is an essence that art should carry, almost an obligation in the special place that it holds, to enlighten, or lead, or enrich," says Walsh.

"Art in all its forms has much to say to us today. I count on it." 🌿



MORE NON-FICTION

ESSAYS

BLUE PORTUGAL AND OTHER ESSAYS

Theresa Kishkan

Using the form of braided essays, this rich and insightful collection draws upon personal genealogies, medical histories, early land surveys, music, colour theory, horticulture, and textile production to explore the natural world, aging bodies, family, and art.

(University of Alberta Press, \$24.99 pb, 206 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-599-3, available as ebook)

FIELD NOTES ON LISTENING

Kit Dobson

This collection is a response to humans' lack of connection to the land, exploring what we could discover if we learn to truly listen deeply to the world around us. The essays look at Dobson's lost family farm, climate change, loss of habitat, and the tensions of living in capitalism, beginning and ending with his home and kitchen table.

(Wolsak and Wynn, \$18.00 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-1-989496-54-1)

RETURN STROKE: ESSAYS & MEMOIR

Dora Dueck

Written with care and clarity, these personal essays – and a memoir of 1980s life in Paraguay – explore Dueck's fascination with life writing, consideration of religious faith, appreciation of place, and love of family. Readers will love spending time with this curious and thoughtful observer.

(CMU Press, \$20.00 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-987986-10-5)

SARIRI: TRAVELS THROUGH BOLIVIA

Ivar Mendez

The Aymara people of the Bolivian Andes have a word that describes Ivar Mendez's nature as a traveller: *sariri*, one who travels not only to visit new places but also to explore and seek new knowledge – a pilgrim on a spiritual quest, a traveller in search of new horizons, adventures, and cultures. In these 20 essays, Mendez reflects on how he wandered on foot

through remote regions of the Andes, navigated Amazonian waterways, and immersed himself in Indigenous communities.

(Your Nickel's Worth Publishing, \$24.95 pb, 152 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988783-79-6, available as ebook)

STRAGGLE: ADVENTURES IN WALKING WHILE FEMALE

Tanis MacDonald

Readers walk through cities, parks, and wilderness with MacDonald through these wry, lyrical, and political essays, as she catalogues fauna, questions who is permitted to walk freely, and shares stories about how walking has shaped her life, and how it adds to her understanding of the people and world around her.

(Wolsak and Wynn, \$20.00 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-1-989496-53-4)

TROUT TRACKS: ESSAYS ON FLY FISHING

Jim McLennan, illustrations

by Lynda McLennan

Drawn from 55 years of passion for fly fishing, these essays are full of insights, information, contemplation, complaints, good-natured humour, and a sense of wonder at human nature, the great outdoors, and the mystery of how they interact.

(Rocky Mountain Books, \$25.00 pb, 256 pages, colour illustrations throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77160-365-2, available as ebook)

GUIDES

ONLY IN SASKATCHEWAN: RECIPES AND STORIES FROM THE PROVINCE'S BEST-LOVED EATERIES

Naomi Hansen, photography

by Garrett Kendel

This beautifully illustrated celebration of Saskatchewan cuisine pairs recipes with loved restaurants, providing profiles of the chefs and families behind them, and capturing the mix of culinary influences. Organized by region, restaurants range from historical to new, and recipes range from ambitious desserts to everyday staples. Also included is a guide to sourcing local food.

(TouchWood Editions, \$45.00 hc, 320 pages, with colour photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77151-355-5, available as ebook)

THE PRAIRIE GARDENER'S GO-TO FOR SOIL

Janet Melrose and Sheryl Normandeau

Providing information on the composition of soil, how to choose appropriate soil, how to compost, and how to care for soil, this fifth book in the Guides for Prairie Gardeners series tells gardeners everything they need to know about soil. (TouchWood Editions, \$15.00 pb, 160 pages, with colour diagrams and photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77151-366-1, available as ebook)

THE PRAIRIE GARDENER'S GO-TO FOR TREES AND SHRUBS

Janet Melrose and Sheryl Normandeau

This sixth book in the Guides for Prairie Gardeners series gives advice on how to grow trees and shrubs from the ground up, including information on planting and transplanting, cultivation and maintenance, care and protection from weather, pests, and disease, and choosing the right plant. (TouchWood Editions, \$15.00 pb, 160 pages, with colour photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77151-368-5, available as ebook)

THE SCHOLAR HACKER'S GUIDE TO AMATEUR ARCHAEOLOGY: HOW TO HUNT, COLLECT, PRESERVE AND SHARE THE PAST

Christopher Friesen

Anyone with an interest in the past – and the information, tools, and inspiration provided in this guide – can be an amateur archaeologist. Readers will learn to explore their local area, hunt for artifacts, and report findings to the scientific community.

(Gray Light Press, \$12.99 pb, 132 pages, with diagrams, ISBN: 978-1-7776714-0-2)

200 NATURE HOT SPOTS IN ALBERTA: THE BEST PARKS, CONSERVATION AREAS AND WILD PLACES

Leigh McAdam and Debbie Olsen

This expanded edition of the regional travel book includes 75 more hot spots and excursions, including snowshoeing trips, cycling trails, lake skating, mountain wildflower hikes, and canyon ice walks, with information on family-friendly hikes and trails that are wheelchair and stroller accessible.

(Firefly Books, \$29.95 pb, 288 pages, with colour photos, maps, index, ISBN: 978-0-22810-360-8)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

PHOTOGRAPHY

SPIRITS IN THE SKY: NORTHERN LIGHTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Paul Zizka

This collection of stunning photographs taken in Alberta national parks, across northern Canada, and in Greenland, Norway, and Iceland showcases the variety in colour structure and behaviour of the northern lights as well as the various landscapes, from mountains and glaciers, to lakes and ice caves. The author also includes short written pieces about the science and mythology of the aurora. (Rocky Mountain Books, \$25.00 pb, 200 pages, with colour photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77160-419-2, available as ebook)

MEMOIRS

FISHING WITH TARDELLI: A MEMOIR OF FAMILY IN TIME LOST

Neil Besner

This exuberant memoir not only takes readers from the apartments and parking lots of Montreal to the fishing boats and gardens of Rio de Janeiro, and lays bare the intricacies of a blended/remixed family, but also provides thoughtful meditations on memory, time, language, literature, love, and loss. (ECW Press, \$21.95 pb, 152 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-634-5, available as ebook)

FLIGHT: STORIES OF CANADIAN AVIATION, VOL. 3

Deana J. Driver and Contributors

In their own words or with the help of Driver, aviation enthusiasts, pilots, and other aviation personnel share stories of precarious landings, mid-air optical illusions, hidden airstrips, and historic achievements in this third collection of stories from Canada's aviation industry. (DriverWorks Ink, \$19.95 pb, 192 pages, with photos, index, ISBN: 978-1-927570-62-3)

FUN ON THE FARM: TRUE TALES OF FARM LIFE

Compiled and edited by Deana J. Driver

This third and final volume of the popular series includes treasured memories – calamities, surprises, and delights – by 20 Prairie writers, who tell of cranky cattle, mixed messages, curious youngsters, rural driving lessons, and more.

(DriverWorks Ink, \$17.95 pb, 144 pages, with photos, index, ISBN: 978-1-927570-63-0)

THE FUR TRADER: FROM OSLO TO OXFORD HOUSE

Einar Odd Mortensen Sr. with Gerd Kjustad Mortense

Edited by Ingrid Urberg and Daniel Sims

This critical edition of Mortensen's personal narrative detailing the years (1925–1928) he spent as a trader at posts in Pine Bluff and Oxford Lake in Manitoba has been translated from Norwegian to English and supplemented with a scholarly introduction, thorough annotations, and a reading guide to assist with a close reading of Mortensen's interpretations of the Indian Residential School system, the people he encounters, and Indigenous participation in the First World War. (University of Alberta Press, \$34.99 pb, 224 pages, with map, photos, bibliography, ISBN: 978-1-77212-598-6, available as ebook)

MY MOTHER, MY TRANSLATOR

Jaspreet Singh

This memoir in essays follows the men and especially the women of Singh's family, from the 1918 epidemic, through the 1947 Partition of India, Singh's childhood in Kashmir and with his grandparents in Indian Punjab to his arrival in Canada in 1990 to study the sciences, and up to the pandemic of 2020, as he explores personal relationships, inherited and direct trauma, and ways to deal with the climate crisis. (Véhicule Press, \$22.95 pb, 322 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55065-579-7, available as ebook)

ONE INCH FROM DISASTER: TRUE TALES FROM THE WILDS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Kelly Randall Ricketts

Ricketts has led an active life, to say the least. His various jobs – logging, mining, wrangling horses – and passion for the outdoors, boxing, music, and storytelling give him plenty of hilarious and exciting moments to share. (Harbour Publishing, \$22.95 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55017-926-2)

REBUILDING A BRICK WALL

Suzanne Gauthier with Evan Wall

Evan, a young man from Shellbrook, Saskatchewan, has to relearn how to talk, eat, and walk after a car collision leaves him with a traumatic brain injury. No longer the "Brick Wall" of his high school football days, he must also deal with ableism. Told from Evan's point of

view, this memoir presents the world of disability in a fresh way. (DriverWorks Ink, \$17.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927570-65-4)

TALES FROM THE HOMESTEAD: A HISTORY OF PRAIRIE PIONEERS, 1867–1914

Sandra Rollings-Magnusson

This compilation of 36 first-hand accounts by people from, among other places, England, Germany, Holland, Russia, and the U.S., immigrating to the Prairies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries includes stories of the journey to Canada and train rides west, times of hardship and natural disaster, and memories of friendship and community events.

(Heritage House Publishing, \$29.95 pb, 164 pages, with b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77203-389-2, available as ebook)

UNSETTLED: A RECKONING ON THE GREAT PLAINS

Dawn Morgan

A family tragedy – the sudden and mysterious death of the author's father connected to his employer's death by bull goring – is examined in relation to the decimation of the bison and the displacement of the Assiniboine People on the Great Plains to make way for European settlement in this probing and literary memoir.

(University of Regina Press, 272 pages, \$89.00 hc, ISBN: 978-0-88977-860-3; \$24.95 pb, ISBN: 978-0-88977-857-3; available as ebook)

UP THE COAST: ONE FAMILY'S WILD LIFE IN THE FORESTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Kathryn Willcock

Growing up in logging camps on the coast of B.C. in the 1960s, Willcock and her sisters were allowed to wander in the wilderness. Grizzly bears, American tourists, terrified gangsters, and wise Indigenous Elders are among the figures that populate the tales of a wild childhood.

(NeWest Press, \$24.95 pb, 224 pages, with b/w photos, map, ISBN: 978-1-77439-051-1, available as ebook)

YES WE DID: LEADING IN TURBULENT TIMES

Gary Filmon

This memoir is Filmon's recollection of his years as the premier of Manitoba in the 1990s – years that included significant issues

and events, such as the Meech Lake and Charlottetown attempts at constitutional reform, NAFTA, the GST, a major economic downturn, the loss of the Winnipeg Jets NHL team, and the 1999 Pan Am Games. (Heartland Associates, 280 pages, with illustrations, \$39.95 hc, ISBN: 978-1-896150-98-7; \$29.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-896150-97-0)

GENERAL NON-FICTION

ABORTION TO ABOLITION: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND JUSTICE IN CANADA

Martha Paynter, illustrated by Julia Hutt
This beautifully illustrated book tells the history of abortion decriminalization and critical advocacy efforts to improve access in Canada. It also describes the threats to reproductive justice in this country and argues that prison abolition is key to the path forward. (Fernwood Publishing, \$30.00 pb, 176 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-514-9, available as ebook)

ADVOCATING FOR PALESTINE IN CANADA: HISTORIES, MOVEMENTS, ACTION

Edited by Emily Regan Wills, Jeremy Wilderman, Michael Bueckert, and Nadia Abu-Zahra
Activists, journalists, and academics contribute to this collection that explores the challenges of engaging in Palestinian advocacy in Canada, looking at the movement's different actors, approaches, and fields of engagement, and its connections to different national and transnational struggles against racism, imperialism, and colonialism. (Fernwood Publishing, \$26.00 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-476-0, available as ebook)

THE ACID ROOM: THE PSYCHEDELIC TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF HOLLYWOOD HOSPITAL

Jesse Donaldson and Erika Dyck
Between 1957 and 1968, New Westminster's Hollywood Hospital was one of the few sites in Canada venturing into psychedelic psychiatry to treat alcoholics, anxiety patients, and unhappy couples using supervised LSD trips. This book thoughtfully explores the facility, the patients, and the medical personnel who worked there. (Anvil Press, \$18.00 pb, 160 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77214-186-3)

THE AMERICAN WESTERN IN CANADIAN LITERATURE

Joel Deshayé
This historically broad and in-depth study of the Canadian western examines over a century of its development as it responds to the American western, and includes overviews of Indigenous and settler-colonial responses to the western, how the genre critiques and idealizes Canadian culture, and how it has evolved in response to climate change. (University of Calgary Press, 424 pages, \$69.99 hc, ISBN: 978-1-77385-277-5; \$34.99 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77385-267-6, available as ebook)

APOSTLES OF INEQUALITY: RURAL POVERTY, ECONOMY, AND THE ECONOMIST, 1760-1860

Jim Handy
Drawing from a wide range of contemporary sources, this book argues that the constant attempts at agricultural "improvement" in England between 1760 and 1860, which were driven by a flawed faith in the wonders of capital, did not increase productivity but instead led to a century of increasing impoverishment in rural England. (University of Toronto Press, \$75.00 hc, 336 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6353-0, available as ebook)

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF ENSLAVED BLACK PEOPLE IN THE MARITIMES

Harvey Amani Whitfield
This book includes more than 1400 brief life histories of mostly enslaved Black people in the Maritimes, people who came from various places, such as Africa, the West Indies, the Carolinas, the Chesapeake, and northern U.S. states. (University of Toronto Press, 304 pages, \$75.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4381-5; \$34.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4382-2; available as ebook)

BOOTS ON THE GROUND: DISASTER RESPONSE IN CANADA

Johanu Botha
Using in-depth archival analysis and interviews with senior military and civilian officials on the inside, this detailed examination of Canada's disaster response system includes recommendations on expanding and maintaining emergency management systems, and on providing

disaster response resources for First Nations communities. (University of Toronto Press, 256 pages, \$80.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-2977-2; \$32.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-2978-9; available as ebook)

CANADA IN QUESTION: EXPLORING OUR CITIZENSHIP IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY Peter MacKinnon

This book identifies what it means to be Canadian, urging for a renewed definition of its meaning, one that takes into account the impact of newcomers on Indigenous Peoples, the ties that bind Canadians to their country and fellow citizens, and challenges from global influences. (University of Toronto Press, 128 pages, \$70.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4313-6; \$24.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4314-3; available as ebook)

CAPITALISM AND DISPOSSESSION: CORPORATE CANADA AT HOME AND ABROAD Edited by David P. Thomas and Veldon Coburn

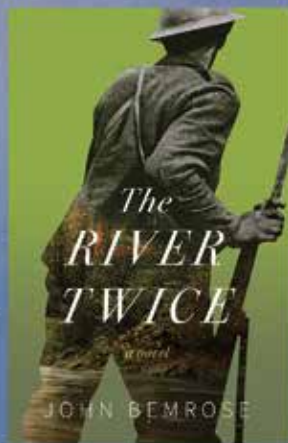
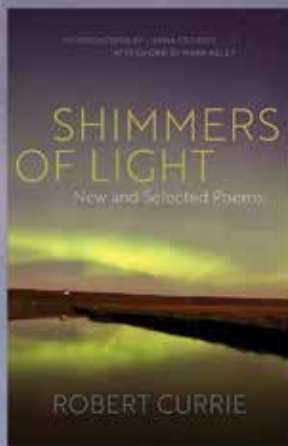
Bringing together a broad range of local and global case studies and a diversity of theoretical approaches, this book highlights the role of Canadian corporations in producing, deepening, and exacerbating conditions of dispossession at home and abroad. (Fernwood Publishing, \$33.00 pb, 272 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-478-4, available as ebook)

CRITICAL SOCIAL WORK PRAXIS Edited by Sobia Shaheen Shaikh, Brenda Anne-Marie LeFrançois, and Teresa Macías

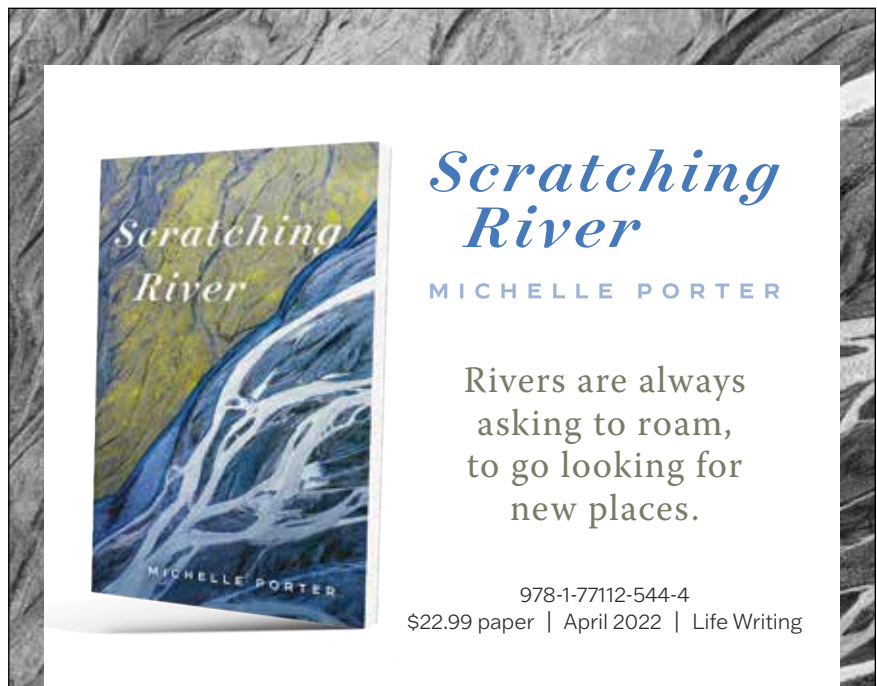
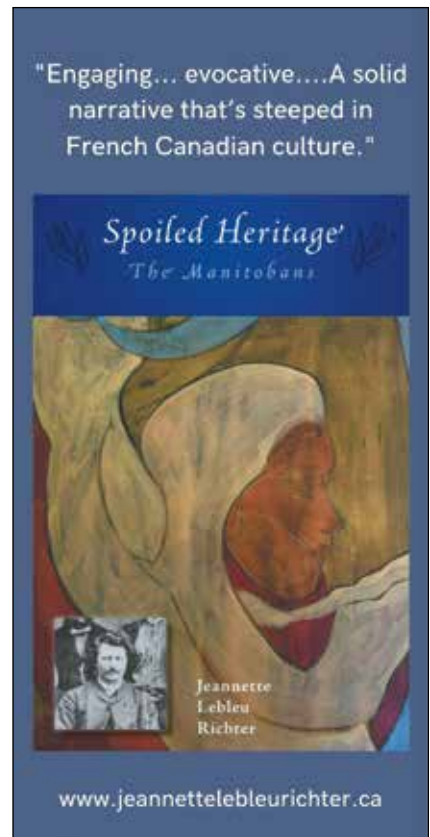
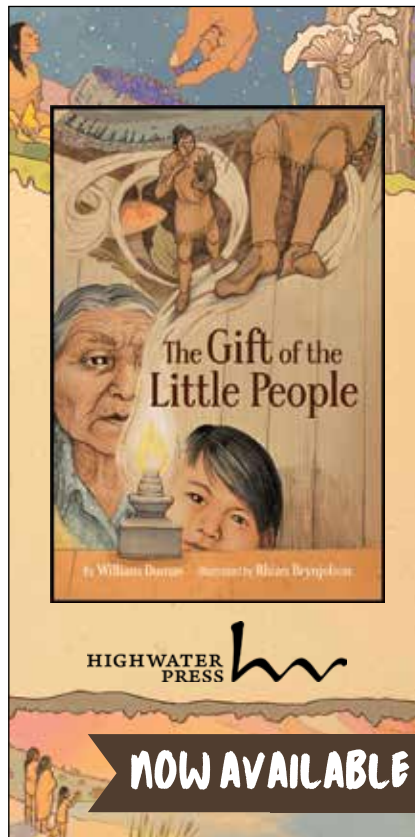
This social work textbook unites theory with practice. Each of 16 sections reflects a critical social work tradition or approach, and includes a theory chapter, a praxis chapter, and a commentary chapter, showing how to extend theory into practice, and giving tools and ideas for discussion. (Fernwood Publishing, \$70.00 pb, 592 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-191-2, available as ebook)

DECOLONIZING EQUITY Edited by Billie Allan and Rhonda Hackett Centring the voices of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized peoples, this collection recognizes the equity work being done and offers a vision of what equity can look like through a decolonial lens. (Fernwood Publishing, \$28.00 pb, 208 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-515-6, available as ebook)

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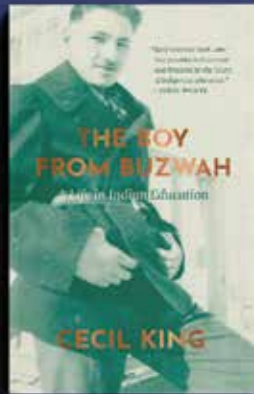
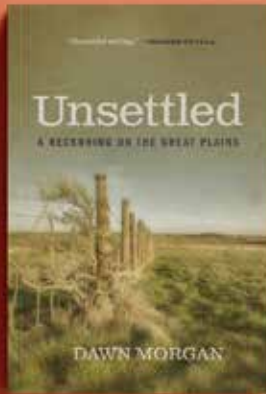
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WHY I'M HERE
Jill Frayne

"Frayne writes about the far North with the same wisdom and tenderness she brings to the lives of her unforgettable characters." - Marri Jackson, author of *Don't I Know You?*

Fifteen-year-old Gale is desperate to get out of Whitehorse, a fact that is immediately clear to counselor Helen Cotillard. She has been having anxiety attacks, so severe they landed her in the hospital. Helen soon begins to realize that Gale's distress at being separated from her little sister too closely parallels a calamity from her own past. **21.95 CAD**



UP THE COAST
Kathryn Willcock

Kathryn Willcock and her sisters grew up in logging camps on the coast of B.C. in the 1960s when children were set loose to play in the wilderness; women kept rifles next to the wood stove, and loggers risked their lives every single day.

The author's tales of grizzly bears, American tourists, and a couple of terrified gangsters, along with the wisdom of indigenous elders, pour off the page like warm syrup on a stack of cookhouse hotcakes. **24.95 CAD**

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Publisher preserves oral culture, safeguards accomplishments of Indigenous people

Eschia Books currently working on videos to accompany award-winning picture book series

by Luis Reis

“Oh, wow!” “Oh, my gosh!” This is what the Dēne Sųlíné or Chipewyan word *eschia* means in English. Eschia Books, based in Stony Plain, Alberta, on Treaty 6 territory, is an Indigenous-owned publishing house.

Their mandate is to produce books that spark an interest in and encourage an understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit experience and world views. Eschia Books provides a venue for Indigenous writers, especially emerging authors and those who live in isolated areas of Canada.

Eschia’s Cree Mohawk president and owner, Dianne Meili, a print and radio journalist, has friends and acquaintances in most First Nations and Métis communities in Alberta. With the support of knowledgeable and trustworthy language keepers and writers, she has developed Eschia Books as a go-to Indigenous publisher in Alberta, and is nurturing relationships in B.C. and the other Prairie provinces.

Eschia Books was started in 2008 by Kathy van Denderen, a Dēne Sųlíné writer, and the press has proudly published 14 Indigenous-themed titles since then. Meili took over as the new director in late 2013.

Eschia’s backlist includes non-fiction and fiction for young people, such as classroom sets of the

fictional *Watishka Warriors* available to support language and Indigenous studies. The adult fiction available is also noteworthy – Wayne Arthurson’s gritty novel *Blood Red Summer* was promoted as a top summer read in 2016 by CBC’s Shelagh Rogers.

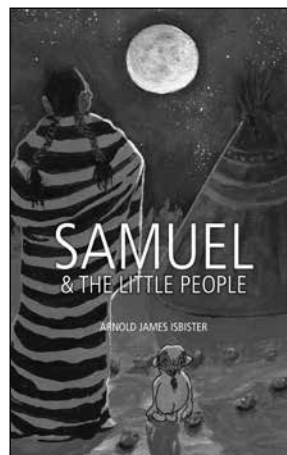
“We offer fiction and non-fiction that safeguards the history, aspirations, and accomplishments of our people – whether it’s through the story of a Mohawk activist in 1845 Upper Canada, a young Métis woman discovering herself in the Barren Lands of the 1980s, or a feisty spirit who helps his brother solve his murder,” says Meili.

The preservation of culture was key to the



“We offer fiction and non-fiction that safeguards the history, aspirations, and accomplishments of our people.”

DIANNE MEILI



release of *The Little Women’s Lodge Kit* by grassroots Cree healer Dr. Darlene Auger in 2019. Illustrated by Nakota/Cree artist Chloe “Bluebird” Mustooch, this kit includes a series of picture books that explore traditional ideas of birth and raising children.

The publisher is currently working on videos that have the

author reading the stories in Cree, with text appearing in the foreground and illustrations featured in the background. This resource won the 2020 Learning Book of the Year Award from the Book Publishers Association of Alberta.

In late 2020, Meili was very excited to release *Mother Earth Plants for Health and Beauty: Indigenous Plants, Traditions and Recipes* by Carrie Armstrong. This beautifully illustrated guide is an Edmonton bestseller and was excerpted in *Canadian Wildlife* magazine.

Three titles from Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation (ANSN) – small in population but huge in traditional knowledge – were released in 2019 and 2020. *Wahogicobi* is a children’s board book illustrating kinship terms. *Jaysen’s Story* and *Sunflower’s Story*, each written by an ANSN youth,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

tackle the heartbreaking social problem of suicide among youth in Indigenous communities across North America.

“We strive to ensure these essential narratives assume their well-deserved place in our country’s literary landscape to resonate with Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers alike,” Meili says.

This year, the beginning of The United Nations Decade of Indigenous Languages, sees Eschia Books responding to the need for Indigenous literature and educational materials with titles that present the world views and preserve the languages of First Peoples.

Currently in the works is *Kelabit-Lun Tauh Dictionary* by Mutang Murud, a work that will help keep a dying language alive.

Also planned for a spring release is *Samuel and the Little People*, a book that presents the Indigenous world view in an interesting way by featuring Up-See-So Ai-See-Neh-Suk – the Little

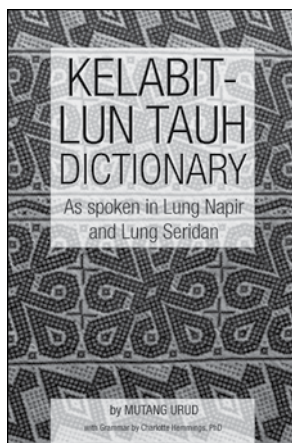
People who feature in many traditional oral stories.

“The Elders in my book [*Those Who Know: Profiles of Alberta’s Native Elders*] talked about them many times when I was conducting interviews with them back in the early 1990s,” Meili says, and Arnold Isbister sourced the story from Samuel White Wolf’s journals.

“Writing down the stories of a traditionally oral culture is important to protect them for future generations,” says Meili. “We do so respectfully, guided by our Elders where needed and using Indigenous illustrations whenever possible.”

Meili explains why Eschia Books is so important right now. “In light of recent events such as the finding of unmarked children’s graves at residential schools, the harsh reality of the negative Indigenous experience in Canada is hitting home.

“Settlers ask, ‘What can I do? How can I help make this right?’ and I tell them, ‘Get to know us. Use your privilege to accommodate Indigenous people, and read authentic Indigenous books by Indigenous authors.’ ” 🌿



KELABIT-LUN TAUH DICTIONARY: AS SPOKEN IN LUNG NAPIR AND LUNG SERIDAN

Mutang Murud

This dictionary is the result of collaborative work over many years, to document and revitalize the language for the Kelabit of Borneo, specifically the Meri’it and Seridan variant of the Kelabit-Lun Tauh language. This is the first comprehensive documentation of the Kelabit-Lun Tauh language, which, for thousands of years, has been purely an oral language.

(Eschia Books, \$39.95 pb, 640 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990321-19-1, available as ebook)

SAMUEL AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE

Arnold James Isbister

This is the story of the origins of the Little People, Up-See-So Ai-See-Neh-Suk, as told in the journal of Samuel White Wolf, which Isbister found among his grandfather’s things. The Up-See-So Ai-See-Neh-Suk only show themselves to those they see as honoured friends, and they favoured Samuel for the stories he told. A tiny person, to whom Samuel gave the name Upsees, meaning “Little” in Cree, became a close and dear friend.

(Eschia Books, \$14.95 pb, 112 pages, with colour illustrations, ISBN: 978-1-990321-09-2, available as ebook)

New from Dora Dueck



*Return
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June 2022 | 248 pages paper | \$20
ISBN 978-1-987986-10-5
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Thief and royalty connect through their desire for adventure, independence in fantasy tale

World of Wyndhail, created by Dee Hahn, is also a land of economic extremes, bands of thieves

by Ian Goodwillie

THE GRAVE THIEF

Dee Hahn

Puffin Canada-Penguin Random House

\$23.99 hc, 344 pages

ISBN: 978-0-7352-6943-9

Available as an ebook

A deepening mystery. A magical kingdom. A dangerous monster. All of this comes together in Dee Hahn's *The Grave Thief*, a story that takes some of the traditional elements of fantasy and turns them on their heads in several unexpected ways.

The story of *The Grave Thief* takes place in Wyndhail, which Calgary-based Hahn says “borders the misty moors and the Craigharock Mountains. Gems from the mountain mines are celebrated and prized amongst Wyndhail’s citizens, and the legendary deepstones are rumoured to possess magic.” But it’s also a land of extremes, particularly between its richest and poorest citizens.

This is most evident in the life of the book’s main character, a boy named Spade, who faces bullying and discrimination because he walks with a limp, and because he is a Joolie, or jewel thief, with an unusual background.

“Spade is a 12-year-old grave thief who is descended from a long line of thieves,” she says. “Given lock picks as birthday presents and trained in the art of deception since a small child, Spade has thievery in his blood.”

It’s his father’s search for greater wealth that changes the trajectory of Spade’s life. “Garnet, Spade’s father, is always on the lookout for ways to improve the family fortunes,” says Hahn. “Taking advantage of the Wyndhail custom of burying their dead alongside their

riches, Garnet sees an opportunity for a thriving business: the trade of ‘deceased goods.’”

The plan to dig up the wealth buried with Wyndhail’s ruling class is the beginning of Spade’s adventure. It leads him in search of the deepstones, to face a monster called the Woegan, and even to meet Ember, the queen’s niece.

The connection between Spade and Ember is immediate, despite their differences. While Ember has studied the magic of the kingdom from books, Spade has learned his skills through hard experience. Ember lives in a castle, and Spade in a rough Joolie camp. Even so, they are not so far apart in their aspirations.

“Spade longs for adventure and change, and he dreams of something more for his life than digging up graves,” says Hahn. “Ember is in a similar

predicament: she’s stuck in a stifling role that lacks the independence she craves and struggles to be seen for who she is.”

Spade’s journey in Hahn’s imagination started in the cemetery.

“I’ve always loved graveyards,” she says, “and I enjoy walking through them and reading tombstone epitaphs. On one of my walks, I wondered what it would be like to have a job that involved spending time in foggy graveyards, particularly at night. And that’s when Spade’s story began to take shape.”

Hahn hopes readers find Spade relatable. “I would like readers to feel a connection with Spade, and his struggles and doubts,” she says.

“As a writer who deals with a chronic pain condition myself, I wanted to create a character who discovers that his worth isn’t defined by a magical stone or a strong body, but that his true value lies in being himself.”



Dee Hahn

Pair of stories from prolific author weaves emotional impact into fiction to draw readers along

Sigmund Brouwer's latest releases designed for less practised readers, but open to everyone

by Laura McKay

HUSH, PUPPY

Sigmund Brouwer, illustrated by Sabrina Gendron

Orca Book Publishers

\$7.95 pb, 96 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4598-2590-1

Available as an ebook

TRAPPED

Sigmund Brouwer

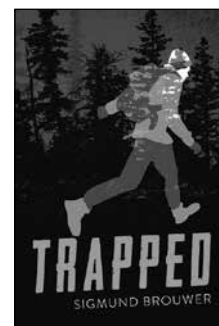
Orca Book Publishers

\$10.95 pb, 96 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4598-2861-2

Available as an ebook

Hush, Puppy is for children six to eight years old, and *Trapped* is intended for teen readers.



As part of the new Orca Anchor series, *Trapped* is a “hi-lo” title written specifically for teens reading below a Grade 2 level; however, the artful use of metaphor and the clever plot will draw in readers of any age and ability.

Brouwer has written books for a variety of audiences, but he is particularly prolific in juvenile and young adult genres. “The first thing that inspires me to write for any audience is just wanting to share a story,” he explains. “As I do my research for anything, I always look for stories that push my emotional buttons, and then I try to weave them into fiction.”

For example, for the Charlie’s Rules series, he did research with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and read a lot of different accounts from veterinarians.

“Whenever I read a story that either made me giggle, or there was a degree of suspense or curiosity – like how did a cow get in a tree? – or a little bit of anger – like why would someone do that? – [those stories] that had some emotional impact showed up in [the series].”

Emotions are a big part of how Brouwer teaches writing too. Through his Story Ninjas program and Rock & Roll Literacy Show, he visits over 150 schools every year.

“When I work with Story Ninjas in my writing classes, my single biggest point is this: Great stories are like great songs – they grab your feelings. And that’s because humans connect emotionally. We love songs that grab our feelings. We love stories that grab our feelings.”

Brouwer showcases this philosophy in his own work. He hopes that when reading *Hush, Puppy* and *Trapped*, young readers will “get so lost in the emotional impact of the problems presented to them that they just enjoy the story from beginning to end.”

Emotional impact is the key ingredient in two new books from Alberta author Sigmund Brouwer.

Adding to his extensive backlist of over 100 titles, *Hush, Puppy* and *Trapped* will both be released in the first half of 2022.

Hush, Puppy is the third book in the Charlie’s Rules series. Charlie is an 11-year-old boy who helps out at his mom’s vet clinic. Whenever he learns something new about animal behaviour, he records it as a rule in his notebook to help him remember.

In this book for animal lovers, Charlie’s rules are put to the test by a car swarmed by bees, a Chihuahua who has lost confidence, and his best friend, Amy, who is acting weirder than any of the pets.

In *Trapped*, we meet Matt, a teen counting down to his 16th birthday – the day when he can leave his abusive foster home situation. However, when Matt discovers a large nugget of gold, he must escape immediately before his dangerous foster father finds out. Set in the Yukon, this book’s suspense will keep readers eagerly turning the page.

Like many of Brouwer’s titles, both *Hush, Puppy* and *Trapped* are “written very deliberately to engage readers who haven’t practised as much reading,” says Brouwer.



Sigmund Brouwer

MORE YOUNG ADULT & CHILDREN TITLES

PICTURE BOOKS

AS GLENN AS CAN BE
Sarah Ellis, illustrated
by Nancy Vo

This charmingly illustrated book tells the story of Glenn Gould, who from a young age was not only a gifted pianist, but also knew what he liked and what he didn't like, and had the strength of character to be himself in every way. (Groundwood Books, \$19.99 hc, 40 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77306-468-0, available as ebook)

BOOBIES

Nancy Vo

Fresh and funny, this picture book offers facts about "boobies" or breasts for curious young children – how mammals have them to feed babies, how they vary from individual to individual and change over time, and how different animals have different numbers of them. (Groundwood Books, \$18.99 hc, 40 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77306-692-9, available as ebook)

A BOY NAMED TOMMY DOUGLAS

Beryl Young, illustrated
by Joan Steacy

When Tommy Douglas was a boy in Winnipeg, a knee injury developed an infection, and his leg was almost amputated, but was saved by a surgeon who worked on it for free. This charming picture book tells how Tommy was inspired by this experience to work to make medical care available to all Canadians, not just those able to pay for it. (Midtown Press, \$19.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988242-41-5)

FLOCK

Sara Cassidy, illustrated
by Geraldo Valério

A little girl starts feeding birds at the bus stop, and before she knows it, more and more fantastical birds want to join in on the feast, turning an ordinary afternoon into a surreal adventure.

(Groundwood Books, \$18.99 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77306-440-6, available as ebook)

KUNOICHI BUNNY

Sara Cassidy, illustrated
by Brayden Sato

This delightful wordless picture book in graphic novel format demonstrates the magic of stuffed animals. While Saya, her dad, and her stuffed ninja-bunny go to the park, Saya – with the help of her beloved stuffie – manages to save the day over and over as they stop a cat fight, save a boy from being hit with a baseball, cheer up a woman on the bus, and much more.

(Orca Book Publishers, \$19.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-2780-6, available as ebook)

PRAIRIE 123s

Jocey Asnong

Bright illustrations and whimsical text celebrate the Prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Young readers count squirrels skating in Winnipeg, trout swimming in Saskatoon, and snow tubes sliding in Red Deer.

(Rocky Mountain Books, 26 pages, \$12.00 board book, ISBN: 978-1-77160-531-1; \$10.00 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77160-532-8)

SITTING SHIVA

Erin Silver, illustrated by
Michelle Theodore

The love between a father and a daughter and the support

they give each other as they grieve is powerfully portrayed in this evocatively illustrated, heartfelt, and gentle story about the comfort of the Jewish ritual of sitting shiva. (Orca Book Publishers, \$19.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-2772-1, available as ebook)

THERE'S A DRAGON IN MY CLOSET

John F. Green, illustrated
by Linda Hendry

New generations of children will love this 35th anniversary edition of the beloved story of a boy who finds a fire-breathing dragon in his closet. When no one believes him, he invites everyone to a dragon viewing, and that's when the real action starts!

(Peanut Butter Press, \$19.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927735-70-1)

THEY SAY BLUE

Jillian Tamaki

This poetic exploration of colour follows a young girl as she contemplates colours in the known and unknown, in the physical world and the world beyond. The stunning illustrations by the award-winning author add to the mystery and glory.

(Groundwood Books, \$14.99 board book, 40 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77306-678-3)

THE THREE BEARS AND GOLDILOCKS

Bee Waeland

This wordless retelling of the fairy tale of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" explores, in bold colours and forms, how the story would go if Goldilocks were held accountable for her crimes.

(Orca Book Publishers, \$19.95 hc, 64 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-3385-2, available as ebook)



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Modern-day fable shares importance of maintaining traditional knowledge

Jean-Pierre Picard's beavers help us take a new look at ourselves and society

by Lucien Chaput

LE GRAND BARRAGE

Jean-Pierre Picard

Illustrated by Karen Olsen

Les Éditions de la nouvelle plume

\$14.95 pb, 40 pages

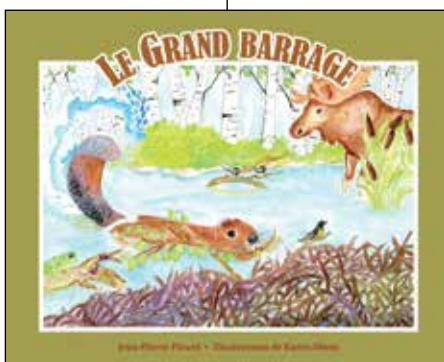
ISBN: 978-2-924237-76-2

Slow and steady wins the race. Who doesn't remember the moral of Aesop's fable "The Hare and the Tortoise"?

In his first picture book, *Le Grand barrage*, Jean-Pierre Picard offers a fable for modern times for children as well as adults. A musician, graphic designer, journalist, author, and webmaster originally from the Outaouais region of Québec, Jean-Pierre Picard has called Saskatchewan home since 1986.

He explains why he chose to write an allegorical tale. "I like this formula which, through animals, creates a certain detachment between our emotions or thoughts and those of the protagonists. It allows us to take an external look at ourselves."

His interest in beavers goes back to the summers of his childhood. "Near our cabin, there was a path that plunged into the forest leading to a marsh that owed its existence to a beaver dam," he says. "The beaver is a truly fascinating animal. It was on its back that the Canada of the Europeans was built."



Une fable moderne sur l'importance du maintien des connaissances traditionnelles

Les castors de Jean-Pierre Picard nous permettent de jeter un nouveau regard sur nous-mêmes et sur notre société

par Lucien Chaput

LE GRAND BARRAGE

Jean-Pierre Picard

Illustrations de Karen Olsen

Les Éditions de la nouvelle plume

14,95 \$ papier, 40 pages

ISBN : 978-2-924237-76-2

Rien ne sert de courir; il faut partir à point. Qui ne connaît pas la morale de la fable « Le lièvre et la tortue » de Jean de La Fontaine?

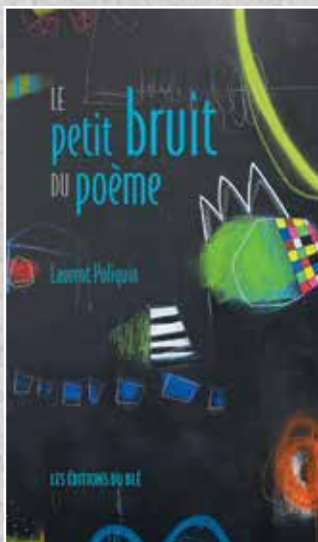
Dans *Le Grand barrage*, Jean-Pierre Picard propose une fable pour les temps modernes destinée aux

enfants et aux adultes. Musicien, infographiste, journaliste, auteur et webmestre originaire de l'Outaouais, Jean-Pierre Picard est établi en Saskatchewan depuis 1986.

Il explique pourquoi il a choisi d'écrire un récit allégorique pour son premier livre. « J'aime cette formule qui, par le biais des animaux, offre un certain détachement entre nos propres émotions ou pensées et les protagonistes. Elle nous permet de jeter un regard extérieur sur nous-mêmes. »

Son intérêt pour les castors remonte aux étés de son enfance. « Près de notre chalet, il y avait un sentier qui s'enfonçait dans la forêt pour aboutir à un marais qui devait son existence à un barrage de castors », dit-il. « C'est un animal vraiment fascinant. C'est sur son dos que s'est construit le Canada des Européens. »

NOUVEAUTÉS EN FRANÇAIS 2022



Le petit bruit du poème

Laurent Poliquin

POÉSIE- 78 P.

Laurent Poliquin s'interroge sur la signification et le rôle de la poésie, de l'écriture et sur le sens de l'existence, à travers sa fonction de poète, témoin sensible des bouleversements et de la magie du monde.

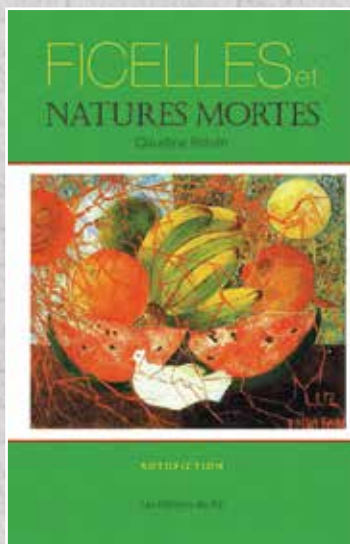


Je m'en vais / Débâcle

Katrine Deniset

THÉÂTRE- 100 P.

La jeune autrice expose avec un regard neuf des questionnements ancrés dans nos communautés franco-phones. Inspirée de la pièce classique de Roger Auger Je m'en vais à Régina.



Ficelles et Natures mortes

Claudine Potvin

AUTOFICTION- 146 P.

Se remémorer le passé signifie faire le tour de sa culture, de son éducation, d'une époque. L'autrice l'a fait en replongeant constamment dans son présent.



Les Didascalies

Lyne Gareau

ROMAN - 121 P.

Dans ce nouveau roman de Lyne Gareau, la vie d'un personnage sur scène se mêle intimement à l'histoire personnelle d'une spectatrice.

Les Éditions du Blé
Saint-Boniface (Manitoba)



ble.refc.ca

Les Éditions du Blé remercient chaleureusement le Conseil des arts du Canada, le Conseil des arts du Manitoba, la Direction des arts du ministère de la Culture, du Sport et du Patrimoine de la Province du Manitoba, ainsi que ses fidèles lectrices et lecteurs toujours au rendez-vous.

Le Grand barrage, illustrated by Karen Olsen, is the story of a colony of beavers and their oversized project: a massive permanent dam on a large river.

“The story supplies the backdrop for addressing various reflections, particularly on the importance of maintaining traditional knowledge in a changing society. The story also addresses the place given to public monuments linked to a painful past,” says Picard.

“Our ancestors knew how to provide for their family on a small plot of land and by sharing knowledge among neighbours. They knew how to fix things.”

Picard believes that today, we would be in very bad shape if we had to do without our current technology.

“It’s difficult in this universe where the electron reigns, but I believe in the need to nurture a certain autonomy,” he says. “Like the Great Dam in the fable, our civilization is fragile, and the day may come (I hope not!) when we will have to manage with the means at hand. Think back, for example, to situations such as the ice storm where entire cities were deprived of electricity.

“Small things can make a big difference like knowing how to start a fire when the wood is wet, or which plants in our environment can heal or nourish us.” 🌿



Jean-Pierre Picard

Le Grand barrage, illustré par Karen Olsen, est l’histoire d’une colonie de castors et de son projet démesuré : un grand barrage permanent sur une grande rivière.

« L’histoire est la toile de fond pour aborder diverses réflexions, notamment sur l’importance du maintien des connaissances traditionnelles dans une société qui se transforme. L’histoire aborde également la place que l’on accorde aux monuments liés à un passé douloureux », dit Picard.

« Nos ancêtres savaient comment pourvoir à leur famille avec un petit lopin de terre et le partage des connaissances entre voisins. Ils savaient réparer les choses. »

Picard croit que nous serions bien mal en point aujourd’hui si nous devions faire sans la technologie moderne.

« C’est difficile dans cet univers où l’électron règne, mais je crois à la nécessité de nourrir une certaine autonomie », dit-il. « Comme le Grand barrage, notre civilisation est fragile, et le jour viendra peut-être (j’espère que non!) où il faudra se débrouiller avec les moyens du bord. Qu’on repense, par exemple, à des situations comme la crise du verglas où des villes entières avaient été privées d’électricité.

« De petites choses peuvent faire une grande différence comme savoir allumer un feu avec du bois humide, ou quelles sont les plantes dans notre environnement qui peuvent nous soigner ou nous alimenter. » 🌿

VIENNENT DE PARAITRE EN FRANÇAIS

BRIGITTE ET LE CANETON

Hélène Flamand, illustrations
de Andrew S. Davis

Brigitte et son papa voient un caneton traverser tout seul la route menant à l’étang. A-t-il besoin d’aide? *Brigitte et le caneton* est le huitième livre dans la série de livres pour enfants P’tits copains d’Hélène Flamand d’Edmonton. Brigitte and her dad see a duckling all alone crossing a road leading to a pond. Does the duckling need help? This is the eighth title in Edmontonian Hélène Flamand’s P’tits copains series.

(Éditions de la nouvelle plume, album jeunesse (3 à 8 ans), 10,95 \$ papier, 32 pages, ISBN : 978-2-924237-75-5)

CORNEILLE APPORTE LA LUMIÈRE, UNE LÉGENDE INUITE

Brandy Hanna

Cette légende inuite de Corneille qui traverse l’obscurité afin d’apporter la lumière aux Inuits prend vie sous forme des illustrations colorées et éclatantes de l’artiste inuite Brandy Hanna. C’est un livre bilingue en français et en inuktitut. An Inuit legend of Corneille (Crow) who brings light to the Inuit takes form and life through the vibrant colours of Inuit artist Brandy Hanna’s illustrations. The book is bilingual in French and in Inuktitut. (Éditions de la nouvelle plume, album jeunesse (5 à 9 ans), 14,95 \$ papier, 36 pages, ISBN : 978-2-924237-88-5)

LES DIDASCALIES

Lyne Gareau

Un roman qui prend la forme d’une pièce de théâtre, *Les Didascalies* nous entraîne sur la piste d’une « histoire » racontée par une narratrice omnisciente. On assiste à la mise en abîme d’une pièce de théâtre, à laquelle assiste la narratrice en compagnie d’un ami en voie de devenir son amoureux. A play within a novel, *Les Didascalies* (The Stage Directions) is a story told by an omniscient narrator who is watching a play with a male friend who will soon become her lover.

(Éditions du Blé, roman, 19,95 \$ papier, 88 pages, ISBN : 978-2-924915-60-8)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

Poetry collection reflects urgency of a COVID-troubled world

Laurent Poliquin creates vivid and instinctual poems

by Amber O'Reilly

LE PETIT BRUIT DU POÈME

Laurent Poliquin

Les Éditions du Blé

\$17.95 pb, 72 pages

ISBN: 978-2-924915-54-7

Available as an ebook

Le *petit bruit du poème* (*The Small Sound of a Poem*) is Laurent Poliquin's first poetry collection published with Les Éditions du Blé, his latest of 20 works including over 10 previous poetry collections. The author, born in Trois-Rivières, Québec, writes, lives, and teaches in the heart of Winnipeg.

The uniquely structured collection includes four long poems with evocative titles: "Le petit bruit du poème," "Jardin des reflets" (Garden of Reflections), "Ô toi souveraine souvenance" (O Sovereign Remembering), and "Art poétique de nos relations" (Poetic Art of Our Relationships).

"The organizational structure is put in place in stages," says Poliquin. "Firstly in tandem with the writing, but also after the fact. Often, my writing goes off in one direction; the unity of a group of poems is then easier to uncover. In the end, I try to identify themes, but I also try to maintain a sort of suspense, a tension, especially to finish with an impact."

In this reflection on the potential and limitations of poetry itself, life and death cohabit like sisters. In *Le petit*

Un recueil de poèmes qui reflète l'urgence d'un monde troublé par la COVID

Laurent Poliquin crée des poèmes saisissants et instinctifs

par Amber O'Reilly

LE PETIT BRUIT DU POÈME

Laurent Poliquin

Les Éditions du Blé

17,95 \$ papier, 72 pages

ISBN : 978-2-924915-54-7

Disponible en livre numérique

Le *petit bruit du poème* est le premier recueil de poésie de Laurent Poliquin publié aux Éditions du Blé, sa plus récente de 20 œuvres y compris une dizaine de recueils antérieurs. L'auteur né à Trois-Rivières, Québec vit, écrit et enseigne au cœur de Winnipeg.

La structure singulière du recueil propose quatre long poèmes aux titres évocateurs : « Le petit bruit du poème », « Jardin des reflets », « Ô toi souveraine souvenance » et « Art poétique de nos relations ».

« L'organisation structurelle se met en place par étape », dit Poliquin. « D'abord au fil de l'écriture, mais aussi après coup. Souvent, mon écriture part dans une direction; l'unité d'un ensemble de poèmes est alors plus facilement repérable. Au fond, j'essaie d'identifier des thèmes, mais j'essaie de maintenir aussi une sorte de suspense, une tension, notamment pour parvenir à une finale relevée. »

Dans cette réflexion sur le potentiel et les limites de la poésie, la vie et la mort se côtoient comme des sœurs.



bruit du poème, Poliquin's readers will find a sensuality always rich and full of life, a thread of pandemic exasperation, and a fresh openness to the world.

"The work clearly inserts itself into the experience of the present times," confesses Poliquin. "It is not at all a book about COVID, but evidently, my relationship to poetry has shifted profoundly through the pandemic. I write poems with a sort of urgency and a profound desire to handle language, find newness, as if the possibility of writing for the last time in my life had been offered to me."

The prose poem musings at the end of the book are a nod to Poliquin's essayist and philosopher side. Indeed, "Art poétique de nos relations" poses especially big questions and truths on this "serious art of the world's lightness," such as "La poésie serait même la seule voie possible à Dieu d'exister, du moins à ceux qui en éprouvent une émotion, alors qu'Il a le silence facile. L'ultime achèvement du poème serait de faire pleurer les morts." ("Poetry may even be the only possible means for God to exist, at least for those who feel it, as He is not much for speaking. The poem's ultimate achievement would be to bring the dead to tears.")

And so, what exactly is the small sound of a poem?

Poliquin replies, "I think it is mostly what doesn't always create sound – misery, tears, interior turmoil, bloodshed – but also what makes the greatest sound: silence." 🌿



Laurent Poliquin

Les adeptes de ce poète retrouveront dans *Le petit bruit du poème* une sensualité toujours riche et vive, un brin d'exaspération pandémique et une fraîcheur éveillée ouverte sur le monde.

« C'est clairement une œuvre inscrite dans l'expérience des temps présents », confie l'auteur. « Ce n'est pas du tout un livre qui parle de la COVID, mais à toute évidence, mon rapport à la poésie a été bousculé par la pandémie. J'ai écrit des poèmes avec une sorte d'urgence et un désir profond de travailler le langage, de trouver du neuf, comme si la possibilité d'écrire pour la dernière fois de ma vie m'avait été offerte. »

Les témoignages en prose poétique de la fin du recueil sont en quelque sorte un clin-d'œil au Poliquin essayiste et philosophe. En effet, *Art poétique de nos relations* émet des questionnements et des constats particulièrement révélateurs sur cet « art sérieux de la légèreté du monde », par exemple : « La poésie serait même la seule voie possible à Dieu d'exister, du moins à ceux qui en éprouvent une émotion, alors qu'Il a le silence facile. L'ultime achèvement du poème serait de faire pleurer les morts. »

Et alors, quel est, justement, le petit bruit du poème?

Poliquin répond, « Je crois que c'est surtout ce qui ne fait pas toujours du bruit – la misère, les larmes, les malaises intérieurs, le sang qui coule – mais aussi ce qui fait grand bruit : le silence. » 🌿

DU COLLÈGE À LA LIBERTÉ

Jean-Marie Taillefer

Inspiré des événements d'une jeunesse passée dans le milieu toujours changeant de la communauté francophone du Manitoba, ce dernier roman d'une série de trois raconte ses expériences au Collège de Saint-Boniface et dans l'école secondaire mixte de son petit village natal durant les tumultueuses années 1960. The last novel of the trilogy inspired by the author's life in a francophone Manitoba community covers the tumultuous 1960s when he was a student at the boys-only St. Boniface

College and then returned to a co-ed high school in the small rural village where he was born.

(Éditions des Plaines, roman, 19,95 \$ papier, 208 pages, ISBN : 978-2-9819195-1-9)

FICELLES ET NATURES MORTES

Claudine Potvin

Une femme d'âge mûr passe au travers de « quelques moments ou épisodes de son existence » et nous donne un récit fragmenté et fragmentaire, des sortes de tableaux, dans laquelle l'esthétique a une place primordiale, liés entre eux par les

liens ténus des méandres de la mémoire. A woman of a certain age remembers certain moments or episodes of her existence, offering the audience a fragmented story, various tableaux, in which beauty has an essential place, and which are linked tenuously by the meanderings of memory. (Éditions du Blé, autofiction-récit, 21,95 \$ papier, 122 pages, ISBN : 978-2-924915-57-8)

Dispatches

Insights on accessible books

by Daniella Levy-Pinto

Books feed our minds and fill our time. From children's stories to novels, poetry, and academic texts, books play a crucial role in our lives, fulfilling the need for knowledge, shaping individuals and cultures, and helping inform ourselves, the ways in which we are in the world, and the ways in which we can expect to affect it.

Imagine if the majority of books were unreadable to you: the font too small, words jumbled, no clear separation between different sections, pages impossible to turn. At best, the reading experience would be unpleasant; at worst, there would be no reading experience to speak of, because you couldn't read some or all of the book.

An accessible book is one that can be used and understood by everyone. Unfortunately, many print and electronic books are not accessible to people with print disabilities (vision, mobility, or comprehension impairments), who read using assistive technologies such as screen readers and braille displays, screen magnification, and text-to-speech apps for computers or mobile devices.

According to current estimates, less than 10 per cent of all published materials in any given year are available in accessible formats.

The digital environment is great for accessibility because electronic devices can interpret digital files and digital systems. The advent of ebooks meant that, for the first time in history, blind and other print-disabled readers could gain access to the same books and publications at the same time as the rest of the population. For this to happen, however, that content must meet accessibility standards and use best practices to ensure its accessibility.

In 2019, the federal government announced a five-year strategy to ensure the funded sustainable production and distribution of accessible books over the longer term. They launched calls for projects that would specifically fund independent Canadian publishers, including publishers in the Prairie provinces, helping them make the transition to publishing born-accessible content.

While ebooks can be created accessibly from the beginning, there is an identified knowledge gap in the publishing industry around adding accessibility features. The National Network for Equitable Library Service (NNELS) is filling that gap by creating awareness and teaching independent publishers in Canada how to create books at the outset in a way that allows people with print disabilities to read them using whatever assistive technology they need.

NNELS has worked with over 50 publishers across the country, including dozens in the Prairie provinces. This work is directly informed by people with lived experience of print disability. It is rewarding to witness publishers realize that by taking steps to build accessibility features into their digital content, they are creating a better product for everyone.

There are many small things that publishers and other content creators can do to incorporate

accessibility into their production process, and this can be done over time – it does not need to be done all at once. For example, ensuring that all text can be resized and customized to meet a reader's needs and preferences, or having a complete table of contents, will make a more accessible book for all readers, with or without print disabilities, resulting in more inclusion. Every little step counts!



“According to current estimates, less than 10 per cent of all published materials in any given year are available in accessible formats.”

DANIELLA LEVY-PINTO

Daniella Levy-Pinto (she/her) is the manager of NNELS (National Network for Equitable Library Service), where she leads accessibility initiatives to prevent and eliminate accessibility barriers to digital content. She has been a user of assistive technologies for more than two decades in her different roles in academic and professional settings. In her work, Levy-Pinto promotes and informs a paradigm shift towards born-accessible content and inclusive design. She holds a PhD in political science from the University of Toronto.

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Currently, **KAM TEO** is the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Book Awards (SBA). A librarian by training, Kam has an MA in history.

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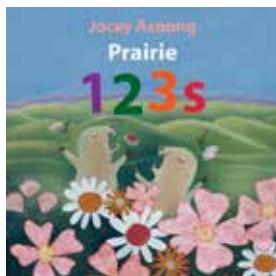
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On the Cover: Cover art from *Finding Izzy* created 2021, Callum Jagger, Hyperlight Artwork

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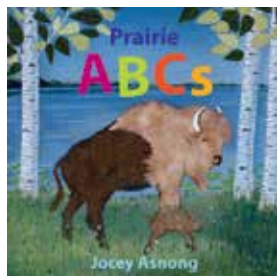


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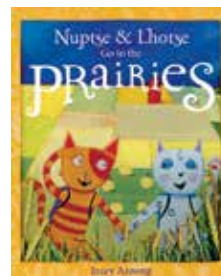


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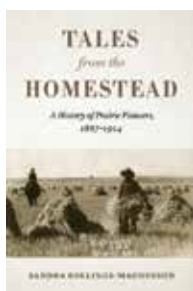


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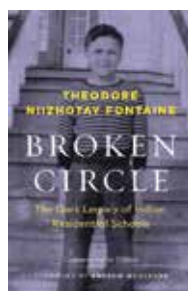
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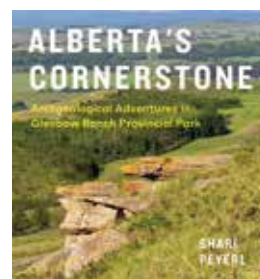
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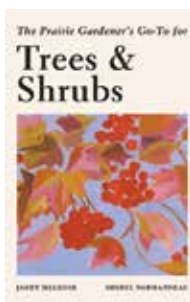
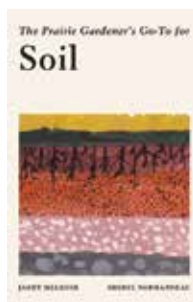
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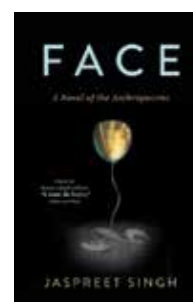


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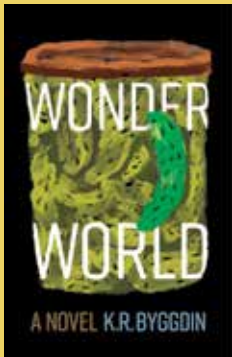


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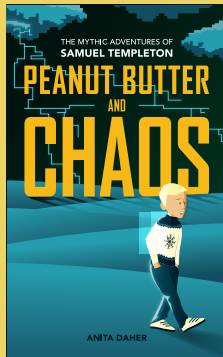
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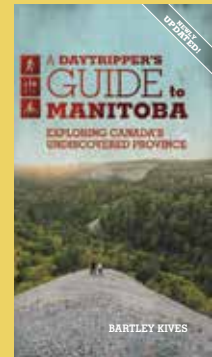


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