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*Evil lives in the 'least likely, most surprising of places' in middle-years fantasy that centres on trees*

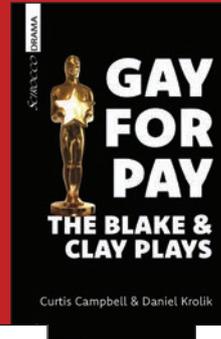
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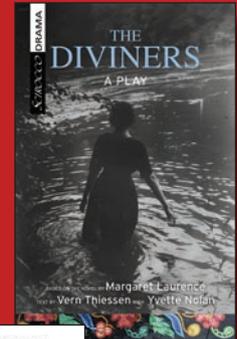
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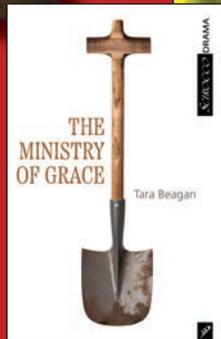
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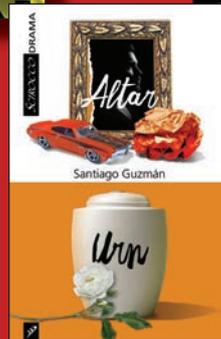
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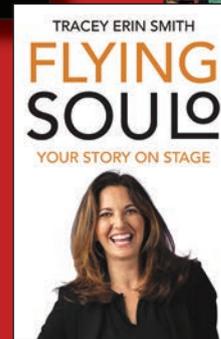
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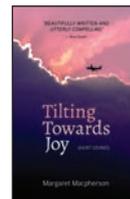
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**On the Cover:** *He Who Would Walk the Earth Cover*, digital artwork (2025) by Polaris. Read more about *He Who Would Walk the Earth* on page 19.

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## Debut novel explores coming of age in Uganda amid social pressure, homophobia

*Tushabe hopes to open dialogue on how queerness is shown in African literature*

by Kim Uduman

### EVERYTHING IS FINE HERE

Iryn Tushabe

House of Anansi Press

\$24.99 pb, 320 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4870-1313-4

Available as an ebook

The writing of Iryn Tushabe’s debut novel, *Everything Is Fine Here*, has enriched her life in more than one way.

She started writing stories and narrative non-fiction during a period in 2015 when her Canadian post-graduation work permit expired before her permanent residency was finalized – a time when she needed a way to take her mind off of everything.

“When I was writing, I wasn’t obsessively checking the citizenship and immigration website for wait times, which were frustratingly vague,” Tushabe explains. “I wasn’t lurking in the chat rooms of those who were stuck in immigration limbo, commiserating about our stalled lives.



Iryn Tushabe

“In this way, stories – those I read and the ones I wrote – came to my aid during my time of need.”

By the time she received her permanent residency in the fall of 2015, she had started the story that later became *Everything Is Fine Here*.

Tushabe now lives in Regina, but her novel draws on her younger years in Uganda. The coming-of-age story follows 18-year-old Aine, who navigates the challenges of family and societal pressures in order to stand in solidarity with her older sister, Mbabazi, who is gay, in a country where queerness is criminalized. After a family tragedy, Aine’s loyalties are divided when her Christian mother cannot accept Mbabazi and her partner, Achen.

Although homophobia, religious intolerance, and societal discrimination are unfortunately experienced everywhere, Tushabe wanted to explore how these themes

would unfold in an East African setting, where the situation is extreme.

“I wanted to meditate upon what happens, on an individual level, when a government – claiming both scientific and scriptural backing – discriminates against a group of people, perpetuating an orthodoxy that allows for those people to be called immoral, to be incarcerated and even killed,” she says.

While the author also grew up in the Ugandan village of Bigodi and attended a boarding school similar to the one

Aine attended, there are some key differences between her life experiences and those of her characters. Young Tushabe bought into Christianity more than Aine and Mbabazi do, and her mother didn’t shun her when she came out.

“My biggest fear had been that she’d stop loving me,” says Tushabe, “but in fact my bisexuality became this secret that brought us closer, even if that closeness was a Christian one, in that we prayed for me together.”

Despite the oppressive environment, the novel presents a picture of thriving queer relationships.

“I hope that the book sparks dialogue about what is possible for these women as they continue living their lives,” says Tushabe. “I also hope for there to be a conversation about how queerness is portrayed in African literature.”

Exploring these young lives offered Tushabe a kind of magic. “Getting to tunnel back in time to all the geographies – both internal and external – of my younger years brought me immense joy, especially since I now live so far away from Bigodi and from all the friends and relatives in Uganda who helped shape me,” she says.

“Writing is like time travel. For me to be sitting at my desk in Regina while a version of me chastises obnoxious baboons in Bigodi is almost witchy. For this reason alone, I believe I will always be a writer.” 🌿



ROBIN SCHLAHT

# Linked short stories reflect intimacies and challenges of living on compact, rural island

*In 8th book, Gaston avoids easy resolutions, leaves loose ends to reflect real life*

by David Jón Fuller

## TUNNEL ISLAND

Bill Gaston

Thistledown Press

\$24.95 pb, 204 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77187-268-3

They say no man is an island, but that doesn't mean no man can create one, as Bill Gaston does – complete with an entire population of characters – in *Tunnel Island*, his latest collection of short stories.

Gaston explores the oddball, passionate, and often moving lives on his titular island off the coast of British Columbia. And like his characters – loners, lovers, parents, criminals, children – the pieces evolved in unexpected ways.

“I didn't know I was doing ‘linked stories’ until Jack [a local handyman] popped up in a second story,” says Gaston, when asked if it was a planned cycle.

“But it may have been in the back of my mind, because I was so taken by the linked story collection *Olive Kitteridge* way back when. It seemed to point out an essential problem with stories, and why novels are generally taken much more to heart. I think this simply has to do with how much time we spend with a character – in a novel you get to know them, you actually do make an unlikely friend.

“So linked stories have characters reappear, which lets our relationship grow, at least a little. We get to see what happens to them over time. And I really enjoyed writing this book for that same reason.”

This is Gaston's eighth book of short fiction. He's also written seven novels, in addition to memoirs, poetry, and drama. He's been shortlisted for the Governor General's Award and other honours, and has won the Ethel Wilson Fiction Prize, a Relit Award, a National Magazine Award, and the Timothy Findley Award for a body of work.

Having spent part of his childhood in Winnipeg and lived across the country, he now calls Gabriola Island in the Salish Sea home. “Tunnel is fictional, though, I swear!” he says, adding, “I don't want anyone here to think I've written about them, and then avoid me in the grocery store.”



Bill Gaston

The locale proved inspirational. “All the islands between the B.C. mainland and Vancouver Island have a distinct and uniquely intense quality,” Gaston says.

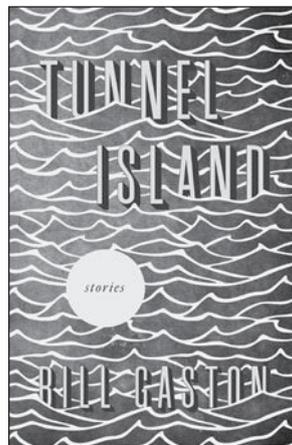
With regard to Tunnel Island specifically, “Everyone lives on a compact, yet rural and forested island. This island has many of the intimate and often claustrophobic qualities of small-town life, except that everyone gets to be a hermit, too.”

Jack, the aforementioned handyman, is one of them: a caretaker for wealthy property owners, his shame of the shack he lives in leads him to take unconventional, even criminal, action. René, another loner, struggles to maintain a relationship with his visiting nephew. Their lives, and many others, intersect on Tunnel Island.

And while every story packs a punch, there are no easy resolutions, leaving the reader to contemplate what's next for the characters.

“By not wrapping up a story's loose ends, I'm simply holding the mirror up to nature, as Shakespeare put it,” Gaston says. “Out here in real life there are always loose ends, and a next step. So, because in life our stories never do end, it can be hard to end a fiction in a way that doesn't feel contrived.

“I think it's largely instinctive, and based on finding a moment when that emotional echo has a chance to resonate. Often it just feels right.”



# Poet's first novel sees cast of characters face up to pain of grief, war, trauma

*Derelict mental hospital setting raises questions of caring for self, others*

by Margaret Goldik

## A STORY CAN BE TOLD ABOUT PAIN

Lisa Martin

NeWest Press

\$24.95, pb, 400 pages

ISBN: 978-177439-116-7

Available as an ebook

For a decade, award-winning poet Lisa Martin's primary artistic focus was her debut novel, *A Story Can Be Told About Pain*.

"When I started work on the novel, I had already published my first collection of poems, *One Crow Sorrow*," the Edmonton-based author says, adding that poetry was "the first way I found to work through my material, which was about grief and questions about how we live with suffering – our own and other people's."



RYAN PARKER PHOTOGRAPHY

Lisa Martin

The novel opens with Shiloh working at a forestry research station in the B.C. Interior in 2010, taking stock of her life. She had been raised in a clearing in northern B.C., playing in the creek near her home, roaming the countryside, returning to a home where the lit fires provided warmth and comfort.

Then her father died, and in 1994, her mother Ruth moved them to a church-funded housing complex

in Vancouver.

Ruth has to deal with her own grief, as well as earn a living, but Shiloh deals with hers by running with a rough group of teens living in foster care who are engaged in drug use, criminal activity, and violence.

Raymond's father Helmut lives in the same housing complex, and carries such a load of guilt and anger that his daughter, Eva, ran away from home years ago. Raymond, trying to be a good son, forces himself to visit Helmut once a week.

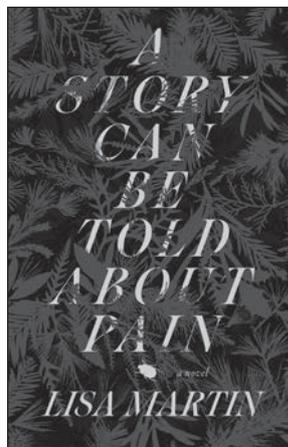
The novel's central image is the abandoned, derelict Pacific Hospital for the Mind, located on the other side

of the trees surrounding the housing complex, left to become a playground for destructive youth after the asylum emptied.

The image, according to Martin, is a comment: "In what ways do we (and don't we) take care of our own and one another's pain? In what way are we responsible to and for ourselves and one another, and where are we in dereliction of our duty to ourselves and one another?"

The finely-drawn characters in the novel have each come to a particular point in their lives where they must deal with their pain, whether it be grieving their lost ones, or dealing with childhood, war, and inherited trauma.

Raymond's psychic pain eventually spirals out of control, and Shiloh's grief leads her down some dark and dangerous paths. Martin's beautiful prose controls the increasing tension.



One grace note comes from Madeleine, a 90-year-old living in the housing complex, who retired some years ago from nursing in the hospital, and remains a nurturing presence, planting flowers at the graves of the patients and watching out for her neighbours. Her hard-won wisdom is healing for Raymond and Shiloh, and for the reader.

"Mental health is not something I take lightly or for granted. I think when you have to work through trauma, especially as a writer, it sharpens your imagination of what the other people might be holding," Martin says.

"We can extrapolate from what we know about being a person in pain under certain kinds of conditions to what our fictional characters are holding, what their 'emotional half-acre' looks like, to quote Anne Lamott." 🌿

## MORE FICTION

### SHORT FICTION

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#### *DEAD WRITERS: STORIES*

Jean Marc Ah-Sen, Michael LaPointe, Cassidy McFadzean, and Naben Ruthnum  
Four writers collaborate in this macro-narrative of interlocking themes, as each explores the concept of the “bargain” in novella-length stories – stories of a reluctant biographer, a journalist, a haunted tourist, and a colonial poet-doctor – all dealing with existential dread, tainted pasts, and uncertain futures.  
(Invisible Publishing, \$23.95, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77843-054-1, available as ebook)

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#### *THE KILLING ROOM, FROM THE HEART 6*

Linda Hutsell-Manning  
In this coming-of-age story, 11-year-old Kate’s family has moved again, and taken up chicken farming. The back shed becomes the killing room, and she is in charge there.  
(At Bay Press, \$9.95 pb, 76 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-59-8)

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#### *RAG PICKERS*

Blaine Newton  
Deeply compelling, these 18 stories tell of characters, some of them recurring, in situations sometimes awkward, sometimes threatening, and sometimes surreal, but always significant, showing their loneliness, lost innocence, and acts of witness, as well as their engagement with art and life.  
(University of Calgary Press, \$29.99 pb, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77385-619-3, available as ebook)

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#### *THE SCROLLS OF BISHOP EUBULUS, AND OTHER STORIES*

Rebecca Bradley  
This collection of 13 stories intertwines horror, dark humour, and fantasy. From a cryptozoologist encountering creatures of legend to a detective solving murders in the aftermath of a zombie apocalypse, each story explores the intersection of the ordinary and the extraordinary.  
(EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, \$21.95 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77053-248-9, available as ebook)

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#### *SOME OF THE FACTS – JASPER: WHEN TALES WERE TOLD*

Beth Everest  
Inspired by Everest’s father and other old-timer storytellers of Jasper, these tales, set in the 1950s, invite readers into the fictional lives of characters with names like Girty Brown, Johnny-B, and Slick Eye.  
(Frontenac House, \$19.95 pb, 88 pages, ISBN: 978-1-989466-86-5)

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#### *TILTING TOWARDS JOY*

Margaret Macpherson  
Centring on Lucia and Mitch, an Edmonton couple who swap houses with an acquaintance in France, these linked stories travel in time and place to portray a wide range of people connected both closely and tangentially to them – frugal Canadians, gentle French farmers, and brash Brits, older couples, childless couples, single mothers, and mothers who wish they were single.  
(Signature Editions, \$19.95 pb, 156 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77324-149-4, available as ebook)

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### HISTORICAL NOVELS

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#### *THE BOY WHO WAS SAVED BY JAZZ*

Tom Bentley-Fisher  
Growing up, first with his maternal grandparents in Biggar, Saskatchewan, and then with his returned mother and her new husband in Calgary and other places, Robert is something of a misfit, but when he discovers a pump organ at an abandoned farmhouse, his affinity for music becomes clear, and that talent keeps him going throughout an adolescence full of sexual awakenings, discoveries of family secrets, and an imagination that even the letters from his dead father can’t keep in check.  
(NeWest Press, \$22.95 pb, 300 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77439-110-5, available as ebook)

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#### *CITY RISING: THE BEND IN THE RIVER, THE SHANGHAI TETRALOGY, BOOK 2*

David Rotenberg  
On the Holy Mountain, in 250 BCE, the First Emperor warned his people to watch for the White Ships on Water, and in 1841, they arrive – British Men of War ships carrying opium. This novel tells of two destitute Baghdadi Jews who become opium lords, their battles with the British companies,

and their love of the City at the Bend in the River – Shanghai.  
(At Bay Press, 24.95 pb, 376 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-61-1)

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#### *CITY RISING: THE IVORY COMPACT, THE SHANGHAI TETRALOGY, BOOK 3*

David Rotenberg  
This sprawling historical epic spanning 200 years continues the story of the two opium lords and the progress and fulfillment of the prophecies.  
(At Bay Press, 24.95 pb, 376 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-01-7)

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#### *FINDING FLORA*

Elinor Florence  
Opening dramatically with a leap from a moving train, this novel follows Flora Craigie, recently arrived in Western Canada from Scotland, as she flees an abusive husband and manages to claim a workable homestead in the Alberta parkland thanks to the knowledge and help of other strong single women she meets and lives beside.  
(Simon & Schuster Canada, \$24.99 pb, 384 pages, ISBN: 978-1-6680-5891-6, available as ebook)

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#### *I WANT TO DIE IN MY BOOTS*

Natalie Appleton  
This debut novel weaves historical fact and fiction to tell the previously untold story of Belle Jane, a woman who ran one of Canada’s largest cattle thieving rings in the 1920s, who took the names of five different husbands, and who paid no heed to any societal expectations of women.  
(Brindle & Glass-TouchWood Editions, \$26.00 pb, 272 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990071-27-0, available as ebook)

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#### *ON ISABELLA STREET*

Genevieve Graham  
Set in Toronto and Vietnam during the turbulent 1960s, this novel follows two young women with very different backgrounds, attitudes, and aptitudes, who live in the same apartment building on Isabella Street. Marion Hart, a psychiatrist fighting deinstitutionalization because she thinks it will cause homelessness, and Sassy Rankin, a budding folk singer and

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hippie protester from a privileged family, become unlikely but enduring friends. (Simon & Schuster Canada, \$25.99 pb, 384 pages, ISBN: 978-1-9821-9701-8, available as audiobook and ebook)

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#### **THE PAPER BIRDS**

Jeanette Lynes

Fresh out of high school, Gemma Sullivan is hired for top-secret government code-breaking work in Mimico, Ontario, and the job comes with an oath of lifelong secrecy, not to mention tremendous mental strain, in this love story that reveals the struggles and sacrifices of everyday working women during the Second World War. (HarperAvenue-HarperCollins Canada, \$25.99 pb, 320 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4434-7281-4, available as ebook)

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#### **PITFALL**

Terry Kirk

In this historical thriller, Frank Cork is head trader at Chicago's leading brokerage firm in October 1929, at the top of his game at 32, with a wife and two children. But when the market crashes, Frank hops a train to Saskatchewan, where he starts selling Canadian whisky to the Chicago mob, all while his firm in Chicago is looking for him. (At Bay Press, 24.95 pb, 350 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-70-3)

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### **SCI-FI/FANTASY NOVELS**

#### **A SONG TO DROWN THE WORLD**

Rowena Spring

This queer, coming-of-age fantasy explores belonging, redemption, and the power of love in the story of Marguerite, a seawitch stranded in a vast, unforgiving desert. To survive the ancient secrets of the desert, she'll need more than her magic power. (EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, \$22.95 pb, 288 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77053-254-0, available as ebook)

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#### **TERMINAL SOLSTICE**

Sean Minogue

Set in a world dominated by conspiracy theories and disaster responses, this debut sci-fi novel follows the overlapping stories of three characters on a quest for survival when a recurring global catastrophe

of frozen time brings humanity to a standstill. (Ravenstone-Turnstone Press, \$23.95 pb, 330 pages, ISBN: 978-0-88801-795-6)

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#### **WHEN THE FUR HITS THE FAN, DUCK, BOOK THREE OF THE ETERNAL SPRING, INVISIBLE FOREST SERIES**

Carrie Newberry

In this urban fantasy, shapeshifter Kellan Faolanni battles an unwanted pregnancy, upheaval in her community, and unstable magic from a surprising source. Will she be able to save her family, both chosen and blood, while facing her darkest fears? (EDGE Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, \$22.95 pb, 288 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77053-244-1, available as ebook)

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### **MYSTERY/THRILLER NOVELS**

#### **CATCH YOU ON THE FLIPSIDE**

Lee Kvern

Moving in time (from the 1980s to 2010s) and place (from the Philippines to Calgary and other spots), this fast-paced political thriller follows four characters who work together at a Calgary casino, presenting their perspectives in a puzzle-in-progress structure to explore the wide-ranging effects of each one's experiences. (Enfield & Wizenty-Great Plains, \$27.95 pb, 312 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77337-132-0)

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#### **A DARK DEATH, MEREDITH ISLAND MYSTERY, BOOK 2**

Alice Fitzpatrick

Kate Galway's plans for a quiet summer working on her writing on Meredith Island are ruined when a group of archeology students discovers a body ritualistically laid out in their trench. When both the island mechanic and her friend's son are considered prime suspects, Kate and her artist friend Siobhan Fitzgerald feel they have to get involved in the investigation. (Stonehouse Publishing, \$22.00 pb, 300 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988754-62-8)

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#### **THE GARDEN CLUB MURDERS**

Jonathan Whitelaw

Stalwart sleuth Amita Khatri and her son-in-law Jason, with the help of a retired cop Frank, are searching for a mild-mannered academic who has gone missing. Soon more people, and some money, are missing,

in this case where planting the evidence takes on a whole new meaning. (HarperNorth-HarperCollins Canada, \$23.99 pb, 384 pages, ISBN: 978-0-008-62645-7, available as ebook)

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#### **HOME FIRES BURN, MERRY BELL MYSTERY, BOOK 3**

Anthony Bidulka

In this conclusion to the award-winning trilogy, Merry Bell confronts her past, both by investigating the death of a community philanthropist, at the request of his son, who just happens to be Merry's high school boyfriend, and by testing the waters of her own family relationships to see if bridges can be mended. As always, Merry's uncommon sense and irrepressible charm draw readers in. (Stonehouse Publishing, \$22.00 pb, 300 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988754-64-2)

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#### **MURDER IN TINSELTOWN: A CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN-STORY MYSTERY**

Max Nightingale

Set in 1950s Hollywood, with all the glitz and glamour of the stars, readers take an active role in determining the story they read, following clues and making decisions that lead to multiple outcomes. (HarperNorth-HarperCollins Canada, \$24.99 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-0-008-74655-1, available as ebook)

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#### **THE TENANT**

M. S. Berry

In this thriller, author Amy Ellis hopes to overcome her writer's block during her year in Germany with her husband and baby daughter, using current news of an international serial killer as inspiration. But does she need the help of a fan who just happens to be renting a flat in Amy's vacation home? And is this fan more of a fanatic? (Ravenstone-Turnstone Press, \$23.95 pb, 290 pages, ISBN: 978-0-88801-804-5)

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### **GRAPHIC NOVELS**

#### **BLOOD AND FIRE, MORDECAI CROW TRILOGY, BOOK 3**

Bill Slavin

The conclusion of the Mordecai Crow Trilogy goes back to his beginnings – readers now hear his mother, Raven, tell

the story of how she was enslaved by Lord Pyke, the ruler of the Luddites, and how she escaped in order to keep her son, only to lose him. Mordecai's and Raven's stories come together in an action-packed climax. (Renegade Arts Entertainment, \$21.99 pb, 172 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998489-38-1)

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#### **THE LAST BAND ON EARTH**

Elaine M. Will

Set in a dystopian city run by demonic entities, this horror story about music and mental illness follows Nat and her bandmates in The Dead Layaways. Trapped in this soul-sucking place, not knowing how they got there, and surrounded by wasteland, they struggle to recover their creativity and sense of purpose – can they escape?

(Renegade Arts Entertainment, \$24.95 pb, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998489-39-8)

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#### **LILY, PASS ME BY, BOOK 3**

Kat Simmers and Ryan Danny Owen

In this luminous graphic novel about family, loss, identity, memory, and self-discovery, Lily, a 17-year-old trans girl, visits her estranged grandfather, Ed, who is struggling with dementia.

(Renegade Arts Entertainment, \$29.99 pb, 208 pages, ISBN: 978-1-989754-30-6)

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#### **REMEMBERING TAIYAKI**

Starkie Mak

This intimate story of family secrets tells how Mak's grandfather, fighting for imperialist Japan in the Second World War, was captured and taken as a prisoner of war to the U.S., disgraced by his government, unable to return, and forgotten by his family – all the while longing to taste his favourite street treat, taiyaki.

(At Bay Press, 26.95 pb, 150 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988168-66-1)

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#### **STRAIGHT OUTTA BUSAN, MODERN ASIAN FAMILY, BOOK 1**

Stefano Jun

This collection of short cartoons based on true stories chronicles Stefano Jun's experiences growing up a Korean immigrant in Western Canada. Full of humour and surprise, and lots of food, these stories show the love in Stefano's

family, and his openness to all the good things in life.

(Renegade Arts Entertainment, \$19.99 pb, 108 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998489-15-2)

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#### **ZEROED OUT**

Jim Munroe, illustrated by Eric Kim

When the aliens took over the planet, they ended pandemics and climate change and even cured cancer! But somehow Matias's life has gone downhill – he was fired and dumped in the same week. And now his new shape-shifting boss wants him to work weekends, which sounds terrible, until Matias discovers a side to his boss that he'd never imagined, in this sci-fi rom-com.

(At Bay Press, 26.95 pb, 150 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-67-3)

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#### **OTHER NOVELS**

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##### **CATTAIL LANE**

Fran Kimmel

Compassionate and thoroughly engaging, this novel follows three fully drawn characters: Nick, who is suddenly the father of a 14-year-old whose grandmother can no longer look after him; Billy, that newly discovered son, who spends all his time caring for his grandmother now in the dementia ward of Prairie View Manor; and Sarah, a housekeeper on the dementia ward and the mother of an offbeat five-year-old, and the one who just might help Nick and Billy learn to offer second chances and open themselves up to futures they'd never before imagined.

(ECW Press, \$24.95 pb, 300 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-787-8, available as ebook)

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##### **DEAR ALGORITHM**

Michael Afenfia

Two sisters, one in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and the other in Saskatoon, Canada, have big announcements to make to their parents about marriage and finding love. While the older sister, Mondie, appears unsure of where she stands between convention and what she desires, her younger sister Yola is all set for an extreme adventure that threatens to tear their family apart.

(Griots Lounge, \$25.99 pb, 326 pages, ISBN: 978-1-7383340-1-8)

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##### **FAVOURITE DAUGHTER**

Morgan Dick

Alternating between the perspectives of half-sisters Arlo and Mickey, this debut novel shows how their father has had an impact on them throughout their lives and even after his death. Their father's will leaves all of his millions to Mickey, his abandoned daughter, but only on condition that she sees Arlo, his younger cherished daughter, for therapy sessions – what unfolds reveals the cracks in their lives and possible ways they may fill them together.

(Doubleday Canada-PRH, \$26.00 pb, 352 pages, ISBN: 978-0-3856-9929-7, available as audiobook and ebook)

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##### **LAUNCH**

Neal Davis Anderson

Theo Strahl, an inventor and artist who repurposes scrap scavenged from back lanes, suffers from the effects of a Missouri childhood during the Cold War and is always expecting the world to end. On his 40th birthday, he sees a sort of spirit who tells him to build a spaceship to escape the doomed planet, in this novel that explores the fragility of family relationships and the struggle between hope and despair. (Signature Editions, \$22.95 pb, 236 pages, ISBN: 978-1-773241-51-7, available as ebook)

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##### **NOBODY ASKED FOR THIS**

Georgia Toews

This hilarious and heartbreaking dramedy follows Virginia, a 23-year-old stand-up comedian, as she navigates family grief following the loss of her mother, a dysfunctional friendship with her depressed roommate, and a date with a fellow comic that goes very wrong – all of which force her to confront the limits of love.

(Doubleday Canada-PRH, \$34.95 hc, 288 pages, ISBN 978-0-3857-0007-8, available as audiobook and ebook)

# Long poem shares process of building kinship with pain, rebuilding sense of self

*Gerbeza's compelling debut is grounded in disability justice framework and confronts ableism*

by Sarah Ens

## HOW I BEND INTO MORE

Tea Gerbeza

Palimpsest Press

\$21.95 pb, 120 pages

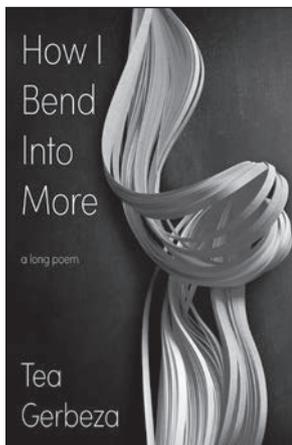
ISBN: 978-1-990293-87-0

Tea Gerbeza's powerful debut, the long poem *How I Bend Into More*, affirms disabled identity by giving voice to the body in all its complexities. Drawing from her personal experience with scoliosis, Gerbeza uses an intimate and inventive poetics to "grasp / what [her] body has / to tell [her]" and, in doing so, records a journey from ableism toward reclamation.

"My body tells me that I am me because of my disability and pain. Without them, I wouldn't be who I am," the Regina poet says. Dedicated to her younger self, *How I Bend Into More* grapples with and ultimately refutes the "ableist desire of being nondisabled," repossessing the disabled body on its own terms.

"There is a way to build kinship with one's pain, even if it's an ongoing process," Gerbeza explains. Wanting to represent this ongoing process on the page during its initial drafting, she realized that the long poem, with its many openings and endings, its curves, gaps, and repetitions, would be the necessary form for this work.

"When I tried to write distinct poems," she says, "there was always a throughline, an aside, an open parenthesis, between the poems. These networks of poems created the reclaimed self."



Through punctuation, photos, white space, the arrangement of text into shapes, and scanographs of Gerbeza's paper-quilled artworks, *How I Bend Into More* visually shows a rebuilding and repairing of selfhood.

"I built *my own version* of my crooked spine [out of paper] and laid it on myself in the book's last photograph," she says. "This act of physically 'holding' pieces of 'myself' was important to me. To rebuild her sense of self, [the poem's speaker] also builds her own paper-quilled spine, her 'grammar of self,' from small pieces into a larger whole."



Tea Gerbeza

ALLAUREN

Grounded in a disability justice framework, the poem restores agency to the disabled speaker and demonstrates the many ways disability creates connection.

Some of the book's most moving passages feature the speaker's mother gently bathing the speaker following her spinal surgery. In these scenes, both mother and daughter experience healing through the care they show each other.

*How I Bend Into More* confronts ableist misconceptions most directly through a series of pieces that each begins with "Clearing Up the Question ... ." Gerbeza describes these sections as "ironic in that they don't clear anything up; instead they ask more questions or try to highlight some common ableist remarks or ideas that assume that not 'looking' sick or disabled is what is desired and that if we don't look like whatever the person envisions, then our lived realities can't be as painful as we say they are."

By illustrating the speaker's reality – her chronic pain, her desires, her boundaries, her community, her parents, her frustrations, her fatigue, her strength, her scars, her sense of humour, her creativity – Gerbeza writes it into undeniable being.

"I reinforce that my body is my own," she says, "and how I navigate my bodily experiences is also mine amongst the medical and societal ableism I receive along the way." 🌿

## Collection aims to find hope among hard times as trauma is metabolized into poems

*Four sections explore queer identity, domestic violence, new parenthood, and COVID*

by Kyla Neufeld

### WHEN WHALES WENT BACK TO THE WATER

Lisa Baird

University of Alberta Press

\$19.99 pb, 72 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77212796-6

Available as an ebook

This is a difficult time to be human. And yet, *When Whales Went Back to the Water*, Lisa Baird's new poetry collection, finds hope amidst the "flash and muck" of trauma.

"I had almost given up on getting this collection published," says Baird, who lives in Guelph, Ontario. "I was awash in rejections – for this collection, for grants, for a different, shorter collection that I was trying to get accepted by chapbook publishers. And then in early 2024, I got the acceptance from University of Alberta Press.

"There's probably a lesson in there."

This book is divided into four sections, each one about a different trauma: figuring out queer identity, domestic violence, new parenthood, and COVID.

"I've been responding to and metabolizing trauma through poetry since my early twenties, so this collection is a continuation of that," she says. Some poems, like "On Seeing the Word Trauma Graffitied on a Garbage Bin," explore trauma in general, while others, like "Affirming Femme," speak to specific instances.

The section about her abusive relationship was the hardest to write. "It was and is important to me not to dehumanize the abusive ex. I did my best to present them as a complex person who did horrible things for complex reasons.

"The writing of those poems was made more complicated by the fact that our relationship took place during their gender transition," says Baird, who employed a sensitivity reader to help her avoid any transphobia.

She wrote this collection of evocative poems in snippets: "In stolen moments while the baby slept. Spoken voice-to-text into the notes app of my phone while I walked to the grocery store. On long-distance phone calls during Sunday morning poetry dates with my best friend."

In poems like "If You Sing It Slowly Enough," Baird explores the nuances of raising children through COVID lockdowns. "Caring for a toddler through the early pandemic years was hard, then magical (because of the toddler, not the virus), and then hard again. Being a

parent in this cultural context is already isolating. COVID amplified that," she says.

Still, there is hope. Baird finds it in her job as a community acupuncturist.



Lisa Baird

"A typical work day looks like ordinary people talking to me about some of the hardest stuff in their lives, then going

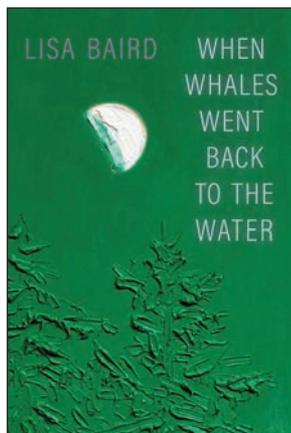
to sleep alongside a few other people, and waking up

feeling a lot better. Not 'fixed,' but relaxed and steadied," she says.

"Every time I go to work I'm reminded that *people do not suck*. We've built harmful terrible systems, we're currently stuck inside these terrible systems, and that sucks. But people in general don't suck."

In a time when it's so difficult to be human, Baird also gives herself grace. "I'm speaking to the baby dyke that I was: *I see you! I remember you! I still love you!*" she says, referring to the poems about her experience of growing into her queer identity.

"I'm invoking tenderness towards our awkward, brave, adolescent queer selves." 🌿



EMMA SUVAJAC

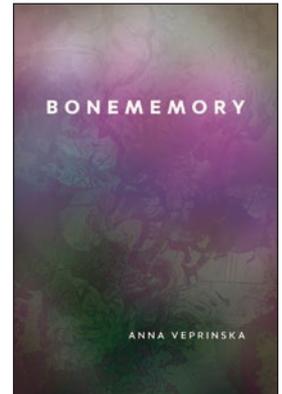
# Lyrical, experimental poems travel between many concepts, echoing Veprinska’s emigration

*Amid loss of Ukrainian language, poet draws from other Eastern European works for inspiration*

by Ariel Gordon

## BONEMEMORY

Anna Veprinska  
University of Calgary Press  
\$18.99, 96 pages  
ISBN: 978-1-77385-611-7  
Available as an ebook



“**M**usic, childhood, family, trees, dreams, the news, birds, escalators, language, and, of course, poetry.” Those are the inspirations for Ukrainian-born but Calgary-based writer Anna Veprinska’s second poetry collection, *Bonememory*.

The works of Eastern European poets like Ilya Kaminsky, Valzhyna Mort, and Wisława Szymborska, as well as those of Paul Celan, Anne Michaels, and Madhur Anand, feature prominently on Veprinska’s list of influences.

“These works are my teachers, and they echo throughout *Bonememory*,” the University of Calgary English professor says.

Another echo in this book is the emigration of Veprinska’s family to Canada when she was five years old. Several of the poems are what she calls “preoccupied” with that age.

“It was a crux in my life, a transformation geographically, emotionally, and linguistically; many of my most vivid memories are from that age,” she says.

Veprinska writes in English, but Russia’s control of Ukraine meant that her family spoke Russian at home before they emigrated because she was so young when they left, Veprinska didn’t learn to write in Russian. And she never learned Ukrainian, a loss that has only become more palpable during the Russian war on Ukraine.

“As much as I cherish English, it’s not my mother tongue,” Veprinska says. “Writing poems in my second language means I am never sure if my fixation on



Anna Veprinska

English words (looking them up, breaking them apart, combining them) is because I’m a poet or because I feel the foreignness of this tongue.”

In terms of form, *Bonememory* moves between lyrical and experimental modes. Editor Helen Hajnoczky pushed Veprinska to consider how line breaks functioned throughout: as pauses or to help readers move smoothly between lines in a poem. She also focused on consistency throughout the manuscript, so there was coherence between all the poems.

Veprinska’s inspirations and her antecedents mean that she has left a large part of herself inside *Bonememory*.

“It’s a vulnerable book, so I am both eager and terrified by its entry into the world,” Veprinska says. “I’d like potential readers to know that *Bonememory* is about many things, both personal and political: memory, family, immigration, language, friendship, intergenerational trauma, chronic illness, disability, empathy, the Holocaust, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Canadian settler-colonialism, and the pandemic.”

She wrote these poems while simultaneously working on a post-doctoral project that consisted of listening to archival testimonies of Holocaust survivors. Then there were the lingering effects of the pandemic, Russia’s war on Ukraine, and the finding of Indigenous children’s remains at former residential schools, as well as the death of friends and dealing with chronic illnesses.

This backdrop of collective and personal pain seeped into the poems.

“Despite the difficult content of so many of these poems, *Bonememory* actually began as a way of distancing myself from the testimonies to which I was listening,” Veprinska says.

“Writing became a reprieve from the daily immersion in the grief stories of others. And, of course, the writing also holds that grief.”

In the end, Veprinska says she hopes this book finds its way into the hands and hearts of those people who need it.

“So many times, poetry has changed my life.” 🌿

## MORE POETRY

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### **DOG AND MOON**

Kelly Shepherd

Drawing upon dreams, creative writing texts, mythology, nature, and memory, and using an adapted free-verse ghazal form that focuses on the leaps and gaps between thoughts and moments, these poems “don’t bloom, they spill. They overflow.”

(University of Regina Press, \$19.95 pb, 112 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77940-038-3, available as ebook)

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### **GREEN**

Zachari Logan

This collection of ekphrastic poems is accompanied by green sketches made as Logan travelled the world – to places such as New York City, London, Winnipeg, Chicago, and Los Angeles – responding with a queer artist’s perspective to famous works of art as well as to art that has been lost or destroyed, and art that is found in nature and on city sidewalks.

(Radiant Press, \$20.00 pb, 148 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998926-25-1)

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### **HAG DANCES**

Susan Wismer

With this new collection, Wismer takes a hard look at herself, courageously making the effort to change and heal, and to overcome her anger, hate, and fear, to go beyond prejudice and manipulation to work toward true reconciliation.

(At Bay Press, \$24.95 pb, 150 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-68-0)

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### **LATE SEASON, FROM THE HEART, BOOK 5** patti sinclair

This fifth instalment of the acclaimed From the Heart series is a quiet collection of poems dealing with loss and reflecting the late summer season, in seaside domestic scenes, and lovely images of kittens, apples, and sunshine.

(At Bay Press, \$9.95 pb, 76 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-58-1)

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### **MANOR’S RANSOM**

Cam Scott

In spare verse and layered prose poems, in what could be called “anti-aphorisms,”

and emerging from images of body parts, musical elements and instruments, city streets, and private bathrooms, with occasional echoes of Leonard Cohen, this second instalment of Scott’s ongoing life-poem reflects on time, class, and the human condition.

(ARP Books, \$22.00 pb, 104 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927886-96-0)

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### **MOONROADS**

Connie T. Braun

Lovely lyric poems, sensual and sensory, uncover core themes of longing and belonging, exploring family history and immigration, the body and the sacred, the environment and climate, and travel, in images of food, daily traditional work of women, motherhood, and home.

(CMU Press, \$24.00 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-987986-22-8)

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### **THE ONEIRONAUT 02**

Sheri-D Wilson

This second book in a trilogy of epic sci-fi poems follows Rain, who is chosen to lead the rebellion against The Bureau, a regime that controls society by preventing citizens from dreaming. If Rain and the Willows, or the keepers of dreams, fail, the secret order of The Oneironauts will be lost, and with it the ability to hope, heal, and imagine a life together as human beings.

(Write Bloody North, \$22.00 pb, 200 pages, ISBN: 978-1-7781626-3-3)

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### **THE POLLINATION FIELD**

Kim Fahner

In precise and mythic language, and in forms ranging from prose narrative to ghazal to ekphrastic to elegy to the duplex, these poems explore the literal and metaphorical world of bees and other pollinators, weaving in environmental concerns and feminism, as well as personal loss.

(Turnstone Press, \$21.00 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-0-8881-798-7)

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### **PYTHON LOVE**

Shannon Arntfield

From the perspective of a medical doctor, who is also a survivor of child abuse and a mother, these visceral poems explore birth trauma and body memory, juxtaposing

long sequences set during difficult labour and delivery with spare, lyrical poems about parental relationships, memory, profound friendship, and wonder at the world.

(University of Alberta Press, \$19.99 pb, 88 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-795-9, available as ebook)

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### **STICKS & BONES: HAIKU AND SENRYU**

Allison Douglas-Tourner

Gentle images and small moments – a mother’s touch, moonlight and stars, the scents of flowers and grass, rain and moths, a crow building a nest – are given profound attention and presence in these gems.

(Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing, \$19.95 pb, 56 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77869-043-3)

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### **SUPERGIANTS**

Kyle Flemmer

The brilliantly innovative visual and lyric poems in this collection radically change how readers see the galaxy – interlocking visual sonnets map random celestial coordinates, asteroid properties are overlaid with the mythologies of their namesakes and biographical details of women in the speaker’s life, and found/collage poems made up of language and symbolic imagery show how reconfiguration creates endless new meanings.

(Wolsak and Wynn, \$20.00 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998408-14-6)

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### **THIS SWEET RUPTURE**

Omar Ramadan

The poems in this bold collection explore family stories and ceremonies, cultural identity, and life as a first-generation son of Lebanese immigrants, who must navigate airport security, climate change, and Prairie blizzard driving. The poet weaves in Arabic text, reflecting the multi-language speakers and shifting senses of place, to great effect.

(University of Alberta Press, \$19.99 pb, 72 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-797-3, available as ebook)

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

**TRAVEL POEMS: PORTUGAL, FROM THE HEART, BOOK 4**

Karen Clavelle, illustrated by Ann Stinner, translations by Livia Penedo Jacob  
 These intimate poems in both English and Portuguese portray scenes of pilgrimage, using interesting sound effects and word play to create a musical love song to Vila Nova da Baronía, in the Portuguese Alentejo. (At Bay Press, \$9.95 pb, 76 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-57-4)

**UNRAVEL**

Tolu Oloruntoba

Exploring the cycle of dismantling and remaking in intertextual, playful, and intellectual ways, in images of pyramids, spaceships, and werewolves, this collection tackles all the big topics – language, poetry, love, and death – drawing on theories of philosophy, history, medicine, religion, design, and art. (McClelland & Stewart-PRH, \$22.95 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-0-7710-1396-6, available as ebook)

**WALKING UPSTREAM**

Lloyd Ratzlaff

This debut poetry collection by the author of three books of non-fiction portrays the beauty of Saskatoon's riverbanks and magpies, following the speaker as he overcomes a harsh evangelical upbringing by finding solace in nature. Brief moments and precise images combine with playful observations and commentary to show the full effect of both urban and wild life. (ThistleDown Press, \$19.95 pb, 78 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77187-270-6)

**WELLWATER**

Karen Solie

Examining shifting ideas of home, the loss of family farms, the environmental crisis, and increasing economic inequality, but balancing those by highlighting thriving pronghorn antelope and a new climbing vine, these poems explore cultural, economic, and personal ideas of value in images of storms, deteriorating buildings, and bogs with life teeming below the

surface, and with Solie's distinctive use of surprising yet apt similes.

(House of Anansi Press, \$22.99 pb, 112 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4870-1340-0, available as ebook)

**WHAT HOLINESS WILL I BRING?**

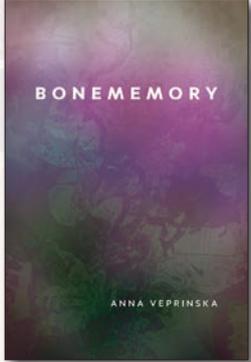
Richard Osler

After receiving a stage four cancer diagnosis and deciding not to pursue treatment, Richard Osler accesses his knowledge as a poetry therapist – his knowledge that poetry heals – and pays tribute to beloved artists, responding to art, artist, and prayer as forms of divine worship.

(Frontenac House, \$19.95 pb, 80 pages, ISBN: 971-989466-88-9)

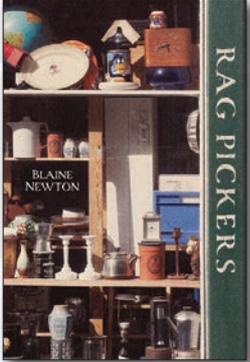


## BRAVE & BRILLIANT ALBERTA AUTHORS



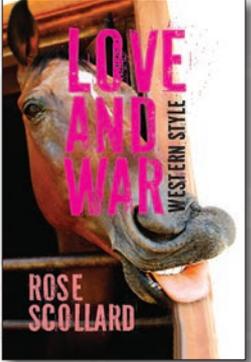
*Here is a poet who knows all too well that language is here to wake us up, and she does it playfully, tenderly, unabashedly—and with style that is all her own.*

—ILYA KAMINSKY, author of *Deaf Republic* and *Dancing in Odessa*



*Polished, often startling stories that come at you sideways, gathering force and momentum. Edgy and smart.*

—JEANETTE LYNES, author of *The Apothecary's Garden*



*Women know it but can't help it. The horses can talk. The gags pop like cheerful balloons. A lot of laughs in them there hills.*

—FRED STENSON, author of *Who by Fire*



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# Playwright examines polarizing topic of MAID and Jewish faith with flashes of humour

*Mand drew from debates following a family friend's decision to pursue Medical Assistance in Dying*

by Luis Reis

## IN SEVEN DAYS

**Jordi Mand**

Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing

\$18.95 pb, 126 pages

ISBN: 978-1-990738-67-8

**I**n *Seven Days*, a play by Toronto-based Jordi Mand, deals with a family's response to MAID – the process of allowing a terminally ill person to receive medical assistance in dying.

The idea for the play arose when a friend of Mand's father announced that he had qualified for MAID and planned to proceed. His decision sparked intense debate within the Jewish community and within Mand's own family.

"I found the discussions surrounding his choice fascinating – how such a deeply personal decision could ripple outward, provoking strong reactions from those around him," Mand says.

"When a subject stirs such vastly different opinions, I know there's a play in it."

Writing *In Seven Days* was both emotionally and structurally challenging.

"The subject matter is deeply personal, polarizing, and emotionally charged," Mand says. "I wanted to ensure the play didn't take a stance but instead created space for multiple perspectives to coexist, allowing audiences to engage with the moral and ethical complexities on their own terms."

She also wanted to honour the people and experiences that inspired the play by crafting dialogue that portrays grief and difficult conversations realistically. "I thought a lot about how people speak when emotions run high – how love, fear, and frustration can tangle in the same sentence."

Authenticity also means humour. "Life doesn't pause for grief or difficult choices; even in the most serious moments, there are flashes of humour, absurdity, and connection," says Mand.

The playwright conducted considerable research to achieve this realness, listening to various perspectives within her family and speaking with rabbis and members of the Jewish community about MAID. She also consulted doctors and nurses to gain a deeper understanding from a health care perspective.

"These conversations were invaluable in shaping the play, ensuring that the characters' perspectives were grounded in real experiences and that the ethical, medical, and spiritual tensions felt authentic."

The title and timeline of the play were deeply intentional.

"I wanted a structure that felt intimate yet urgent," Mand says. "This time frame represents the countdown to an irreversible choice, a period in which family, friends, and the community are forced to confront their beliefs, their grief, and their love for the person at the centre of it all."

The number seven works thematically, too.

"In Jewish mourning practices, shiva is traditionally a seven-day period of grieving after someone passes, a time for reflection, tension, and connection – all themes that run through the play."

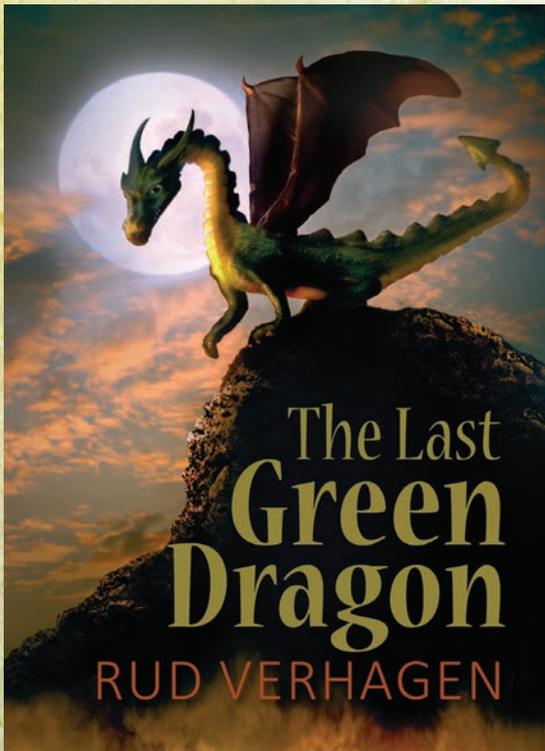
She also notes, "While the play is deeply rooted in Jewish perspectives on life, death, and autonomy, its themes are universal. At its core, it's a story about family, about love, and about how we navigate the hardest choices of our lives."

Mand hopes her play sparks conversation.

"*In Seven Days* isn't about providing easy answers – it's about creating space for audiences to engage with a deeply personal, complex, and often divisive topic. I want people to leave the theatre still thinking about it, still talking about it, whether they agree or disagree with the choices made in the play." 🌿



Jordi Mand



ISBN: 978-1-988783-91-8

\$19.95 • 5 x 7 • 200 pp soft cover

**The Last Green Dragon**  
by Rud Verhagen

Raised from a hatchling by owls, Gus grows up believing he is the last Green Dragon. Then a chance encounter with a girl named Ev uncovers a secret doorway between Gus's world and hers. Their unlikely friendship forges the key to unlocking Gus's mysterious past—and leads them to a shocking discovery. But can their friendship survive this life-changing revelation?

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## MORE DRAMA

### DOWNED HEARTS

Catherine Banks

Ten days after a jetliner goes down in the ocean, fisherman Aaron is mentally fragile from his role in recovering bodies, and from dealing with his son with special needs leaving home to be educated off the island. He finds a young mute woman, who may or may not be a survivor, but who, together with his neighbour's artistic practice, provides healing for Aaron.

(Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$18.95 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990738-66-1)

### THE EXTRACTIONIST

Michaela Jeffery

This riveting crime drama follows Asha Ray, who “extracts” people from cults and women from dangerous situations, and former cop Reuben Medina, who is looking for a missing woman. The two team up to uncover the truth about a powerful predator in this play that is a cry for justice for women in a system that protects the wealthy.

(Playwrights Canada Press, \$18.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-0-3691-0539-4)

### THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

Mark Crawford

Glen and Sandy Golden have been celebrating their wedding anniversaries at the same cottage for 50 years, but this year is not so celebratory – Sandy has cancelled their big anniversary party and kicked Glen out of the house. In one evening, they travel back through the years, recalling pivotal moments and getting to the core of their current

problem, in this play about marriage and memory. (Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$18.95 pb, 114 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990738-69-2)

### ICEMEN

Vern Thiessen

In the midst of the Great Depression, brothers and icemen Joe and Rennie are fighting back against the loss of their ice harvesting livelihood due to the advent of refrigeration. They are holding their boss captive, forcing him to face what he is doing to his workers, in this thriller that exposes the human cost of capitalism.

(Playwrights Canada Press, \$18.95 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-0-3691-0542-4)

### LOVE AND WAR WESTERN STYLE

Rose Scollard

These three playful radio plays were commissioned by the CBC in the 1990s: *Don't Fence Me In* follows Mitch Carter and his imaginary horse in their escapades saving small Western towns; *The Pretzel Maker* shows the power of a Wish Therapist to help Eric overcome his shyness and transform into Fred Astaire; and *Love and War Western Style* is a five-episode history of the romantic goings-on of a ranch family, narrated by the daughter.

(University of Calgary Press, \$24.99 pb, 144 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77385-615-5)

# Trilingual play set in post-apocalyptic future tackles treatment of women, girls, and Two-Spirit peoples

*Beagan drew inspiration from activities of Drag the Red, placing the river at centre of narrative*

by Katie German

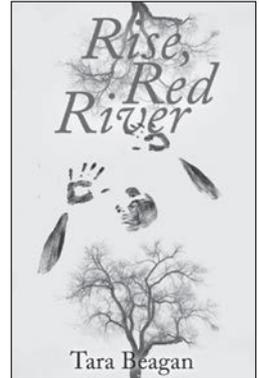
## RISE, RED RIVER

Tara Beagan

Playwrights Canada Press

\$18.95 tpb, 112 pages

ISBN 9780369105486



Tanya Nepinak, Morgan Harris, Ashlee Shingoose, also known as Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois, Annie Yassie, Melissa Ivy Chaboyer, Hillary Angel Wilson, Lorlene Bone, Marcia Koostachin, Jennifer Leigh Catcheway, Tammy Nattaway, Kendara Ballantyne and many more – the list of names and their stories live on.

Aunties, sisters, mothers and daughters are invoked in Tara Beagan's *Rise, Red River*. This trilingual play unearths the history of a lineage buried in the depths of the now dry Red River.

'She' is a blank slate and is trying to fill in who she is by dragging hooks through a desiccated riverbed, uncovering artifacts, stories, and people and accompanied by 'Ancestor' speaking Anishnaabemowin.

'She' is reunited with the French speaking 'Women': Lisa, Tanya and Rhonda. These women hold space, transcending language barriers as they piece together their lives and rediscover what the river means to them.

Playwright Tara Beagan is a proud Ntlaka'pamux and Irish "Canadian" halfbreed. She is cofounder/director of ARTICLE 11 with Andy Moro. A11 has worked in Aotearoa, Australia, and Edinburgh. Beagan has served as artistic director, community liaison, and co-artistic associate of Native Earth Performing Arts and currently resides in Calgary, Alberta.

"When Thom asked me to do what I considered an eco-warrior play," Beagan explains, "I didn't know if I could really go there. But then I had the image of a woman dragging those hooks that the Drag the Red boat drags. Immediately, I saw 'Her.'"

Drag the Red is an active, Winnipeg based community group founded by the late Kyle Kematch and Minister Bernadette Smith in response to the 2014 discovery of Tina Fontaine's body in the Red River.

Smith was a key inspiration when it came to creating this play. "[Bernadette] came to a play reading that we did with Urban Indigenous Theatre Company. She was just so generous sharing her thoughts and heart and just to see her strength. And Winnipeg feels like a kind of nexus where all these energies collide and implode and bloom."

Beagan notes, "It shows in our women. My god these powerful women who live there, who come from there and who then go out into the world, or who build community there. It's as big or bigger than how much loss has been experienced."

Though this play was first produced in 2024 and is set in a future, post-apocalyptic Winnipeg, the subject matter is still very present. As of spring 2025, we wait for updates on the search of the Prairie Green Landfill and the intended search of the Brady Road Landfill in the hope of more discoveries like that of the now-confirmed remains of Morgan Harris and Ashlee Shingoose, also known as, Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe. It is a constant reminder that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ bodies continue to be discarded at an alarming rate and the list of names continues to grow.

"The deeply difficult thing about the subject matter that the play covers is that it is about our women and girls and Two-Spirit peoples and how we treat the Earth, and it's never not relevant," says Beagan.

*Rise, Red River* offers us a story of connection and hope in a world where Indigenous matriarchs continue to laugh and cry, sing and yell.

"It's being in production, it's being in a room where every artist is Indigenous and feeling the strength of that and knowing that even when we tell stories of great loss, we embody resilience and we are there and there is choice now. It is in the doing, that's the hope." 🐾



Tara Beagan

# With dry humour and measured flounce, poetry and prose collection feels like late night talk with an old friend

*McDonald examines impact of colonialism, racism alongside work to reclaim culture*

by Melanie J. Murray

## WHAT SHADE OF BROWN?

**John Brady McDonald**  
Radiant Press  
\$20 tpb, 75 pages  
ISBN 9781998926282

In this resonant and powerful collection of decidedly personal poetry and prose, John Brady McDonald takes on a dissection of the impact of colonialism, racism, and the scar tissue of survival from his home in northern Saskatchewan.

A number of his pieces feel like a balm for an aching heart, with tension between surrender and resistance as a thread throughout the work.

“I think the source for the majority of the poems in this collection stems from a sense of being an old man before my time, longing for a youth and boyhood stolen by the residential schools and poverty, looking back on a life lived much too fast.

“That being said, it’s about a desire to appreciate what is remaining while it is still here to appreciate, but at the same time, mourning for its loss even before it’s gone,” McDonald explains.

Speaking to the work to reclaim culture, he notes, “it wasn’t until I began to unpack my baggage from my childhood and made that reconnection to the Red Road that my writing began to take on a more realistic, narrative form of poetry. I began chronicling my existence and speaking to it as opposed to trying to be a flouncy poetic wordsmith, because I needed to be honest and true with my words in a way that pure abstract wordplay would not allow me. Does that mean there’s no flounce? No, but it is measured out carefully now.”

With pensiveness and profoundly crafted “flounce” present, readers can also expect flashes of wry humour.

It’s a read that feels as intimate as a late night talk with a long-time friend, skipping the small talk, and going straight to the heart of trying to make sense of a weary world and our place in it.

Restlessness, longing, and discomfort simmer throughout: however, righteous rage crystallizes in McDonald’s titular poem, calling to task colourism, lateral violence, and the ever-moving goalposts of impossible standards of measuring up.

“I have always seen my words as a mirror, reflecting the world around us and showing the viewer the reality of what is being addressed. As we continue deeper into a darker world of fascism, hatred, and horror, the work of artists grows increasingly more difficult,” he says.

“For me, my role as a warrior is to hold up that mirror, and reflect what’s going on. My words are medicine – sometimes the medicine stings, sometimes it tastes like bananas, sometimes it works, sometimes it’s a placebo, sometimes it causes reaction, and sometimes it does nothing at all. It’s the reality of coming from a place where one is honest.”

Cultural reclamation shows up as McDonald’s match-in-the-dark in poems that capture a heart-connection to the power of ceremony, land-based practices, and Indigenous ways of knowing.

“The knowledge inherent in our culture is alive, it is a living, breathing entity that, while often wounded, is a self-healing organic state of being. The ability to heal is one of the first things we learn when we return to the Red Road, because that is almost always why those of us removed from our culture reclaim it – to heal.” 🌿



John Brady McDonald



# Man without memory searches a shifting world in debut novel unconstrained by genre

*Journey reflects Bjerke-Clarke's own disconnection from Métis heritage*

by Ian Goodwillie

## HE WHO WOULD WALK THE EARTH

**Griffin Bjerke-Clarke**  
 Fernwood Publishing  
 \$24 tpb, 160 pages  
 ISBN: 9781773637228

Genre is a tricky thing, especially when talking about a book like *He Who Would Walk the Earth* by Griffin Bjerke-Clarke.

It has elements of a variety of genres, including horror, fantasy, and western.

Yet it's a story that truly can't be contained or defined by any one of those genres; this debut novel is something special all on its own.

Bjerke-Clarke is Métis, raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, yet disconnected from his own heritage.

It's a reality many Indigenous and Métis people face in Canada because of long-held stigmas. According to Bjerke-Clarke, "I grew up with traditional stories and teachings from my grandfather and my mother, but speaking about our ancestry was largely seen as taboo."

When his father's work moved them to Nova Scotia, the gap only widened due to the lack of a strong Métis presence in the province. That would change over time as he found kinship with other displaced Métis from the prairies.

A combination of both life experience and education is at the core of this novel.

"When I started university, I noticed that the ideas we – as students – were made to understand as foundational or important largely came from western philosophers. We were made to believe that the racist assumptions core to their philosophies were irrelevant to a discussion of their ideas."

His original intentions with the story evolved from there with an important realization.



Griffin Bjerke-Clarke

"My aim with this book was to vent my frustrations and to expose most of the poster boys of the western canon ... but as I went on, I realized that the opportunity to include alternative voices from perspectives beyond the 'west' was vital," Bjerke-Clarke explains.

From there, the journey of Felix Babimoosay was born.

Felix has no memory, no connection to the past, and endlessly searches the world for not only meaning but a sense of belonging. Everything around him is coming apart, a reality that is never quite what it's supposed to be and rarely lives by its own purported truths.

For Bjerke-Clarke, Felix's journey is a deeply personal one, both for himself and for other Métis who have felt such a strong sense of disconnection from their own heritage.

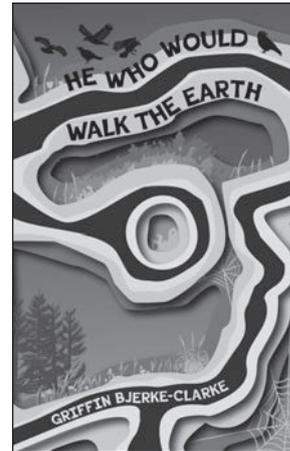
"He (Felix) is many young men these days. I have been him and I have met him several times in my life – someone looking for belonging and meaning amongst all the chaos."

But the beauty of the story is the hope built into it. "Felix and I both have

to accept and understand where we come from and it's a long journey to get there. When we finally understand our place, we can work toward creating supportive and positive communities," Bjerke-Clarke shares.

As for the genre *He Who Would Walk the Earth* fits in, there's no simple answer to that question.

When pressed, Bjerke-Clarke says the closest descriptor would be weird western, as "there's horror, there's fantasy, there's mystery, there's satire and there's comedy, but it's all in service of a journey and the exploration of a world in decay. I just hope it all comes together as intended." 🌿



# Delightful and magical visit to Métis family farm fills new children’s book

*Gonneville and Boyer create vibrant world full of adventure, cultural teachings, hope, and love*

by Janelle Desrosiers and Jude Desrosiers Rudolph

## MADDY’S SASH

Marion Gonneville  
 Illustrated by Kate Boyer  
 Gabriel Dumont Institute  
 \$17.50 tpb, 88 pages  
 ISBN: 9781988011356

**M**addy’s *Sash* follows the plucky and curious Madeleine on her first solo visit to her grandparents’ farm in Northern Saskatchewan. Author Marion Gonneville (originally from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and currently living in Vancouver) was inspired by her own childhood and her Métis grandmother.



Marion Gonneville

“My Michif grandmother, or ‘Chicken Granny,’ as she was known in the family, was the inspiration for this book. She worked extremely hard all of her life to provide for her family and always proudly spoke her Cree Michif language. A visit to her farm every weekend was always fascinating to me,” Gonneville says.



Kate Boyer

Métis history, culture, and kinship are central themes of the book. Through Kohkum (grandmother) and Moshôm’s (grandfather) teachings, the reader learns along with Maddy about relationships with the land and animal kin, Métis history, family, friendship, and community values, as well as beading, dancing, music, and food.

Setting a gentle and exploratory pace for readers, Gonneville uses descriptive yet accessible language that evokes five senses: the feel of sawdust crunching underfoot in the chicken coop, the smooth glide of a canoe across water, the sweet tart burst of a berry on the tongue, and a heart-pounding encounter with animal kin.

Gonneville also highlights the importance of Michif language in Métis culture, integrating common Michif

words within the story. A glossary at the end of the book helps with translations.

In addition to the expressiveness of Gonneville’s words, the colourful textures of Kate Boyer’s illustrations create a grounded and immersive reading experience.

From Rosthern, Saskatchewan, Kate was raised in a French Michif family, immersed in Métis culture and ceremony.

“Humour was always central to our stories at home. I think it’s a central pillar of Metis culture really. I was always taught that if you could laugh with someone then you were already way ahead in terms of relationship-building. I think if more people embraced that, our world would be a much more peaceful place.”

Her illustrations are a special feature of this chapter book. Each chapter includes bright and whimsical pictures which depict Maddy’s adventures with delightful detail. Boyer uses colours, layers, and textures to create not only a sense of play and nostalgia, but of touch.

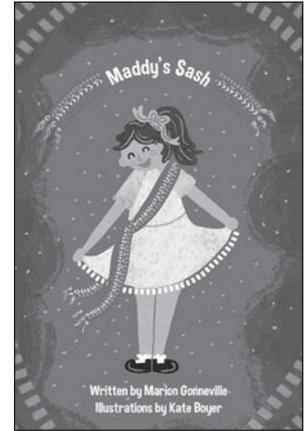
“I wanted readers to be able to feel the illustrations, the lace of the curtains, the weave of a sash, the soft and scratchy fabric of Moshôm’s shirts,” says Boyer.

All characters in the story, human and animal, have their own personality and gifts, including Maddy’s special companion, her grandparents’ gentle giant dog Max. Maddy learns from each of them, sometimes with excitement and confidence, sometimes with a humbling experience, sometimes through affectionate teasing from Kohkum and Moshôm.

The connection, joy, magic, and humour in Métis culture and kinship was important for Gonneville to highlight.

“I wrote *Maddy’s Sash* for Métis children, to help them learn about the joy and the magic of Michif culture—not just the trauma and tragedy,” Gonneville says.

“Métis children need to be protected and nurtured. I believe in fostering their sense of wonder and imagination in the world around us, opening their minds to the hope and happiness in our history and culture.” 🌿



# Robertson writes a path to the future with weekly handbook, reflections on mental health

Pair of releases shares themes of healing relationships, community building

by Emelia Fournier

## ALL THE LITTLE MONSTERS:

*How I Learned to Live with Anxiety*

David A. Robertson

HarperCollins

\$25.99 tpb, 272 pages

ISBN: 9781443472401

## 52 WAYS TO RECONCILE:

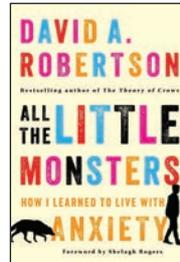
*How to Walk with Indigenous Peoples on the Path to Healing*

David A. Robertson

McClelland & Stewart

\$25.00 hardcover, 240 pages

ISBN: 9780771019357



“little monsters” tell us, through the importance of mindfulness, support networks, therapy, medication, and the healing power of art.

“Writing about my mental health, reaching back into my childhood, revealed the seeds of it, how it grew into something hard to handle, and how much strength and courage it took to live through the worst parts of it,” said Robertson.

“In doing so, it also helped clear a path to the future. It assured me that I had a future and that I deserved one. My father used to tell me that you don’t know where you are unless you know where you’ve been.”

While *All the Little Monsters* focuses on the stories we tell about ourselves, *52 Ways to Reconcile* encourages readers to think about the stories we tell about Indigenous people, Canadian society and history, and each other.

Readers are meant to take in one chapter of *52 Ways to Reconcile* each week. Many of the calls to action involve reflection or less demanding actions. Some of the prescribed actions involve consuming Indigenous stories – being able to participate in reconciliation by watching *Reservation Dogs* or reading a Katherine Vermette novel is certainly a pleasant task.

Some involve more long-term action, like starting an Indigenous book club. The actions are spread out throughout the weeks, alternating between different levels of intensity and time commitment, which makes taking on the process of reconciliation more manageable.

Robertson notes that the term “reconciliation” is a misnomer, given that the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people has “never been good.” He said he prefers the term “community building” to illustrate the process of building a good relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

“My hope is that everybody learns what they need to know, fills themselves with truth, and uses that truth, that knowledge, to find out what their role can be, and then act out that role in a meaningful way that creates lasting change. We’re all in this together.” 🌿

“Stories heal.” That’s the message at the crux of David Robertson’s most recent books, *All the Little Monsters: How I Learned to Live with Anxiety* and *52 Ways to Reconcile: How to Walk with Indigenous Peoples on the Path to Healing*.



David A. Robertson

AMBER GREEN

Robertson is based in Winnipeg, but he has spoken at schools and literary festivals across Canada. A member of Norway House Cree Nation, his previous works delve into themes of mental health and Indigenous realities in comic book and novel form.

*All the Little Monsters* is his first explicitly autobiographical work, chronicling his mental health journey, and *52 Ways to Reconcile* is a week-by-week handbook on how to participate in the process of reconciliation.

Both books are about healing relationships, showing how storytelling and community building are pathways to that healing.

*All the Little Monsters* focuses on the stories we tell ourselves and how they can fuel anxiety, depression, and low self-worth. Robertson discusses his experience with health anxiety, panic attacks, OCD, and depression. He also shares what he’s learned to resist in the stories the

# Anthology marks 15 years after art project which introduced red dress as symbol for MMIWG2S

*Connections with others affected by MMIWG2S led to this ‘collective call for action’*

by Sarah Seroy

**REDRESS:**

*Art, Action, and the Power of Presence*

Edited by Jaime Black-Morsette

HighWater Press

\$38 tpb, 160 pages

ISBN: 9781774921388

**R**EDress: *Art, Action, and the Power of Presence* is an anthology that aims to raise awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people (MMIWG2S), a highly important issue in Canada.

The REDress Project was founded in 2009 by artist and editor of the anthology Jaime Black-Morsette. It is an installation art-based project that calls attention to the issue of MMIWG2S in public spaces. The red dress has since become an iconic and powerful symbol of the MMIWG2S movement.

When asked how she felt about her art inspiring such a large movement, Black-Morsette explained: “I feel like I helped activate something much greater than myself, a spiritual force symbolized by the Red Dress. The Red Dress connects us to the strength and force of generations of women standing in their power, fighting to protect one another.”



Jaime Black-Morsette

REDress comes 15 years after the initial art project launched. Black-Morsette described how this anthology came to be at this moment in time.

“Since stepping onto this path ... I sometimes describe it as a river ... creating The REDress Project felt like stepping into a fast-moving current – but since stepping into this water, I have let it take me, rather than trying to set the course, and it took me here! With an offer from HighWater Press to create a publication about the work.”

The REDress Project helped Black-Morsette connect with others affected by the issue of MMIWG2S, which also inspired this anthology.

“Along this path I have also had the privilege of connecting with a powerful network of women standing up for themselves and one another; the book became a place to gather our voices together in a collective call for action,” she explained.

Black-Morsette also feels that this is the right moment for REDress, explaining how “the timing of this book being released is prescient given that the voices of powerful women and especially powerful Indigenous women are especially important in combating the rollback of human rights occurring south of the border.”

The creation of REDress brought up a lot of difficult emotions for Black-Morsette, who also shared her emotional journey in the anthology.

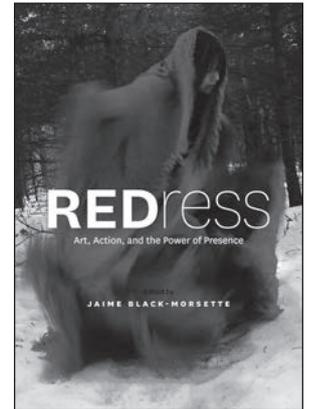
“I felt like I had a responsibility to all those connected to the work I do to really access my own vulnerability in my writing for this book. It was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done and I felt very afraid of being exposed, but I have always written and created from a very raw and vulnerable place and I think that is also where my power and the power of the work comes from.”

Ultimately the creation of the REDress Project and now anthology has been an inspiring process for Black-Morsette.

“My art practice and The REDress Project have given me the courage to continue confronting where we are broken and find healing and power in the creative expression of our experiences,” she says.

This powerful and inspiring anthology addresses the extremely important and pressing issue of MMIWG2S, and Black-Morsette hopes that it will inspire readers into action.

“I want readers to feel into the experiences of the writers, to open a connection, to share in our vulnerabilities and our strengths and to create together from those places a world more compassionate, interconnected and caring.”



## MORE FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT

### PICTURE BOOKS

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#### *DAD, IS IT TIME TO GATHER MINT? CELEBRATING THE SEASONS, JOSHUA LEARNS FROM THE LAND SERIES*

Tyna Legault Taylor, illustrated  
by Michelle Dao

In English with both Swampy Cree and Anishinaabemowin words, this land-based story follows a young boy who loves to gather mint with his father in the summer. Together they observe the changes and participate in activities of the fall, winter, and spring, before it is time to gather mint. Warmly and colourfully illustrated, this book includes a recipe for mint iced tea, a glossary, and a pronunciation guide. (HighWater Press-Portage & Main, \$21.95 hc, 36 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77492-122-7, available as ebook)

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#### *FIVE SENSES FOR MÉTIS BABIES*

Leah Marie Dorion, Michif translation  
by Irma Klyne and Larry Fayant

This board book features Dorion's usual ornate and vivid style of illustration. Told in English and Michif, the book shows a baby's five senses in the context of Métis culture—tasting berries, hearing fiddle music, and more.

(Gabriel Dumont Institute Press, \$17.50 board book, 26 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988011-33-2)

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#### *ᕿagáᕿ hiyt ǫ́xwum / HERRING TO HUCKLEBERRIES*

ošil (Betty Wilson), illustrated  
by Prashant Miranda

In this charmingly illustrated book, ošil and her grandparents harvest food. When the seasons change and the weather grows warm, the ᕿagáᕿ (herring) return to the waters of the ǫ́aᕿəᕿᕿ Nation, located on the southwest coast of British Columbia. Written in ᕿayᕿajuᕿəᕿ and English, this book includes a glossary and pronunciation guide, a map, and illustrations and descriptions of the traditional foods mentioned in the story. (HighWater Press-Portage & Main, \$24.95 hc, 44 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77492-118-0, available as ebook)

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#### *MIYA WEARS ORANGE*

Wanda John-Kehewin, illustrated  
by Erika Rodriguez Medina

This sensitive story tells how Miya, the only Indigenous student in her early years class, learns about residential schools – this knowledge awakens complicated feelings in her. (HighWater Press-Portage & Main, \$21.95 hc, 40 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77492-125-8)

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#### *MOTHER EARTH: MY FAVOURITE ARTIST*

Carol Rose GoldenEagle, illustrated  
by Hawlii Pichette

This wonderfully illustrated book is about a young visual artist who takes inspiration from nature and sees all sorts of images in tree trunks, rivers, tracks, rocks, and more. (Medicine Wheel Publishing, \$22.99 hc, 28 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77854-061-5)

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#### *NO ORDINARY CAMPING TRIP / NAMOOWA KOONJAH AEN VOYAZH TANDAY KA KAPAYSHIHK*

Bertha Landrie, illustrated by  
Lucille Scott, Michif translation by  
Irma Klyne and Larry Fayant

In this story inspired by the author's husband, 12-year-old Joe and his Métis family go to southern Saskatchewan for the summer to work on a farm picking rocks. The whole family works hard, but they also take time to relax and go fishing and to go to the local fair.

(Gabriel Dumont Institute Press, \$17.50 pb, 44 pages, ISBN: 978-1-988011-36-3)

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#### *PĒYAK LITTLE DUCK*

Sandra Lamouche, illustrated  
by Mando Littlechild

Celebrating the connection between language learning and the land, this counting book explores the birds a young Cree child finds on a walk, teaching Plains Cree vocabulary while practising counting. Cree pronunciations are given and reinforced by the rhythm of the English text.

(Orca Book Publishers, \$21.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-3717-1, available as ebook)

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#### *RAVEN'S RIBBONS*

Tasha Spillett, illustrated  
by Daniel Ramirez

This joyful and richly illustrated book explores gender expression in the story of Raven, who loves dancing round dances with his grandma and asks her if he can wear a ribbon skirt.

(Owlkids Books, \$22.95 hc, 28 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77147-566-2)

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#### *THE TALKING STICK*

David Bouchard, illustrated  
by Jessica Somers

In this story about humility, respect, and fairness, Beaver helps the four-leggeds, flyers, crawlers, and swimmers agree on how to share their ideas and make decisions together by listening to others, showing readers how the Talking Stick came to be.

(Vidacom Publications, \$19.95 pb, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77461-072-5)

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#### *WAY BACK THEN*

Germaine Arnattauijuq and  
Neil Christopher, illustrated by  
Germaine Arnattauijuq

Presented in both English and Inuktitut, this book uses striking illustrations and the bedtime story frame of Kudlu telling his children magical stories from Inuit mythology, including stories of giants, animals disguised as humans, and little people smaller than lemmings, and stories of how night and day were formed and how caribou came to roam the North.

(Inhabit Media, \$16.95 pb, 44 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77227-520-9)

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### FOR EARLY YEARS READERS

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#### *SARAH PONAKEY, STORYCATCHER, AND MASKWA'S TIPI TALES* Sita MacMillan, illustrated by Azby Whitecalf

In this chapter book, Sarah is torn between two homes – her summer at Kohkom's with her best friend Eden is coming to an end, but at the same time, she is missing her mother and her friend in the city. She also wants to learn her language and culture, something Eden is doing without her. On their one last sleepover in a tipi in the backyard, a magical visit from Maskwa

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

reminds the girls why their friendship is so special.

(Annick Press, 120 pages, \$24.99 hc, ISBN: 978-1-77321-949-3; \$10.99 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77321-950-9)

## FOR YA READERS

### OURS TO TELL

Eldon Yellowhorn and Kathy Lowinger

Through archival photos, contemporary art, and biographical profiles of 16 Indigenous creators – novelists, poets, graphic artists, historians, craftspeople, mapmakers, anthropologists – and one collective of food educators and advocates, this book tells the histories and cultures of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island. Also included are sources and resources, an index, and sidebars with contextual information and mini-profiles.

(Annick Press, 136 pages, with full-colour illustrations and photos throughout, \$24.99 hc, ISBN: 978-1-77321-953-0; \$16.99 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77321-954-7; available as ebook)

## FICTION

### RETCON, THE TULPA SERIES, BOOK 2

Garry Thomas Morse

Tom, an art house aficionado, returns to his hometown to attend the Brolleywood film studies conference, and is drawn into a noirish plot that may distance him from his fiancée, Ciana. As he navigates shifting islands of personal memory, he begins to wonder if life is not just a retcon (the most contrived form of retroactive continuity).

(At Bay Press, \$24.95 pb, 400 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-00-0)

### SEVENTH BLADE

Tonia Laird

Set in a fragmented, colonized world of dangerous magics and cryptic gods, the story starts with T'Rayles, an infamous warrior, discovering her adopted son has been murdered. This discovery is quickly followed by her quest to find his killer and seek justice, during which she must use the power of her inherited sword and ally

herself with the corrupt Broken Fangs and the immortal deity Elraiche.

(ECW Press, \$24.95 pb, 376 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-807-3, available as ebook)

### SMALL CEREMONIES

Kyle Edwards

This very Winnipeg novel examines identity and place, trauma and recovery, as it follows two Indigenous boys, Tomahawk (Tommy) Shields and Clinton Whiteway, who play for their high school's poorly performing hockey team. Through their eyes and those of other characters – an ambitious university student, an ex-convict expected to bring his younger brother into the criminal world, a lonely rink attendant, and an aspiring journalist – the city's complexity is portrayed from various perspectives.

(McClelland & Stewart-PRH, \$32.00 hc, 368 pages, ISBN: 978-0-7710-2561-7, available as audiobook and ebook)

### WINNIPEG AND OTHER PLACES, FROM THE HEART 7

Bernard Mulaire

The more than 40 short stories, some in English and some in French, by the French-Canadian Métis author, explore memory, loss, and longing through the offbeat perspectives of artists, travellers, children, lovers, addicts, and others.

(At Bay Press, \$9.95 pb, 76 pages, ISBN: 978-1-998779-60-4)

## POETRY & DRAMA

### ALL WRONG HORSES ON FIRE THAT GO AWAY IN THE RAIN

Sarain Frank Soonias

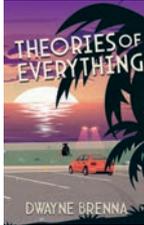
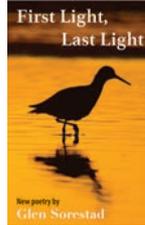
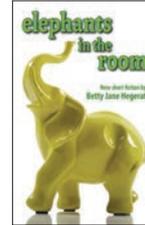
Written while attending therapy through a TRC initiative for children and grandchildren of residential schools and Sixties Scoop Survivors, the poems in this debut collection attempt to reconcile with the ghosts of the dead and find some joy in life, and include song lyrics, fragments, shape poems, love poems, and advice to self.

(NeWest Press, \$20.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77439-114-3, available as ebook)



**SHADOWPAW PRESS**  
REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN  
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**NEW AND COMING SOON  
FROM SHADOWPAW PRESS**

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 <p>ISBN 9781998273485</p> <p><i>Fourteen tales of the sometimes funny, often heartbreaking, search for happiness and understanding</i></p>	 <p>ISBN 9781998273355</p> <p><i>A sumptuous exploration of the fascinating stories behind familiar and not-so-familiar gastronomic terms</i></p>	 <p>ISBN 9781998273423</p> <p><i>Two young teen girls must use all their grit and intelligence to free their friends from magical enslavement</i></p>	 <p>ISBN 9781998273379</p> <p><i>Can the trillionaires who control the world be stopped from seizing the keys to reality itself?</i></p>
 <p>ISBN 9781998273393</p> <p><i>What will happen when the restless trolls and goblins of Toronto are finally revealed for all to see?</i></p>	 <p>ISBN 9781998273508</p> <p><i>Long ago, a vicious war saw all magic locked behind the Great Barrier. But that barrier may be about to fall...</i></p>		

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**THE BEAUTY OF VULTURES**

Poems by Wendy McGrath,

Photos by Danny Miles

In this collaboration between Edmonton-based Métis poet McGrath and July Talk drummer and photographer Miles, breathtaking photos of birds and other wildlife inspire a wide variety of not purely ekphrastic poems in forms such as sonnets, pantoums, ghazals, concrete poems, found poems, and even a short play. (NeWest Press, \$19.95 pb, 90 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77439-112-9, available as ebook)

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**BORN SACRED: POEMS FOR PALESTINE**

Smokii Sumac

This powerful and heartbreaking book comprises 100 poems written between October 2023 and April 2024 in which the poet bears witness to the war in Palestine, making connections between daily and past experiences here as an Indigenous colonized person and the genocide in Gaza, and processing his deep grief to somehow continue to believe that poetry can make a difference.

(Roseway-Fernwood Publishing, \$24.00 pb, 160 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-725-9, available as ebook)

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**SOUTH SIDE OF A KINLESS RIVER**

Marilyn Dumont

These nuanced and sometimes biting, sometimes humorous, poems tell a Métis woman's history, through stories of land theft, language loss, sexual relationships between Indigenous women and European men, the assistance Indigenous midwives gave to early settlers, and more.

(Brick Books, \$23.95 pb, 72 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77131-631-6, available as ebook)

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**STARWALKER**

Corey Payette

With spectacular theatricality, this musical portrays Borealis House, a drag queen residence and performance space in East Vancouver. Eddie (Star) Starwalker, an Indigiqueer Two-Spirit person, is brought in by Levi, and as they discover themselves and fall in love, they also bring Indigenous cultural practices to their chosen family and community.

(Scirocco Drama-JGS Publishing, \$18.95 pb, 112 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990738-68-5)

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**ART****CARTOGRAPHIC POETRY:****EXAMINING HISTORIC BLACKFOOT AND GROS VENTRE MAPS**Ted Binnema, François Lanoë,  
and Heinz W. Pyszczyk

This first book-length study of five maps drawn by Blackfoot and Gros Ventre cartographers in 1801 and 1802 for the Hudson's Bay Company explores the maps' cartographic conventions, utility, and beauty from historical, linguistic, and archeological perspectives.

(University of Alberta Press, \$39.99 pb, 256 pages, with maps, b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77212-799-7, available as ebook)

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**DARK CHAPTERS: READING THE STILL LIVES OF DAVID GARNEAU**Curated by Arin Fay, paintings by  
David Garneau, edited by Nic Wilson

Lush with full-colour art throughout, this book implements the TRC Call to Action 83, with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists – 17 poets, authors, artists, curators, essayists, and critics – collaborating with the still life paintings of David Garneau – provocative paintings that feature books, rocks, and bones – to contribute to the reconciliation process, interrogating and repositioning ideas of colonialism, allyship, knowledge, kinship, and art.

(University of Regina Press, \$32.95 pb, 176 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77940-053-6, available as ebook)

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**GENERAL NON-FICTION****BEBÍAS INTO ?HNDAA KE: QUEER INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FOR LAND AND COMMUNITY**

Kleo P. Skavinski and Sydney Rae Krill

This powerful collection of essays, stories, and conversations – by young activists, artists, families, and both emerging and established scholars – offers a wealth of queer Indigenous theory, experience, and practices with an emphasis on the critical role of land.

(ARP Books, \$28.00 pb, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1-927886-92-2)

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**BECOMING MÉTIS IN NORTHERN ALBERTA**

Patricia A. McCormack

Drawing upon literature related to ethnogenesis, this book challenges the

prevailing discourse about “Métis-ness” by considering the circumstances of the northern Métis, many of whom were considered by white Canadians as little different from First Nations people, until government policies made a distinction between Métis and First Nations Peoples to deal with them differently. The book also examines the evolution of legal distinctions between First Nations and Métis, reviewing key pieces of legislation and judicial decisions.

(Athabasca University Press, \$34.99 pb, 400 pages, with maps, ISBN: 978-1-77199-438-5, available as ebook)

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**BEYOND THE RINK: BEHIND THE IMAGES OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL HOCKEY**Alexandra Giancarlo, Janice Forsyth,  
and Braden Te Hiwi, with the 1951  
Sioux Lookout Black Hawks

In this fascinating book of oral history, the authors collaborate with three surviving members of the 1951 Sioux Lookout Black Hawks Thunder Bay district champions to share their stories and the complex legacy behind the promotional tour and professional photos taken and used at the time to demonstrate to the Canadian public the success of the Indian Residential School system.

(University of Manitoba Press, \$24.95 pb, 184 pages, with b/w illustrations, bibliography, index, ISBN: 978-1-77284-106-0, available as ebook)

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**BOOK OF HOPE: HEALTHCARE AND SURVIVAL IN THE NORTH**

Agnes R. Pascal

Pascal compiles over 30 first-hand narratives from Northern and Indigenous cancer survivors and caregivers that illuminate the unique challenges of health care accessibility in the North, challenges that include the logistics of travel for treatment, the disconnect between Indigenous and Western medicine, and the structural determinants of health. Yet the people also share that hope comes from building healing communities.

(Fernwood Publishing, \$29.00 pb, 192 pages, with photos, maps, ISBN: 978-1-77363-736-5, available as ebook)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

**ELEMENTS OF INDIGENOUS STYLE: A GUIDE FOR WRITING BY AND ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, 2ND EDITION**

Gregory Younging, lead editor Warren Cariou, contributing editors Deanna Reder, Lorena Sekwan Fontaine, and Jordan Abel

A new editorial team continues the conversation started by the late Younging in this new edition, which includes five new chapters covering author-editor relationships, identity and community affiliation, Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer identities, Indigenous citation practices, sensitivity reading, the representation of Indigenous languages and oral narratives in print, emerging issues in the digital world, and more.

(Brush Education, \$27.95 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55059-945-9)

**INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN CANADA**

Merli Tamtik

Grounded in decolonial perspectives, and drawing on extensive document analysis and personal narratives of Indigenous individuals across various Canadian universities – people who are reclaiming their rightful place in academia and asserting their place in higher education – this book illuminates the profound impact of Indigenous knowledges on reshaping institutional governance, policy, teaching, research, innovation, and culture.

(University of Toronto Press, 272 pages, \$85.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4289-4; \$32.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4290-0; available as ebook)

**INDIGENOUS RIGHTS IN ONE MINUTE: WHAT CANADIANS NEED TO KNOW TO TALK RECONCILIATION**

Bruce McIvor

The founder and senior partner at First Peoples Law answers 50 questions most often asked of him during his nearly 30 years of advocating for Indigenous rights and teaching Aboriginal law, first in one sentence, and then more fully in clear language and the amount of text it would take most people about one minute to read. He then, using a similar format, explains the leading court decisions in Aboriginal law and why they are important.

(Nightwood Editions, \$22.95 pb, 208 pages, ISBN: 978-0-88971-488-5)

**IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE TRAVELLER: THE ASTRONOMY OF NORTHERN DENE**

Chris M. Cannon, foreword by Chief Fred Sangris

Through collaboration with more than 65 Dene Elders and culture bearers from 34 communities in Alaska and Canada, and combining interviews, photographs, detailed illustrations, and the author's own experiential learning, this book reveals the significance of the stars to Northern Dene life, language, and culture. (University of Manitoba Press, \$34.95 pb, 448 pages, with colour illustrations, maps, bibliography, index, ISBN: 978-1-77284-098-8, available as ebook)

**PROTECTING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND HERITAGE: A CANADIAN OBLIGATION, NEW EDITION**

Marie Battiste and James Sa'ke'j Youngblood Henderson

This book traces Canadian progress in reforming laws and policies to align with UN standards for respecting Indigenous knowledge systems and heritage rights, preserving identity and languages, and decolonizing educational systems. This new edition tackles current issues in intellectual property rights and topics such as the revision of educational curricula to incorporate Indigenous content and methodologies, creating a proposal for co-operative legal reform to protect, reconcile, and invigorate Indigenous knowledge systems and heritage. (Purich Books-UBC Press, \$39.95 pb, 424 pages, ISBN: 978-0-7748-8082-4, available as ebook)

**PUTTING DOWN ROOTS: MÉTIS AGENCY, LAND USE, AND WOMEN'S FOOD LABOUR IN A QU'APPELLE VALLEY ROAD ALLOWANCE COMMUNITY**

Cheryl Troupe, foreword by Maria Campbell

Using oral histories, archival sources, genealogies, photographs, and deep mapping, this innovative and engaging study reframes Métis road allowance communities as sites of resistance and resilience, revealing how the everyday actions of women's work sustained Métis identity, family systems, and relationships to the land.

(University of Manitoba Press, \$27.95 pb, 408 pages, with b/w illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, index, ISBN: 978-1-77284-102-2, available as ebook)

**SOFT AS BONES: A MEMOIR**

Chyana Marie Sage

Framed by Cree words/concepts, and woven together with traditional Cree-style retellings, this poetic memoir tells of Sage's relationship with her father, a crack dealer who went to prison for molesting her older sister, how that damaged her relationship with her mother and sisters and others, and how she healed through traditional stories and ceremonies.

(House of Anansi Press, \$26.99 pb, 296 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4870-1302-8, available as ebook)

**Remembering Michael Wile**

We were deeply saddened to learn that Michael Wile passed away in January 2025. Michael joined the *Prairie books NOW* team in late 2017/early 2018 as our Toronto-based national contact for advertising sales.

Michael was very enthusiastic about the work of publishers all across Canada. He filled an important – and often under-celebrated – niche role in the publishing/literary industry, and worked for a number of varied publications, including *Montreal Review of Books*.

We consider ourselves lucky that we had the chance to work with Michael on *Prairie books NOW*. He valued his connections with publishers, some of whom he had worked with for many years.

We pass along our condolences to Michael's friends and family. A more detailed tribute to Michael can be found at [prairiebooksnw.ca](http://prairiebooksnw.ca).



MICHAEL WILE (LINKEDIN)

# Freehand Books celebrates 100th release, and they're no stranger to award nods by now

*With focus on excellent Canadian contemporary writing, they find fun in following books' momentum*

by Brock Peters

Since 2007, Calgary-based Freehand Books has been publishing a carefully curated list of award-winning Canadian fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. The press was originally established as the literary imprint of Broadview Press, an academic publisher, but in 2016 they made the move to become independent.

"We have always seen ourselves as belonging to the literary publishing world rather than the academic," says Kelsey Attard, Freehand's managing editor.

"The thing that has been consistent for Freehand since Day 1 is its simple goal: to publish excellent contemporary writing by Canadian writers."

The world of Canadian publishing was alerted to Freehand's simple yet ambitious mandate in striking fashion when its very first title, *Good to a Fault* by Marina Endicott, was shortlisted for both the Giller Prize and Canada Reads. That early recognition established a pattern of award nods and accolades for Freehand titles that continue to the present day.

For example, Sarah Leavitt's graphic memoir *Tangles: A Story about Alzheimer's, My Mother and Me* became the first work of graphic literature to be shortlisted for the Writers' Trust award for non-fiction in 2010.

"It's currently in development to be an animated feature film," Attard notes, "starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Bryan Cranston, and Seth Rogen!"

And in 2019, the memoir *Homes: A Refugee Story* by Abu Bakr al Rabeeh and Winnie Yeung became a finalist for Canada Reads – not to mention a Canadian bestseller.

"It's particularly fun when you have a book that really starts to gain momentum," says Attard. "*Homes* had already enjoyed a warm reception, and then really catapulted into the spotlight when it was selected for Canada Reads."

More recently, Freehand Books achieved a milestone of a different kind. When Calgary writer Mikka Jacobsen's

story collection *Good Victory* launched in February 2025, it marked the 100th book published by Freehand.

"It's always extra fun to work with a hometown writer," Attard says.

"As a publisher in Calgary, we have a particular interest in publishing voices from Alberta and Western Canada, which tend to be underrepresented nationally, and sharing them with the rest of the country. Half of the books we published last year were from Alberta authors."

That said, Freehand's desire to highlight regional authors must function in tandem with their goal of presenting their authors to a national audience – a "real balancing act," according to Attard.

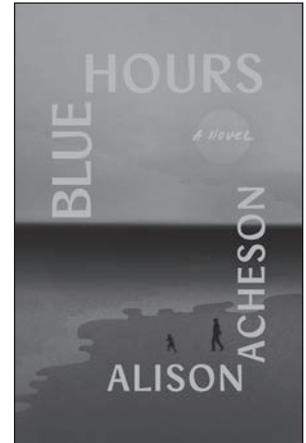
"Our approach has been to not define ourselves as a regional publisher," she explains, instead adopting the attitude that "Canadian literature is a national conversation that we're participating in." As such, Freehand authors can be found across the country, from Victoria to Toronto to Whitehorse.

Never a publisher to shy away from ambitious goals, in 2023 Freehand announced that it had earned the Global Certified Accessible (GCA) digital accessibility certification program.

"We want everyone who wants to read our books to be able to read our books," says Attard.

All of Freehand's new ebooks – and most of their backlist – are tooled to meet international accessibility standards "so that they are adaptable and flexible, and meet the needs of people with print disabilities," she explains.

While doing so has required some changes to Freehand's production process, Attard notes that "the job of a book publisher is constantly growing to include entirely new fields of expertise."



Kelsey Attard

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And though she says this can be challenging for a small publisher with limited staff and resources, it’s also an excellent way to keep learning – and lots of fun besides.

In addition to accessibility, Attard points out that design plays a large role in the Freehand story. “One of my favourite parts of the process is when our designer sends us cover mock-ups,” she says.

With the help of Natalie Olsen of Kisscut Design, a frequent collaborator, Attard says that the press has intentionally placed an emphasis on exceptional design to match their focus on exceptional writing.

“We publish beautiful words,” says Attard, “but want to make sure that we have beautiful covers to match.”

Attard is eager to highlight the beautiful words in Freehand’s most recent crop of books, which runs the gamut from *Juiceboxers*, a novel centred on Canada’s military involvement in Afghanistan that she calls “truly exceptional,” to *Blue Hours*, an “immersive novel about fatherhood and family,” to *Every Night I Dream I’m a Monk*, *Every Night I Dream I’m a Monster*, a short story collection that Attard says “wins the award for the most intriguing title of the year – an ambitious short story collection like no other.”

Another standout is *Graveyard Shift at the Lemonade Stand* by

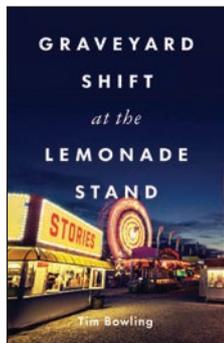
Alberta author Tim Bowling. Though Bowling is an award-winning author of some 24 books, his Freehand debut is also his debut short story collection.

“It’s such a privilege to work with an author of his calibre,” says Attard, “and exciting to work with him to delve into new territory!”

Having pursued innovations in prose, design, and accessibility, what does the future hold for Freehand Books?

“In 2025 and going forward, we want to publish books that surprise us, challenge us, and delight us,” Attard says.

“Our readers can expect more high-quality novels, short story collections, and works of creative non-fiction. We have more great books coming out over the next couple of years!” 🌿



**SPRING/SUMMER TITLES FROM FREEHAND BOOKS**

**BLUE HOURS**

Alison Acheson

This elegant novel takes readers through the gradual, tender, and bewildering grieving process of stay-at-home dad Keith and his six-year-old son, Charlie, after the death of wife/mother and artist Raziell. Their story is full of grace, love, and magical moments.

(Freehand Books, \$24.95 pb, 304 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990601-89-7)

**GOOD VICTORY**

Mikka Jacobsen

Unsettling, subtle, and revelatory, the stories in this debut collection go to dark places – like the risk-taking of teens, the lonely life of a grad

student, and the intrusion of lechery on the innocence of children – and shine an angled light on them.

(Freehand Books, \$22.95 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990601-83-5, available as ebook)

**GRAVEYARD SHIFT AT THE LEMONADE STAND**

Tim Bowling

The stories in this first collection of short stories by the award-winning author explore power, family secrets, childhood memories, mental illness, and intergenerational trauma in nostalgic, funny, spooky, layered, and heartbreaking ways.

(Freehand Books, \$22.95 pb, 276 pages, ISBN: 978-1-990601-86-6)

**Thistledown Press**

**FICTION** *TUNNEL ISLAND* by MELISSA TRENKLE

**POETRY** *WALKING UPSTREAM* by Lloyd Ratzlaff

**NONFICTION** *FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY: A Life in Travel* by ELIZABETH J. HAYNES

thistledownpress.com

## Previously unpublished stories, essays by Carol Shields join magazine articles in new collection

*'From travel to divorce and from petals to purses,' topics highlight wide range of interests*

by Bev Sandell Greenberg

### THE CANADIAN SHIELDS:

#### *Stories and Essays*

Carol Shields

Edited by Nora Foster Stovel

University of Manitoba Press

\$29.95 pb, 336 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77284-082-7

Available as an ebook

**I** wanted to bring the unpublished works to light," says editor Nora Foster Stovel about her new project, a collection of writings by the late author Carol Shields, titled *The Canadian Shields: Stories and Essays*.

Stovel is a professor emerita at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, who has edited numerous books about Canadian women writers, with two other volumes on Carol Shields's writing among them.

Shields (1935–2003) was an acclaimed American-born author who moved to Canada in 1957 as a young bride. At the age of 40, she completed an M.A. in Canadian literature at the University of Ottawa and thereafter started writing fiction.

Shields's literary output included ten novels, four short story collections, four poetry books, six plays, a book of criticism, and a biography of Jane Austen, while she also co-edited two anthologies.

Her 1993 novel *The Stone Diaries* won the Pulitzer Prize and Governor General's Award and received a Booker Prize nomination. In addition to numerous literary awards, Shields received 15 honorary PhDs.

This new compilation of Shields's work includes three previously unpublished short stories, along with 24 previously unpublished essays and an equal number of previously published but uncollected essays. This is the



Nora Foster Stovel

first time they have appeared together in one volume.

Stovel says the book is intended for general readers, especially fellow writers and admirers.

The book's clever title affirms Shields's prominent role in Canadian literature. "By writing about her adopted country and its writers, she earned the title the Canadian Shields," Stovel asserts.

"In fact, Shields spent 46 years, more than two-thirds of her life in Canadian cities, such as Toronto, Ottawa, and Victoria, her longest stint being in Winnipeg."

For Stovel, putting the book together was a formidable task. There were more than 200 archival boxes of Shields's fonds to go through. "The biggest challenge was travelling to Ottawa a number of times and spending many hours sifting through all the material," she says.

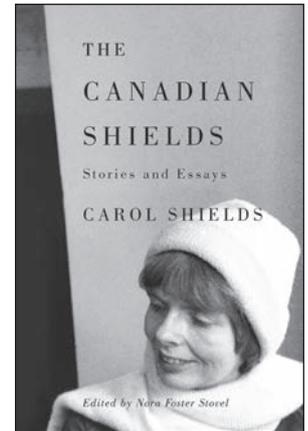
As a result, the editing process involved several steps. "After selecting the items and requesting photocopies from the National Library, I had to retype them, organize them, and write introductions," Stovel says.

Those introductions are one of the treats of this meticulously edited book, which includes not only an introduction to the collection as a whole, but also one to each of the two sections. Stovel shares her enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge about Shields, interspersing the commentaries with lively anecdotal details.

The first section of previously unpublished work includes three short stories and essays that cover topics such as memories, coming to Canada, the reading/writing connection, and the writing process.

The second section includes essays that first appeared in travel and women's magazines, in literary journals, and as introductions/afterwords to books. Depending on the original intended audience, some topics are more personal, while others address cultural issues.

In Stovel's words, "What surprised me the most was the wide range of Shields's interests, from travel to divorce and from petals to purses." 🌿



# Making municipal finance fun: Michel Durand-Wood writes in plain language for those curious about cities

*Book grew from Winnipeg-based blog with wide readership, reflecting universal nature of civic issues*

by Margaret Anne Fehr

## **YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS!**

*How We Can Afford a Great City for Everyone, Forever*

Michel Durand-Wood

Great Plains Press

\$19.95 pb, 104 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77337-134-4

When Michel Durand-Wood, a.k.a. the Elmwood Guy, started his blog *Dear Winnipeg* in December 2018 with the tagline “A Fun Blog About Infrastructure and Municipal Finance,” he didn’t foresee the ripple effect that his postings would have in terms of educating Winnipeg’s civic-minded readers.

“As citizens, it’s our responsibility to be actively engaged in the decisions at City Hall that have such a huge impact on our day-to-day quality of life. Cities provide so many services that touch our daily lives, like trash collection, clean drinking water, recreation options, and more,” says Durand-Wood.

“But it’s difficult to engage without a firm grasp of how everything fits together, which is where the financial part comes in, because preferences change when prices are attached.”

To help provide that firm grasp, Durand-Wood has penned *You’ll Pay for This! How We Can Afford a Great City for Everyone, Forever*, written in plain language and short enough to be read in an afternoon.

“It’s really for any person who’s curious about their city, and what it takes to overcome the most pressing challenges in present-day Winnipeg, and as readership proves, in today’s North American city.”

The blog readership had grown to the point that more than 60 per cent of readers came from somewhere other

than Winnipeg. “And that’s because most cities in North America are facing the same challenges as we are, having made the same mistakes, using the same patterns,” says Durand-Wood.

“I’ve heard from so many people who said reading my stuff felt like I was exactly describing places as diverse as Steinbach, Charlottetown, Calgary, and Ottawa in Canada, to American cities located everywhere from Maryland to Florida to Texas, and even a few [cities] in Australia and New Zealand.”

When Great Plains Press came calling with the idea of publishing *You’ll Pay for This!* as the first in The City Project series, Durand-Wood says, “I loved the idea right away, so it didn’t take much convincing to sign on.”

The City Project is a series of books that each deals with a different aspect of building a successful, vibrant, and sustainable city. As the first book in the series, *You’ll Pay for This!* is meant to lay a foundation for all of the other ones.

Durand-Wood explains that each book in the series is going to be written by a different author sharing one aspect of building a better city for all. Upcoming topics will include reconciliation, active transportation, green space, economic development, transit, housing, and more.

Durand-Wood cites legendary urban Toronto thinker Jane Jacobs who said, “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

“Cities provide such vital services, and they need to be able to do it not only today, but for generations to come,” says Durand-Wood.

“Understanding how we can pay for it is key to that. So I hope readers will come away with a newfound understanding of, as the subtitle says, how we can afford a great city for everyone, forever.” 🍷



Michel Durand-Wood

# Trinh reflects on wanderings from Vietnam to Egypt to China in search of spiritual awakening

*Memoir examines feeling like an outsider in many spaces while maintaining sense of wonder*

by Rowan McCandless

## SEEKING SPIRIT:

*A Vietnamese (Non)Buddhist Memoir*

Linda Trinh

MiroLand-Guernica Editions

\$22.95 pb, 204 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77183-954-9

In her compelling new book, *Seeking Spirit: A Vietnamese (Non)Buddhist Memoir*, Linda Trinh takes readers on her path of discovery as she searches for spiritual connections and fulfillment in her life.

Trinh, who was born in Vietnam and grew up in Winnipeg, where she still lives, says, “I’m very conscious of having and grateful to have my basic needs met – shelter, food security, and a stable income. I also have my health and the love and support of my family. Yet I’m still seeking more.

“The ‘something more’ may differ person to person. I define it for me as spiritual fulfillment.”

Trinh often felt she didn’t belong as a Vietnamese child in West End Winnipeg and as a visitor to Vietnam.

“Being too much of something – too Vietnamese in some instances – and being too little of something else – not Buddhist enough in some instances – left me without an anchor when it came to exploring spirituality,” she says. “Which in some ways gave me freedom to explore and wander where my intuition led me.”

And wander Trinh does, from Vietnam to Egypt to China, in her search for spiritual awakening.

“In every sacred space,” she says, “my insights are similar, that these spaces exist as glimpses of the divine, as true in the present day as it was true generations ago. When I’m feeling disconnected, lonely, untethered, I bring my mind back to one of these extraordinary moments, I breathe deeply, and I invite the divine into my ordinary life.”



Linda Trinh

To tell her personal narrative, Trinh structures her memoir into three engaging sections: “Spirit Studied,” “Spirit Experienced,” and “Practising Spirit.” A variety of entryways (like the seven gates of the underworld) and forms (such as diagrams, columns, and tables) are used within each section, reflecting the parallels Trinh finds between her journey of learning and various mythic, biblical, and historical stories and traditions.

The first section asks “the big questions about life and death” and shows how the beliefs of ancient Egyptian and Chinese civilizations parallel each other and provide teachings. Trinh also learns and unlearns from the story of ancient Sumerian goddess Inanna.

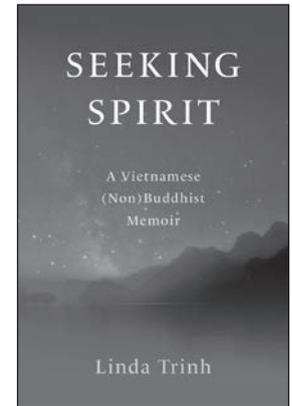
“The second section,” Trinh explains, “speaks to a specific period when I was going back to work after maternity leave and trying to grow my family and all the heartbreak of that time.” Throughout this section, there are references to Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt and a recurring self-contained grid speaking to the areas of her life in transition.

The third section, “Practising Spirit,” explores the three touchstones of Buddhism: mandala, mudra, and mantra, and how she makes these ancient practices specifically hers and relevant to her life, especially as a creative writer.

Trinh’s openness to the divine and wonder in the world is contagious. “I believe that life is mysterious and wondrous,” she says.

“There are things that can’t be explained, can’t be proven, things that can *only* be experienced. The memoir is my unique experience. I don’t have answers. I only have questions, and in questioning, I’m getting closer and closer to my spiritual truth.

“And hopefully, in sharing my unique experience, readers may find their own questions and what may be true for them.” 🌿



# Soufi digs behind the headlines to find community impacts after 3 men he knew became ‘homegrown radicals’

*Critical analysis meets real-life mystery as author explores what happened to these men and why*

by Paula E. Kirman

**HOMEGROWN RADICALS:**  
*A Story of State Violence, Islamophobia, and Jihad in the Post-9/11 World*

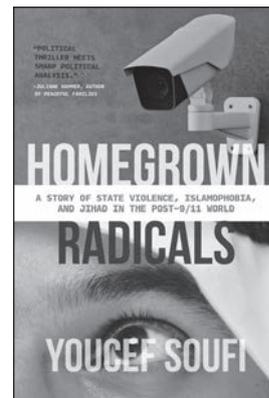
**Youcef Soufi**

University of Regina Press

\$29.95 pb, 272 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77940-061-1

Available as an ebook



this on Muslim communities are incredibly obscured in the media. Part of that tragedy is the hypersurveillance of the state, which impacted many Winnipeg Muslims in unpredictable but very harmful ways,” Soufi explains.

The biggest challenge Soufi found when researching the book was finding willing Muslim interview subjects because “security agencies during the War on Terror worked on the model of guilt-by-association.”

Numerous interviewees expressed fear for their safety if they were included by name. At one point, Soufi was asked if he was an undercover CSIS or RCMP agent.

Although the book was initially intended for an academic audience, the publisher decided to target a general readership.

“The book is constructed around a mystery: what happened to the three men and why? The critical analysis is woven into the gradual revealing of the mystery, and that, in itself, makes it relevant to a broader readership.”

*Homegrown Radicals* is also more readable for non-academics due to the intimate voice Soufi brings to his work.

“My positionality allows me to interrogate questions that others can’t,” he says. “For instance, who were the men before they left? Or how do traditional Muslim ideas about war and peace differ from those they adopted?”

Soufi says the questions addressed in *Homegrown Radicals* continue to be relevant.

“Today, again, we must ask ourselves: what justifications does our state give to support the death, occupation, and political oppression of peoples abroad? I have Gaza and Palestine in mind. How do we diminish the importance of their lives? And what will be the consequences – for us, for them, for international law?,” he says.

“Can we perhaps move beyond a political state of affairs where some lives matter and others don’t? Are there forms of international solidarity that can get us there?”

“My book tries to grapple with these questions.” 🌿

What are the consequences of the “War on Terror”? *Homegrown Radicals: A Story of State Violence, Islamophobia, and Jihad in the Post-9/11 World* investigates this question by looking at two figures thought to represent Muslims since 9/11: the homegrown radical versus the moderate.

Author Youcef Soufi presents the tensions between these two stereotypes as a framework for the story of three Muslim men he knew during his undergraduate years at university in Winnipeg. The men disappeared in March 2007 and were suspected of joining a jihadist organization overseas.

“After testifying at the U.S. trial of one of the men in 2017, I knew the story in the media was partial at best. It followed a tired, and frankly racist, narrative of seemingly ‘ordinary’ Muslim men who suddenly turned into ‘homegrown radicals,’ raising fears that any Muslim might turn to violence,” says Soufi, who is a researcher in Islamophobia with the Institute for the Humanities at the University of Manitoba.

Soufi also discusses impacts on people who knew the men, as well as on Winnipeg’s Muslim community.

“One interviewee in the book tells me that when the men left, ‘they left a mess behind.’ I wanted to document that mess. I feel that the consequences of a tragedy like



Youcef Soufi

NASEER AHMED

## MORE NON-FICTION

### ANTHOLOGY

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#### **BEYOND TOUCH SITES: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE TANGIBLE**

Edited by Wendy McGrath

In essays, stories, and poetry, and in English and French (with bits of other languages), the contributors to this fourth anthology in the Beyond Series – authors such as Rona Altrows, Rita Bouvier, Pierrette Requier, and Uchechukwu Peter Umezurike – explore the sense of touch, and also the concepts of getting/staying in touch.

(Laberinto Press, \$25.00 pb, 120 pages, ISBN: 978-1-7770859-6-4)

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### ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

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#### **BUFFALO TRACES**

Mark Vitaris

This photo-essay narrative explores the geography, ethnology, art, history, and people of the northern Great Plains, with photos and interrelated stories drawing upon roadside encounters, kitchen table conversations, campsite chats, and barroom banter, and inspired by the explorers, writers, and artists who followed in the wake of the bison.

(Frontenac House, \$80.00 hc, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1-989466-76-6)

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#### **SEASONS OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES**

Mike Grandmaison

With stunning photographs and accompanying text, Grandmaison shows the grandeur of the Canadian Rockies in all four seasons.

(Vidacom Publications, \$29.95 hc, 162 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77461-075-6)

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### BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIR

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#### **CHRYSTIA: FROM PEACE RIVER TO PARLIAMENT HILL**

Catherine Tsalikis

With impeccable research, seasoned perspective, and an accessible style, Tsalikis traces Chrystia Freeland's journey from the northwestern Alberta town of Peace River to Moscow, London, and New York – where she spent two decades as a journalist – to the halls of Parliament

Hill as the deputy prime minister and finance minister in Justin Trudeau's Liberal government.

(House of Anansi Press, \$34.99 hc, 360 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4870-1121-5, available as ebook)

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#### **FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY: A LIFE IN TRAVEL**

Elizabeth Haynes

Loosely organized around meals, the essays that make up this memoir take the reader to faraway places – researching the author's father's time working in Nigeria, attending a traditional funeral in Indonesia and a family wedding in North Carolina, cycling through Cuba, volunteering in the Philippines, and more. Often accompanied by close family members, Haynes observes other cultures with sensitivity, compassion, and gratitude.

(Thistledown Press, \$24.95 pb, 204 pages, ISBN: 9781-77187-269-0)

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#### **FOR THE LOVE OF A SON: A MEMOIR OF ADDICTION, LOSS, AND HOPE**

Scott Oake with Michael Hingston

This raw and candid memoir tells how Oake and his wife Anne did their best at supporting their son Bruce who struggled with ADHD and eventually with an opioid addiction that led to his accidental overdose at the age of 25. The parents and their younger son, Darcy, turned this loss into a way to help thousands of others by establishing the Bruce Oake Recovery Centre, staffed almost entirely by addicts and alcoholics in recovery.

(Simon & Schuster Canada, \$26.99 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-6680-4547-3, available as ebook)

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#### **HARLEY PARKER: THE MCLUHAN OF THE MUSEUM**

Gary Genosko

Genosko uncovers the legacy of Harley Parker, the Canadian museum exhibition designer, typographer, and painter, and explores his innovative concepts for reshaping museums as perceptual laboratories.

(University of Alberta Press, \$29.99 pb, 240 pages, with b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77212-793-5, available as ebook)

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#### **THE LUSH LIFE: A NOT SO SOBER SECOND LOOK**

Gregg Shilliday, with drawings

by Dale Cummings

Writing what he knows, Shilliday tells his life story by celebrating the people with whom and places at which he's shared some memorable alcoholic beverages.

Cummings uses wine as ink to draw the charmingly goofy illustrations.

(Bottoms Up Press, \$12.95 pb, 88 pages, ISBN: 978-1-55383-615-5)

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#### **MELTDOWN: THE MAKING AND BREAKING OF A FIELD SCIENTIST**

Sarah Boon

Intimate storytelling and scientific observation come together in this memoir about glaciers and forests, the struggles of academia, and a scientist who just might also be a writer.

(University of Alberta Press, \$27.99 pb, 328 pages, with maps, b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77212-791-1, available as ebook)

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#### **NAOMI'S HOUSES**

Rosalie I. Tennison

This tender account of Tennison's parents' – especially her mother's – struggles with poverty and loss in post-war rural Manitoba is told through the lens of the homes that her mother created with love and resilience.

(Heritage House Publishing, \$26.95 pb, 288 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77203-535-3)

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#### **SAFARNAMEH: A TRAVELLER'S JOURNEY ALONG THE HIPPIE TRAIL**

Trevor Harrison

Harrison, like millions of young people from Western countries during the 1960s and 1970s, travelled overland from Turkey to India, and this book, based extensively on his written observations made at the time, tells of his journey, exploring the physical, psychological, and emotional impacts, and weaving in comments and insights from 48 interviews with people from different countries who made the same journey during the same period.

(Athabasca University Press, \$29.99 pb, 200 pages, with b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77199-437-8, available as ebook)

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## ESSAYS/LECTURES

### **BODIES OF ART, BODIES OF LABOUR**

Kate Beaton

The latest CLC Kreisel Lecture was given by award-winning Kate Beaton. In it, she explores connections among class, literature, and art, maintaining that class has a profound effect on who is allowed to become an artist and thereby who is represented in art, but also recognizing that she, from Cape Breton, came from a working class community that valued art, and that has made all of the difference. (University of Alberta Press, \$14.99 pb, 88 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-800-0, available as ebook)

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### **MY WORKS, YE MIGHTY**

Christian Bök

The most recent writer in residence at Athabasca University, Christian Bök, expands upon his conceptual poetry, in particular his ongoing project, *The Xenotext*, in this essay, addressing the concept of “scale” in poetry, and presenting alongside the essay an epic poem written especially for this publication. (Athabasca University Press, \$19.99 pb, 96 pages, with colour illustrations, ISBN: 978-1-77199-434-7, available as ebook)

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## COOKBOOKS/GUIDES

### **CRAVE: CUPCAKES, CAKES, COOKIES, AND MORE FROM AN ICONIC BAKERY**

Carolyne McIntyre Jackson and Jodi Willoughby

To celebrate the Alberta bakery’s 20th year in business, owners Carolyne and Jodi share over 70 of their favourite sweet recipes, and also include stories about the bakery’s history and people, detailed how-tos on filling and decorating, and information about stocking a pantry and key kitchen tools. (TouchWood Editions, \$45.00 hc, 272 pages, with full-colour images, ISBN: 978-1-77151-452-1, available as ebook)

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### **THE HOUSEPLANTER: YOUR GO-TO JOURNAL**

Janet Melrose and Sheryl Normandeau

The authors of the popular Guides for the Prairie Gardener series are back with this journal for keeping records of and

plans for houseplant acquisitions and maintenance. It also includes tips on plant care and facts about houseplant history, names, and folklore.

(TouchWood Editions, \$20.00 hc, 176 pages, with full-colour images, ISBN: 978-1-77151-459-0, available as ebook)

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### **JENNA RAE CAKES AT HOME: OUR FAVOURITE RECIPES TO ENJOY WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

Ashley Kosowan and Jenna Hutchinson

This second book from the celebrated Winnipeg bakery focuses on everyday baking, putting Jenna and Ashley’s spin on grab-and-go snacks, after-dinner favourites, and reimagined classics, everything from pancakes, muffins, and bread to party snacks, cookies, cakes and squares, and pies. They also include lists of staples, equipment, and tools to have on hand, helpful tips for bakers, and information about specialized skills. (Random House-PRH, \$45.00 hc, 304 pages, with full-colour images throughout, ISBN: 978-0-7352-4426-9, available as ebook)

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### **OUTSIDE IN, INSIDE OUT: UNLEASHING THE POWER OF BUSINESS STRATEGY IN TIMES OF MARKET UNCERTAINTY**

Lance Mortlock

An integrated, accessible how-to guide, this book gives business leaders – in this critical time of immense risk, uncertainty, and complexity – the tools to formulate and execute strategic plans and to be resilient, flexible, and agile. (ECW Press, \$39.95 hc, 384 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-820-2, available as ebook)

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### **111 PLACES IN WINNIPEG THAT YOU MUST NOT MISS**

Donna Janke, photographs by Gindalee Ouskun

Going beyond the usual landmarks and tourist areas of Winnipeg and the surrounding area, this guide provides the story behind, directions to, hours of operation for, and one more place related to such locations as the Cleocatra Café, Cooks Creek Grotto, North Forge FabLab, the REDress Project, and Times Change(d) High & Lonesome Club. (Emons, \$32.50 pb, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-3-7408-2080-0)

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### **STAYING ALIVE: THE GO-TO GUIDE FOR HOUSEPLANTS**

Janet Melrose and Sheryl Normandeau

This handy Q&A guide provides expert advice to ensure houseplants thrive, including information about choosing, repotting, splitting, and training plants, about the types of soil and water to use, and about how to tackle problems like insects, fungus, and general malaise. (TouchWood Editions, \$20.00 pb, 152 pages, with full-colour images, ISBN: 978-1-77151-457-6, available as ebook)

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### **WINNIPEG PLACES AND SPACES**

Winnipeg Architecture Foundation

Organized by neighbourhood, and including a variety of buildings and landscapes, from the modest to the monumental and from all time periods, this comprehensive guide was produced in conjunction with Winnipeg’s 150th anniversary. Its cover folds out into a two-sided map of the city. (Winnipeg Architecture Foundation, \$35.00 pb, 336 pages, with maps and colour photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-988321-10-3)

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## GENERAL NON-FICTION

### **AGAINST THE PEOPLE: HOW FORD NATION IS DISMANTLING ONTARIO**

Edited by Bryan Evans and Carlo Fanelli

Written by on-the-ground experts and focused on the Progressive Conservatives since coming to power in Ontario in 2018, this book provides an in-depth look into the devastating policies of the Ford government across a wide range of public policy issues – from health care, municipal, education, and judicial restructuring, to economics, arts, labour, environment, housing, and Indigenous lands. (Fernwood Publishing, \$28.00 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-724-2, available as ebook)

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### **ALICE MUNRO AND THE ART OF TIME**

Laura K. Davis

By conducting close textual analyses of a selection of Munro’s stories and collections, Davis explores how Munro challenged and reconfigured traditional assumptions about time, considering the relationship between the past and the present, material

experiences of being, story structure, memory, and memoir. (University of Alberta Press, \$32.99 pb, 320 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-801-7, available as ebook)

**BANANA CAPITAL: STORIES, SCIENCE, AND POISON AT THE EQUATOR**

Ben Brisbois

This book reveals the often grim realities of daily life for banana farmers and workers in Ecuador – alarming rates of negative health effects associated with widespread pesticide use along with precarious and unsafe working conditions – and seeks to understand and address these challenges by looking at the history of banana production and issuing an urgent call to action. (University of Regina Press, \$34.95 pb, 368 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77940-034-5, available as ebook)

**THE CANADIAN STATE**

Edited by Heather Whiteside and Stephen McBride

Paying attention to how the State exercises accumulation, legitimation, and coercion

in unique ways, this book explores the State's distinctive role in the development of a political economy shaped by capitalism and settler colonialism in chapters on land ownership, extractivism, energy, services, care work, democracy, finance, commercialization, employment, and trade and investment. (Fernwood Publishing, \$55.00 pb, 288 pages, with tables, figures, ISBN: 978-1-77363-739-6, available as ebook)

**CONFRONTING ILLIBERALISM: A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE**

Peter MacKinnon

This book examines the defining features of Canadian liberal democracy and the growing anti-liberal behaviours and developments that undermine or challenge their foundation, such as claims that are made in the name of freedom, the decline of Canadian politics, the increase of hate crimes, the persistence of inequality, and the vulnerability of Canadian institutions. (University of Toronto Press, \$24.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6115-4, available as ebook)

**COUNT D'ESTERHAZY AND THE ESTERHAZ-KAPOSVAR HUNGARIAN COLONY IN WESTERN CANADA**

Joseph G. Nagy

Among the waves of immigrants who came from Europe to Canada in the late 1800s were the Hungarian and Western Slavic settlers who founded the Esterhaz Colony, later known as the Kaposvar and Kolin districts, in southeastern Saskatchewan. This book offers insight into the area and the key figure, Count Paul O. d'Esterhazy, an immigration agent for the Canadian government, who worked tirelessly to promote immigration to these districts and to improve the lives of the people who settled there.

(FriesenPress, 356 pages, \$33.99 hc, ISBN: 978-1-03-831509-0; \$25.99 pb, ISBN: 978-1-03-831508-3; available as ebook)

**THE CULTURE BOX: MUSEUMS AS MEDIA**

Harley Parker, edited by Gary Genosko

In this critical edition of a manuscript previously thought lost, Parker applies McLuhan's medium theory and reimagines

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

**Pulling. Together.**

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museums as catalysts for cultural engagement and empathy. (University of Alberta Press, \$29.99 pb, 256 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-794-2, available as ebook)

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**DECOLONIZING PUBLIC PLACES, THE CITY PROJECT, BOOK 2**

Sadie Lavoie

Lavoie explores the history of Indigenous resistance within Winnipeg since Idle No More in 2012 and how that protest played a pivotal role in the Indigenous cultural resurgence of reclaiming space within the city. As public space is reclaimed, Lavoie discovers how this newfound inclusion is shaping relationships within Indigenous communities, as well as how this movement connects Indigenous nations with their co-existing treaty partners. (Great Plains Press, \$19.95 pb, 110 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77337-119-1)

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**DISPATCHES FROM THE THRESHOLD: TENANT POWER IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

Edited by Rae Baker and Alexander Ferrer, foreword by Samuel Stein

Bringing together activists, scholars, and legal practitioners directly involved in tenant organizing, this book contextualizes and catalogues the traction and tensions of the movement across 17 cities in five countries, connecting housing justice to struggles against criminalization, surveillance, and policing, and to debates about social reproduction, precarity, organized labour, abolitionist praxis, and political strategy. (Fernwood Publishing, \$28.00 pb, 224 pages, with map, photos, illustrations, ISBN: 978-1-77363-727-3, available as ebook)

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**ELECTIONS IN CANADA: PEOPLE, PLAYERS, AND PROCESSES**

Edited by Tamara A. Small and Royce Koop  
Drawing on a wide variety of perspectives, this book examines the intricate relationships between voter preferences, historical and legal frameworks, campaign dynamics, political figures, and media platforms to provide politics students and instructors with a comprehensive

overview of both contemporary and historical Canadian elections. (University of Toronto Press, 336 pages, \$130.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-5132-2; \$75.00 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-5134-6; available as ebook)

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**FAT AND THE BODY IN THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY: MEANINGS, MEASURES, AND REPRESENTATIONS**

Edited by Amy J. Shaw and V. Lynn Kennedy

This book examines the lively and complex 19th- and early 20th-century debates about the meaning of fat and its varied implications for health, beauty, and class status. Divided into four sections, the book addresses epistemologies, artistic and literary representations, the turn toward measurement, and the connections to imperialism and colonialism. (University of Toronto Press, \$60.00 hc, 234 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4875-5339-5, available as ebook)

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**THE FINAL SPIRE: "MYSTERY MOUNTAIN" MANIA IN THE 1930s**

Trevor Marc Hughes

In 1934, four young men from Manitoba set out to climb the highest mountain in B.C., the central spire of "Mystery Mountain," later named Mount Waddington. This book tells the story of their dream and what they did in pursuit of it. (Ronsdale Press, \$26.95 pb, 270 pages, with b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-55380-722-3, available as ebook)

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**FOUNDING FOLKS: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL**

Kevin Nikkel

Through interviews with staff, volunteers, and musicians like Bruce Cockburn and Tom Jackson, Nikkel tells the story of 50 years of the Winnipeg Folk Festival, how Mitch Podolak brought it into being, and how it has grown to become one of the most influential folk festivals in North America. Nikkel explores the relationships between politics and culture, and provides insight into the lifelong friendships that developed among some of folk music's most defining figures. (University of Manitoba Press, \$34.95 pb, 502 pages, with b/w photos throughout, ISBN: 978-1-77284-110-7, available as ebook)

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**GREAT MINDS IN DESPAIR: THE FORCED MIGRATION OF GERMAN-SPEAKING NEUROSCIENTISTS TO NORTH AMERICA, 1933 TO 1989**

Frank W. Stahnisch, foreword by Paul J. Weindling

Focusing on the years between 1933 and 1989, this book examines the long-term effects of the forced migration of hundreds of neuroscientists and biological psychiatrists from Nazi Germany and its surrounding countries in the 1930s and 1940s on the scientific and medical cultures of North America and on the researchers themselves.

(McGill-Queen's University Press, \$75.00 hc, 642 pages, with photos, tables, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2459-0, available as ebook)

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**HEAL THE BEASTS: A JAUNT THROUGH THE CURIOUS HISTORY OF THE VETERINARY ARTS**  
Philipp Schott

This entertaining and idiosyncratic history of how people have cared for animals for both emotional and practical reasons since the earliest days of the domesticated dog includes stories of all kinds of animal-human bonds, such as work, companionship, and spiritual ones. (ECW Press, \$24.95 pb, 260 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77041-783-0, available as ebook)

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**HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE INEQUITIES: A CRITICAL POLITICAL ECONOMY PERSPECTIVE**

Arnel M. Borras

Integrating document and interview data, Arnel analyzes how inequalities related to class, race, ethnicity, and gender contribute to health and health care inequities, arguing that capitalism is the fundamental driver of these inequities. (Fernwood Publishing, \$27.00 pb, 160 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-726-6, available as ebook)

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**HEALTH PROMOTING UNIVERSITIES: ADVANCING WELL-BEING THROUGH A SYSTEMS APPROACH**

Edited by Vicki Squires, Chad London, and Matt Dolf

Written by health promoting university leaders, practitioners, and scholars, this book presents approaches and strategies to advance health and well-being on higher education campuses and beyond, goals that are especially relevant in today's challenges of climate change, systemic

racism, and the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.  
(University of Toronto Press, 288 pages, \$85.00 hc, ISBN: 978-104875-4676-2; \$32.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-4788-2; available as ebook)

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**HOCKEY ON THE MOON: IMAGINATION AND CANADA'S GAME**

Jamie Dopp

Dopp analyzes key texts of hockey literature – like Stompin' Tom Connors's "The Hockey Song," Scott Young's *Scrubs on Skates* trilogy, Roch Carrier's *The Hockey Sweater*, Bill Gaston's *The Good Body*, Cara Hedley's *Twenty Miles*, and Richard Wagamese's *Indian Horse* – to examine how they reveal the imaginative possibilities of the game.  
(Athabasca University Press, \$29.99 pb, 330 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77199-413-2, available as ebook)

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**IN SEARCH OF A MENNONITE IMAGINATION: KEY TEXTS IN MENNONITE LITERARY CRITICISM**

Edited by Robert Zacharias

This anthology of the most important critical essays from 150 years of writing about Mennonite literature in North America includes a detailed introduction to the book by the editor, as well as an incisive introduction and bibliography for each essay.  
(CMU Press, \$50.00 hc, 800 pages, ISBN: 978-1-987986-23-5)

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**IN THE LIGHT OF DAWN: THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF A BLACK CANADIAN COMMUNITY**

Marie Carter, foreword by Dr. Afua Cooper  
Carter, a lifelong resident of the area, challenges the prevailing story of the Dawn Settlement, arguing that rather than an example of a "failed" Black utopia at the end of the Underground Railway, it has been throughout its 200-year-history and continues to be a vibrant community of racial and economic diversity, whose people not only resisted slavery and oppression but also made successful and lasting contributions to the growth of local communities and the wider society.  
(University of Regina Press, \$36.95 pb, 368 pages, with maps, b/w photos, ISBN: 978-1-77940-046-8, available as ebook)

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**INTERRUPTING INNOVATION: CENTRING THE SOCIAL**

Edited by Melanie Panitch, Samantha Wehbi, and Jessica Pimentel Machado  
Leading scholars and practitioners from social work, psychology, sociology, natural sciences, art making, and community practice showcase the countless ways educators, activists, students, artists, and change-makers of all kinds are creating the conditions for meaningful social transformation.  
(Fernwood Publishing, \$29.00 pb, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-729-7, available as ebook)

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**THE JESUIT RELATIONS: A BIOGRAPHY**  
Micah True

True tells the story of the *Jesuit Relations* – a series of annual reports produced between 1632 and 1673 detailing the experiences of missionaries in New France – demonstrating that they were not crafted solely by Jesuit missionaries, but by diverse contributors, including Indigenous people, nuns, lay settlers, editors in Paris, and readers in France, and explaining contextual factors such as the Jesuit epistolary tradition, the shipping schedule, and the Parisian book trade.  
(McGill-Queen's University Press, 312 pages, \$110.00 hc, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2463-7; \$44.95 pb, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2464-4; available as ebook)

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**KNOWLEDGE, POWER, AND MIGRATION: CONTESTING THE NORTH/SOUTH DIVIDE**

Edited by Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Mireille Paquet, and Ethel Tungohan  
This book challenges global inequalities in immigration research – academics from the Global North and wealthier countries produce most of it, while research from Global South scholars is largely dismissed – by assembling researchers from across the divide to generate important findings for policy makers, immigrant-serving organizations, and migrant advocates.  
(McGill-Queen's University Press, \$42.95 pb, 416 pages, with tables, diagrams, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2465-1, available as ebook)

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**LOST SONGS OF NATURE: NATURE'S SYMPHONY IN THE AGE OF NOISE POLLUTION**

Michel Leboeuf, translated by Jennifer Strachan  
Both an invitation to listen and a plea to save the sounds of nature, this book

explains what sound is, looks at three main sources – nature, living organisms, and human beings – and explores specifically the soundscapes of birds, animals, and plants, especially trees, throughout the seasons, inspiring great appreciation and concern in readers.  
(Great Plains Press, \$28.95 pb, 216 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77337-135-1)

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**NO PLACE LIKE HOME: ENEMY ALIEN INTERNMENT IN CANADA DURING THE GREAT WAR**

Bohdan S. Kordan

This book chronicles a little-known episode in Canada's history – the first use of internment during the First World War under the War Measures Act – showing how internment as an instrument of security policy and a political choice altered the lives of thousands of innocent people.  
(McGill-Queen's University Press, \$24.95 pb, 200 pages, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2467-5, available as ebook)

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**THE PRACTICE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN CANADA**

Bob Barnetson and Jason Foster

This introductory human resource management textbook covers topics such as law, workflow, recruitment, and training, helping students understand, anticipate, and respond to how power, profit, and intersectionality shape the practice of human resource management.  
(Athabasca University Press, \$39.99 pb, 402 pages, with figures, tables, ISBN: 978-1-77199-425-5, available as ebook)

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**PRAIRIE JUSTICE: THE HANGING OF MIKE HACK**

Wayne Sumner

Sumner examines the true story of the 1928 murder of George Edey in Saskatchewan and the swift arrest and conviction of Mike Hack, a deaf farmhand with a mental disability, and through this examination highlights themes of injustice and systemic flaws in the Canadian criminal justice system.  
(University of Toronto Press, \$60.00 hc, 158 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6178-9, available as ebook)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38

**PSYCHEDELIC CAPITALISM**

Jamie Brownlee and Kevin Walby

Psychedelics are enjoying a newfound appeal, said to remedy individual mental health issues and bring about social change, but this book offers a critical view of this so-called renaissance, locating it in the context of corporate capture, medicalization, and the war on drugs, and revealing concerns with how it is entrenching systems of inequality, limiting access and affordability, and increasing the reach of surveillance and criminalization.

(Fernwood Publishing, \$35.00 pb, 342 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-731-0, available as ebook)

**THE PUBLIC SERVANT'S GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT IN CANADA, 2ND EDITION**

Alex Marland and Jared J. Wesley

Written for university students, early-career public servants, and those shifting into government from other sectors, this concise book aims to help them navigate the intersecting worlds of politics, public administration, and public policy in Canada. Each chapter of this new edition includes practical tips and key takeaways.

(University of Toronto Press, \$26.95 pb, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6084-3, available as ebook)

**RED FLAGS: A RECKONING WITH COMMUNISM FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LEFT**

David Camfield

Accessible and vibrant, this book is a synthesis of the history of communism from the 1917 Russian Revolution to the construction of the world's first "actually existing socialist" society, the USSR, and other similar societies in China and Cuba, arguing that they were not moving toward communism because workers were still being exploited, so they were not the alternative to capitalism that people need.

(Fernwood Publishing, \$29.00 pb, 192 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-732-7, available as ebook)

**RELIGIOUS INVENTIONS: ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN PRACTICE AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION**

Edited by William Arnal and Erin K. Vearncombe

Looking at the material and social circumstances behind the production

of written religious artifacts, this book asks how modern conceptions of religion can shed light on the relics of ancient Mediterranean Jews and Christians.

(McGill-Queen's University Press, 432 pages, with photos, tables, \$110.00 hc, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2445-3; \$42.95 pb, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2446-0; available as ebook)

**RETHINKING FEMINIST HISTORY AND THEORY: ESSAYS ON GENDER, CLASS, AND LABOUR**

Edited by Lisa Pasolli and Julia Smith

Bringing together essays by international and interdisciplinary academics, this collection explores how feminism has influenced the connected histories of gender, class, race, labour, and colonialism, showcasing the ongoing relevance and adaptability of feminist perspectives.

(University of Toronto Press, 352 pages, \$85.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-0846-3; \$36.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-2589-7; available as ebook)

**SECULARISM, RACE, AND THE POLITICS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA**

Edited by Sharmin Sadeque

The contributors to this book call attention to the ways secularism is embedded in and drives the disciplinary institutions of the State – such as law, political groups, government entities, and bureaucracies – to produce, enable, normalize, and authorize racism and the racialization of Muslims and Islam.

(University of Alberta Press, \$32.99 pb, 272 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77212-792-8, available as ebook)

**SETTLER: IDENTITY AND COLONIALISM, 2ND EDITION**

Edited by Emma Bartell Lowman and Adam J. Baker

In this revised edition of the defining book that explained what it meant to be a Settler, the authors reflect on the term's changing, more nuanced, and continued importance, and considers the successes and failures of Settler Canadians in supporting decolonization and charting next steps toward transformative change.

(Fernwood Publishing, \$26.00 pb, 224 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-734-1, available as ebook)

**STANDING UP TO BIG NICKEL: THE STORY OF THE MINE, MILL, AND SMELTER WORKERS STRIKE, 1958**

Elizabeth Quinlan

This comprehensive portrait of the pivotal 1958 strike by the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers in Sudbury, Ontario, traces the events before, during, and after the strike, and features retrospective accounts by surviving union members, leaders, family, and community members, and biographical sketches and scenes based on archival and documentary data.

(McGill-Queen's University Press, \$34.95 pb, 248 pages, ISBN: 978-0-2280-2480-4, available as ebook)

**THINKING SYSTEMATICS: CRITICAL-DIALECTICAL REASONING FOR A PERILOUS AGE AND A CASE FOR SOCIALISM**

Murray E. G. Smith and Tim Hayslip

Smith and Hayslip make a compelling argument that individual thinking and collective decision-making are being systematically constrained within limits imposed by outmoded forms of cognition and the determination of privileged elites to perpetuate an unsustainable status quo. The dialectical reasoning advocated in this book aims to overcome those limits and allow a more profound understanding of the human condition in the 21st century.

(Fernwood Publishing, \$38.00 pb, 376 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77363-693-1, available as ebook)

**TOMMY DOUGLAS AND THE QUEST FOR MEDICARE IN CANADA**

Gregory P. Marchildon

Drawing on archival sources including speeches, television broadcasts, and cabinet documents, this book explores the history of universal health care through the life of Canadian politician Tommy Douglas, identifying the pivotal moments and decisions that led to the establishment of Medicare in Canada.

(University of Toronto Press, 640 pages, \$120.00 hc, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6044-7; \$49.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-4875-6043-0; available as ebook)

## Double feature: Mystery where a cat runs the show, and a history of humanity's relationship to water

*Nelson's two spring releases revisit beloved characters and draw from real-world classroom discussions*

by Amanda Sanders

### MYSTERY AT THE BILTMORE #2:

#### *The Classified Catnapping*

Colleen Nelson

Illustrated by Peggy Collins

Pajama Press

\$22.95 hc, 136 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77278-336-0

### MAKING A SPLASH:

#### *How Humans Consume, Control and Care for Water*

Colleen Nelson

Illustrated by Sophie Dubé

Orca Book Publishers

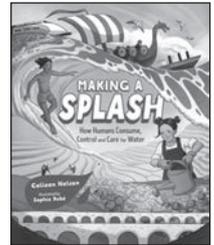
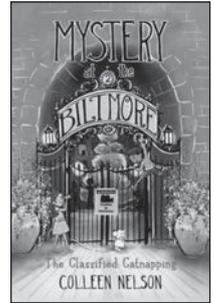
\$29.95 hc, 96 pages

ISBN: 978-1-4598-3869-7

Available as an ebook



Colleen Nelson



“She’s very similar in nature to my dog, Rosie, who is also a Westie,” says Nelson. “They have the right personality to be helpful to a detective. Good sense of smell, curious, and determined.”

The Biltmore, a 100-year-old building in New York City, is filled with quite the cast of characters, creating new and interesting people for Elodie to meet and interview.

“In this book, there is everything from a young socialite to a Broadway producer to a pet nanny. It’s New York, so the sky’s the limit!” she says.

*Making a Splash: How Humans Consume, Control and Care for Water* is Nelson’s third non-fiction title. Colourfully illustrated by Sophie Dubé, and filled with photos selected by Nelson, this book gives middle schoolers everything they need to know about the history of humanity’s relationship with water.

Nelson takes care to balance the good and the not-so-good impacts of humans on water. She examines global warming, pollution, and water inequity, but also features conservation projects, sustainable technology, and stories of water protectors.

“I wanted to make sure [the book] gave hope and profiled people and projects that are making a difference and helping the world’s water,” she says.

The book started where Nelson hopes it will have a place in the end: In the classroom. “This book began when my teacher partner and I started an inquiry project asking the students to convince us what has had a bigger impact: humans on water or water on humans,” she says.

“The class discussions were rich, and I could see that it had the right elements to become a book.”

Nelson sees a need for engaging non-fiction for this age group.

“There are a lot of books about water, but this one hits differently,” she explains. “It asks a question and invites readers to make their own decision once they are armed with information from the book.

“Water is literally why we are here and the most important resource for humans. We can’t survive without it. Yet, we treat it so poorly.” 🌿

Colleen Nelson, a middle school teacher in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is releasing two titles for middle years readers this spring: *Mystery at the Biltmore #2: The Classified Catnapping*, and *Making a Splash: How Humans Consume, Control and Care for Water*, a non-fiction book about water use and conservation.

*The Classified Catnapping* returns to the Upper West Side apartment where Elodie LaRue lives and operates a detective agency with her friend Oliver and dog Carnegie.

A murder mystery movie is being filmed in the courtyard of The Biltmore, and a mystery arrives at Elodie’s door – The Biltmore’s famed cat Bijou, who is starring in the movie, is missing!

Bijou, who was left a fortune by her deceased owner, was inspired by Choupette, designer Karl Lagerfeld’s cat, who, it was rumoured, inherited his fortune when he died.

“It was a lot of fun creating a world where a cat runs the show,” says Nelson. “She’s a celebrity with her own staff, so when she goes missing, it has to be kept under wraps, which makes solving the crime even harder for Elodie.”

The other character directly inspired by someone in real life is Elodie’s West Highland white terrier, Carnegie.

# Evil lives in the ‘least likely, most surprising of places’ in middle-years fantasy that centres on trees

*Hughes upends gender expectations of stories’ villains with fearsome Mother Dear*

by Laura McKay

## IN THE FORESTS OF THE NIGHT

**Alison Hughes**

DCB-Cormorant Books

\$14.95 pb, 212 pages

ISBN: 978-1-77086-785-7

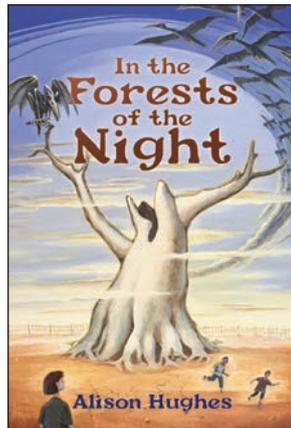
A subversive villain and a love of trees come together to create an unsettling read in Edmonton-based Alison Hughes’s new novel, *In the Forests of the Night*, her first foray into the fantasy genre.

While the novel is written as a standalone, a few unresolved threads suggest the possibility of more adventures to come in a future sequel. The award-winning author of more than 20 books for children and young adults, Hughes drew on her extensive experience with middle years readers in crafting this novel.

“I think there’s sometimes a difference between what adults expect in content for middle grade readers, and what the kids themselves expect. Many of them are sophisticated readers (and gamers) who embrace grim and gripping storylines,” she explains. “[This book] is for those kids looking for an urgent, high-stakes, life-or-death kind of story.”

Written for ages nine to 12, *In the Forests of the Night* follows the adventures of 12-year-old Ellis, an orphan in a world where blight has killed almost all of the trees, leaving behind an arid wasteland.

When Ellis is put in charge of Pip, the orphanage’s silent new arrival, they and their connection to a “Ghost Tree” in the schoolyard capture the interest of Mother Dear, a scientific genius eager to both dominate and destroy the natural world.



One of the most interesting elements of the story is the character Mother Dear – an unpredictable villain that turns reader expectations on their head.

“I wanted to root evil in the least likely, most surprising of places,” says Hughes. “Enter Mother Dear, whose fearsome reputation precedes her, but who turns out to be an innocuous, ordinary, stretchy-pants-wearing, middle-aged woman (but also an evil, brilliant, twisted, megalomaniac scientist-villain).”



Alison Hughes

Gender was also an important consideration for Hughes’s villain. “Most villains [in stories] tend to be male, and that was something else I wanted to upend,” she explains.

“And with a female villain, particularly one with a god-like complex of forging a new world based on her own creations, it seemed really interesting to add a mother element as well, one that warps the idea of maternal nurture and care into one of brutality and power.”

Humanity’s relationship to nature – both nurturing and destructive – are central to the story’s themes, with a particular focus on the perspective of trees.

“I wanted to try to get outside of human-centred ways of looking at the world,” says Hughes. “Trees were a great symbol of nature’s long view, its cycles of growth and regeneration.”

A source of comfort, strength, and even direct assistance throughout the story, trees are at the centre of the world’s magic system – and its mysteries.

“I chose to write about the sanctuary that nature provides because that’s how I experience nature,” Hughes explains.

“Nothing could make me happier than if a child reader looked at a tree a little differently because of reading this book.” 🌿

## MORE YOUNG ADULT & CHILDREN TITLES

### PICTURE BOOKS

#### *INS AND OUTS*

Elizabeth Withey, illustrated by Salini Perera

Using only the words *in* and *out* together with warm and colourful illustrations, this book presents various scenarios – a person smuggled in bed, another outside gardening – that move from simple to playful and subtle to demonstrate the concepts of “in” and “out.”

(Orca Book Publishers, \$21.95 hc, 32 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-3835-2, available as ebook)

#### *THE LAKE IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN*

Neil Sawatzky, illustrated by Julio Salazar  
Readers explore the sights and seasons around Wascana Lake, the centrepiece of Saskatchewan’s capital city, Regina, in rhyming couplets, vibrant illustrations, and informational sidebars, in this updated 20th anniversary edition of the delightful picture book.

(Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing, \$24.95 hc, 36 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77869-040-2)

#### *A LITTLE CAMPER LOVE*

Rayna Meakin

This whimsical love letter to vintage 1968 to 1988 fibreglass campers – brands like Boler, Scamp, Surfside, and Trillium – portrays various kinds of birds naming and complimenting the different models of campers, spreading affirmations and positivity on every page.

(Heritage House Publishing, 64 pages, \$26.95 hc, ISBN: 978-1-77203-527-8; \$16.95 pb, ISBN: 978-1-77203-541-4)

#### *UNNATURALLY BLUE*

Dorson Plourde, illustrated by Byron Eggenschwiler

A girl who used to swim in pattern formations feels like there’s no room in the pool for her kind of blue – there isn’t any room for tears. She swims down to the bottom and uncorks the plug, and plunges into the deep, where there is room for blue, and for much more.

(Kids Can Press, \$23.99 hc, 48 pages, ISBN: 978-1-5253-1133-8, available as ebook)

## EARLY YEARS CHAPTER BOOKS

#### *LARK WRAPS IT UP, LARK BA DETECTIVE SERIES*

Natasha Dean, illustrated by Marcus Cutler  
Lark and her (younger) twin brother Connor are again called upon to solve a mystery – this time Miss June’s carefully crafted quilt has been stolen off of her clothesline, just hours before the quilt show. With help from their friends and a careful examination of the clues, will they be able to find the quilt in time?

(Orca Book Publishers, \$8.95 pb, 96 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-3878-9, available as ebook)

#### *WHERE’S JOHNNY? THE TALE OF A LOST CAT*

Lori Burton, illustrated by Wendi Nordell  
Based on a true story, this chapter book tells of Johnny, a large Maine Coon cat, who gets lost in a Prairie city for two years. Told from Johnny’s point of view, the book explores themes of loneliness, survival, and belonging.

(Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing, \$19.95 pb, 48 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77869-041-9)

### MIDDLE YEARS FICTION

#### *RHAPSODY SMITH: ICE ANGEL*

Lorna Schultz Nicholson

In this fast-paced novel, hockey action meets mystery. Rap, her hockey teammates, her grandmother, and her best friend Alex set out to uncover the mystery of who Marion – an older woman who knows hockey, but has a very selective memory – is, where she got a 1990 Women’s World Hockey Championship ring, and who stole it from her.

(Yellow Dog-Great Plains Press, \$18.95 pb, 208 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77337-130-6)

#### *TODAY I AM: 10 STORIES OF BELONGING*

Edited by Jael Richardson

A collection of short fiction, poetry, and graphic fiction by award-winning BIPOC authors from across Canada, such as Marty Chan, Angela Misri, Danny Ramadan, and Brandon Wint, this book explores the theme and concept of home, from awkward family dinners, to life on the rez, to moving to a new town.

(Scholastic Canada, \$16.99 pb, 240 pages, ISBN: 978-1-44319-235-4, available as ebook)

## MIDDLE YEARS NON-FICTION

#### *GAME CHANGERS: STORIES OF HIJABI ATHLETES FROM AROUND THE WORLD*

Charlene Smith, illustrated by Natalya Tariq

This illustrated non-fiction anthology features the stories of 13 inspiring hijabi athletes from around the world – Egyptian beach volleyball player Doaa Elghobashy, Pakistani weightlifter Kulsoom Abdullah, and Iranian triathlete Shirin Gerami, to name a few. The book also includes a list of more hijabi athletes, brief appendices on wearing the hijab and the requirements of modest sportswear, a glossary, and a list of resources.

(Orca Book Publishers, \$24.95 hc, 80 pages, ISBN: 978-1-4598-3805-5, available as ebook)

#### *A TIME OF LEGENDS: THE STORY OF TWO FEARLESS WOLVES – AND ONE REBEL, CHRONICLES OF THE YELLOWSTONE WOLVES, BOOK 2*

Rick McIntyre and David A. Paulsen

Wolf 21 has become one of Yellowstone’s most famous wolves – leader of the Druid pack, he’s brave, kind, and committed to his mate, Wolf 42, who is equally impressive. But Wolf 302 is cut from a different cloth – he avoids fights, naps during conflicts, and begs for food instead of hunting. Will he grow out of his immature ways in time to become an alpha like the greats who came before him?

(Greystone Kids, \$24.95 hc, 128 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77840-193-0, available as ebook)

### YA FICTION

#### *ODYSSEY, FRACTURED KINGDOM, BOOK 2*

M. L. Fergus

In this sequel to *Prophecy*, Persephone and Azriel must follow through on a shocking truth that has come to light, one that will change everything for the entire kingdom forever. But the evil Regent Mordesius wants this truth – and the young couple – buried, and only agrees to their release on the condition that they find the mythical healing pool for him. They set out on a journey to the farthest corners of the kingdom, but will they survive the ensuing battles with men and beasts?

(Tundra Books-PRH, \$18.99 pb, 408 pages, ISBN: 978-1-77488-609-0, available as audiobook and ebook)

## Raconter en rimes : une façon motivante d'écrire

*Le dernier « Grand-maman raconte » valorise l'esprit et les traditions franco-manitobaines du Festival du Voyageur*

par Katryne Parvais-Dion

### GRAND-MAMAN RACONTE AU FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR

Diane Freynet Therrien

Illustrations de Francesca Da Sacco

Les Éditions des Plaines

14,95 \$ papier, 32 pages

ISBN : 978-2-89611-907-3

**P**our Diane Therrien Freynet, raconter des histoires a toujours fait partie de sa vie. Alors qu'elle grandissait dans des communautés rurales manitobaines, elle aimait lire et écrire et a développé un véritable penchant pour les rimes, qu'elle récitait souvent à ses jeunes neveux et nièces.

Elle explique : « Parce qu'il n'en existait pas beaucoup [de rimes] au Manitoba français à l'époque, les enfants me demandaient de traduire ces rimes [anglais], alors je les interprétais en français. J'ai adopté la même pratique avec mes petits-enfants. »

La passion de Freynet pour les rimes l'a finalement dirigée à la création de la série d'albums jeunesse « Grand-maman raconte ». Elle célèbre le festival d'hiver emblématique du Manitoba dans son nouveau livre, *Grand-maman raconte au Festival du Voyageur*, qui est surgi de la connexion qu'elle a entretenue toute sa vie avec le Festival en tant que participante et bénévole dévouée.

« Le thème du Festival prend une place importante dans la culture des Franco-Manitobains », dit-elle, « et c'est par l'entremise de cet album que j'ai voulu raconter d'où viennent et ce que représentent les Canadiens français de l'Ouest, en particulier du Manitoba. »

Ses vers incarnent avec imagination l'esprit et les traditions du Festival du Voyageur, entremêlant des illustrations vivantes de divers plats, événements, concours et expositions du Festival, tels que la

## Rhyming: A Motivating Way to Write

*Grand-maman raconte's latest album showcases the Franco-Manitoban spirit and traditions of the Festival du Voyageur*

by Katryne Parvais-Dion

### GRAND-MAMAN RACONTE AU FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR

Diane Freynet Therrien

Illustrated by Francesca Da Sacco

Les Éditions des Plaines

\$14.95 pb, 32 pages

ISBN: 978-2-89611-907-3

**F**or Diane Therrien Freynet, storytelling has always been a part of her life. Growing up in rural Manitoba, she loved reading and writing and developed a real penchant for rhyming, often reciting to her younger nieces and nephews.

“As there weren't many French rhymes in Manitoba at the time, the children would ask me to translate these [English] rhymes, so I would interpret them in French. I adopted the same practice with my grandchildren,” she says.

Freynet's passion for rhyme eventually led to the creation of the “Grand-maman raconte” series of picture books. She celebrates Manitoba's iconic winter festival in her latest, *Grand-maman raconte au Festival du Voyageur*, which arose from her lifelong connection to the Festival as a devoted attendee and volunteer.

“The Festival theme is an important part of Franco-Manitoban culture,” she says, “and through this picture book, I wanted to tell the story of where French-Canadians from the West, and Manitoba in particular, come from and what they represent.”

Her verses imaginatively encapsulate the spirit and traditions of the Festival du Voyageur, interweaving lively illustrations of various festival foods, events, contests,



soupe aux pois, le concours du barbu et les sculptures de neige.

« Cet évènement annuel fait partie de notre vie, de notre culture et des festivités que nous vivons », déclare-t-elle. « HÉ HO! »

De nombreux contes s'inspirent de situations réelles. Pour l'une des histoires mettant en scène un renard malicieux, Freynet s'est inspirée à la fois de l'observation d'un « chien rouge » par son arrière-petite-fille et de la rencontre de sa petite-fille avec un renard voleur qui s'était emparé de son téléphone cellulaire. Ces anecdotes, ainsi que d'autres, sont à l'origine de la narration rythmique et captivante qui caractérise ses œuvres.

La rime est au cœur du processus d'écriture de Freynet. « Ça me fascine tout simplement, et j'aime l'idée de travailler un peu plus fort pour arriver à bonne fin des histoires », dit-elle. « C'est un défi qui me passionne et qui me motive dans mon écriture. »

Les illustrations vibrantes apportent une grande énergie aux histoires que Freynet raconte. Pour la première fois, elle a collaboré avec l'artiste Francesca Da Sacco, qui avait déjà illustré des ouvrages pour la maison d'édition.

Freynet a soigneusement guidé le processus, en fournissant des descriptions détaillées et des photos de référence pour façonner les images. « Je lui ai expliqué en détail ce que je recherchais pour chacun des contes, ce qu'elle a transformé en dessins magnifiques dans ce nouvel album. »

Le travail de Freynet consiste essentiellement à inspirer les jeunes lecteurs. *Grand-maman raconte au Festival du Voyageur* invite les enfants à célébrer les riches traditions de la communauté franco-manitobaine et à encourager la créativité.

Le message qu'elle leur adresse est simple : « N'ayez pas peur de vous servir de votre imagination et d'être passionnés pour la lecture. Toute personne possède une bonne imagination – il suffit de s'en servir. »



Diane Freynet  
Therrien

and displays, such as pea soup, the beard-growing contest, and the snow sculptures.

“This annual event is part of our lives, our culture, and the festivities we experience,” she states. “HÉ HO!”

Many tales are inspired by real-life experiences. For one of the stories featuring a mischievous fox, Freynet drew upon both her great-granddaughter spotting a “red dog” and her granddaughter’s encounter with a thieving fox snatching her cell phone. These and other whimsical anecdotes create the engaging, rhythmic storytelling that defines her work.

Rhyme is central to Freynet’s writing process. “It fascinates me, and I like the idea of working a little harder to get stories right,” she says. “It’s a challenge that excites and motivates me in my writing.”

The vibrant illustrations bring great energy to the stories Freynet tells. For the first time, she collaborated with artist Francesca Da Sacco, who had previously illustrated for the publisher.

Freynet carefully guided the process, providing detailed descriptions and reference photos to shape the images. “I explained in detail what I was looking for in each tale, which she ended up transforming into magnificent drawings in this new book.”

At its heart, Freynet’s work is about inspiring young readers. *Grand-maman raconte au Festival du Voyageur* invites children to celebrate the rich traditions of the Franco-Manitoban community and embrace creativity.

Her message to them is simple: “Use your imagination and be passionate about reading. Everyone has a good imagination – you just have to use it.”

## VIENNENT DE PARAITRE EN FRANÇAIS

### DANS LA COUR DES GRANDS : LE PARCOURS D'UN AUDACIEUX

Roger Turenne

Ces mémoires d'un audacieux, originaire d'un petit village francophone du Manitoba, qui a osé jouer dans la cour des grands, s'échelonnent sur huit décennies et trois continents. L'auteur raconte son cheminement en tant que personne engagée qui a mis son sens de l'intérêt public au service des autres. This memoir of a bold man, originally from a small

French-speaking village in Manitoba, who dared to play in the big leagues, spans eight decades and three continents. The author recounts his journey as a committed person who put his sense of public interest at the service of others. (Éditions du Blé, mémoires, 32,95 \$ papier, 512 pages, ISBN : 978-2-925452-12-6, disponible en livre numérique)

### MAURICE L'ORIGINAL ET SON AVENTURE HIVERNALE

Sophie Gareau-Brennan,  
illustrations de Roger Garcia

C'est hiver. Dans la grande forêt boréale, il fait froid. Venez découvrir Maurice, un

jeune orignal pas comme les autres. It's winter. In the great boreal forest, it's cold. Meet Maurice, a young moose unlike any other.

(La nouvelle plume, album jeunesse, 14,95 \$ papier, 44 pages, ISBN : 978-2-925329-14-5, disponible en livre numérique)

### LOUIS RIEL, PATRIOTE

Robert Freynet

Freynet met en scène le drame tragique de la vie du controversé chef métis Louis Riel, fondateur de la province du Manitoba et l'un des Pères de la Confédération

CONTINUED ON PAGE 45

## La collection déambule d'un repère à l'autre alors que Seream célèbre « 30 ans d'agitation poétique »

*Des poèmes courts et longs, des lieux à leur cœur, conjugués au présent*

par Liz Katynski

### GÉOGRAPHIES DU PRÉSENT

Seream

Éditions du Blé

21,95 \$ papier, 82 pages

ISBN : 978-2-925452-10-2

Disponible en livre numérique

**L**e buste d'un personnage historique. La rue qui, pour une écrivaine, a menée au grand succès. Un pont.

Ce ne sont que quelques repères qui se retrouvent dans *Géographies du présent*, la nouvelle collection de poèmes du poète, poète slammeur, chanteur, acteur et peintre, Seream.

« J'ai besoin de repères, car je me perds facilement », dit l'auteur.

Seream c'est le nom de scène et de plume en France de Sébastien Gaillard, établi au Manitoba depuis 2018.

« Cette année, je célèbre 30 ans d'agitation poétique. Le fait d'inspirer le matin, la première inspiration de l'air extérieur. Je guette. À l'affût. Parfois, ça marche. D'autres fois, ça loupe », dit-il.

« Je veux communiquer tout ce qui me passe par la tête, une proximité anodine. »

Il décrit son livre comme suit : « Un recueil de poèmes, des courts, des longs, un très long, en quatre géographies différentes, conjugués au présent. »

Dans ses poèmes, un poète immigrant, explorateur des champs poétiques, découvre Winnipeg et le Manitoba. À travers ses créations et ses ateliers d'expression orale et écrite, il œuvre sans relâche à placer la poésie au cœur de nos vies.

## Collection wanders through landmarks as Seream celebrates '30 years of poetic agitation'

*Working in the present tense, short and long poems have place at their heart*

by Liz Katynski

### GÉOGRAPHIES DU PRÉSENT

Seream

Éditions du Blé

\$21.95 pb, 82 pages

ISBN: 978-2-925452-10-2

Available as an ebook

**T**he bust of a historical figure. The street that led a local writer to great success. A bridge.

These are just some of the landmarks that appear in *Géographies du présent*, the latest collection of French poems by poet, slam poet, singer, actor, and painter Seream.

“Landmarks are important to me. I need them because I easily get lost,” says the author.

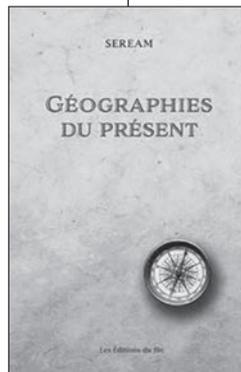
Seream is both the pen name and the stage name of Sébastien Gaillard. He used it in France well before he moved to Manitoba in 2018.

“This year, I am celebrating 30 years of poetic agitation. Taking my first breath in the morning, my first breath of fresh air, I am inspired. I watch for the right moment. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it misses,” he says.

“I want to share everything that comes to mind, at a harmless closeness.”

He describes his book as “a collection of poems, some short, some long, one very long, in four different geographies, in the present tense.”

In these poems, a migrant poet explores poetic fields and discovers Winnipeg and Manitoba. Through his poetry and his writing and spoken workshops, Seream continues to work at placing poetry at the heart of people's lives.



Parmi les poèmes, on trouve une lettre d'amour avec 94 *cons* – 94 lignes commençant avec *con*.

Dans le poème « Pont Provencher », il fait une comparaison entre la France et Saint-Boniface : « sous le pont Mirabeau (à Paris) coule la Seine (du poète français Apollinaire), sous le Pont Provencher (à Saint-Boniface) coule la Rouge. »

Le poème « Le jardin des sculptures » lui présente Georges Forest, un activiste francophone avec son buste dans le Parc Provencher.

Scream s'interroge sur la rue Deschambault, la rue où a grandi l'auteure Gabrielle Roy, et le titre d'un de ses livres fameux. « Cette rue l'a menée au bout du monde », il écrit. Aussi, il est le directeur du musée dans sa maison d'enfance, la Maison Gabrielle-Roy.

« Diriger une bâtisse patrimoniale et suivre sa programmation culturelle demande beaucoup d'énergie », dit-il. « C'est une mission passionnante. »

L'été dernier, il a joué le rôle du père de Gabrielle dans les tournées de la maison.

« J'ai interprété Léon dans le cadre d'un monologue théâtral écrit pour être joué dans la maison. Dix-sept représentations de juin à août 2024. Ce fut un beau succès. J'ai eu beaucoup de plaisir à partager ce beau texte de Suzanne Kennelly avec le public. »

Scream espère que bien des gens liront son livre. « Des aventuriers, des acrobates, des jongleurs, des équilibristes, des contorsionnistes, et j'en oublie. »

Il les invite à en retirer « l'agréable souvenir d'une odeur de jasmin au jardin ». 🌿



Scream

Among the poems is a love letter with 94 *cons* – 94 lines that begin with *con*.

In the poem “Pont Provencher,” he compares France and St. Boniface, noting how the Seine River runs under the Mirabeau Bridge in Paris (quoting French poet Apollinaire), and the Red River runs under the Provencher Bridge in St. Boniface.

“Le jardin des sculptures” puts him on a first-name basis with Georges Forest, the French language rights activist who is honoured with a bust in Provencher Park.

Scream reflects on Rue Deschambault, the street where Gabrielle Roy grew up, and the title of one of her great books. This street led her to the ends of the earth, he writes. Coincidentally, he also works at the museum that was once her childhood home, Maison Gabrielle-Roy.

“Serving as director of this heritage building and following its cultural programming takes a lot of energy,” he says. “It is a passionate mission.”

Last summer, he gave tours as Gabrielle’s father, Léon.

“I played Léon in a one-man play written to be performed in the house. We did 17 performances from June to August. It was a great success. I really enjoyed sharing this work by Suzanne Kennelly with the public.”

Scream hopes many people will read his book. “Adventurers, acrobats, tightrope walkers, contortionists, and I am sure I forgot a few.”

He invites them to share his moments of inspiration like “the sweet memory of the scent of jasmine in the garden.” 🌿

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

canadienne. L'intrigue et l'émotion sont au rendez-vous dans ce récit concis et authentique situé au 19<sup>e</sup> siècle – un homme se tient debout, un peuple se rallie, un pays est forgé. Freynet depicts the tragic drama of the life of the controversial Métis leader Louis Riel, founder of the province of Manitoba and one of the Canadian Fathers of Confederation. Intrigue and emotion are present in this concise and authentic story set in the 19th century – a man stands, a people rallies, a country is forged. (Vidacom Publications, bande dessinée, 29,95 \$ papier, 78 pages, ISBN : 978-1-988182-93-3)

#### LE MUSÉE DES OBJETS PERDUS

Lyne Gareau

La pièce met en scène deux Québécois dans une chambre d'hôtel de Vancouver pour le moins inhabituelle. Leur drame? La perte d'un parapluie. La pièce invite à réfléchir au sens de la perte, en juxtaposant des moments d'éblouissement avec le sentiment doux-amer que tout s'effacera. This play features two Quebecers in a rather unusual Vancouver hotel room. Their tragedy? A lost umbrella. It invites audiences to reflect on the meaning of loss, juxtaposing moments of dazzlement with the bittersweet feeling that everything will be erased.

(La nouvelle plume, théâtre, 20,00 \$ papier, 74 pages, ISBN : 978-2-925329-12-1)

#### UN PETIT MONDE : RÉCITS ET ANECDOTES DE LA CÔTE-DE-BEAUPRÉ

Éric Galarneau

Dans ce recueil de neuf récits autonomes, Galarneau se remémore la Côte-de-Beaupré des années 1970 et ses personnages, en particulier ses malfrats et ses artistes, et leurs mésaventures. Le recueil met en lumière la Côte-de-Beaupré et les gens qui y ont vécu et qui y vivent encore. In this collection of nine short stories, Galarneau looks back on the Côte-de-Beaupré of the 1970s and its characters, in particular its crooks and artists, and their misadventures. The collection highlights the Côte-de-Beaupré and the people who have lived and who still live there. (Éditions du Blé, nouvelles, 22,95 \$ papier, 188 pages, ISBN : 978-2-925452-14-0, disponible en livre numérique)

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## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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**JUDE DESROSIERS RUDOLPH** is a 7-year-old Michif and European-Canadian (French, Ukrainian, British) kid who loves reading, writing, drawing, and making music!

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**MARGARET ANNE FEHR** is a freelance writer and editor who moved from Winnipeg to Milton, Ont., where she operates her writing practice, Effective Eloquence.

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**DAVID JÓN FULLER** is a Winnipeg writer and editor. His short stories have appeared in numerous anthologies, and his debut novel is forthcoming from Turnstone Press.

**KATIE GERMAN** is a Métis performer, director, playwright, educator and mother. Born and raised in Winnipeg, and with ancestral roots in both Cayer and St. Rose Du Lac, Man., and Aberdeen, Scotland, Katie is the owner and director of Junior Musical Theatre Company (JMT) and a proud mom to two wonderful humans.

After a career spent in the book world (AELAQ, ABQLA, Chapters, and various school libraries), **MARGARET GOLDIK** is concentrating on reading, drinking tea, and working on her own writing projects.

**IAN GOODWILLIE** is a freelance writer based in Saskatoon who covers a variety of topics for different publications.

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**LIZ KATYNSKI** is the author of *Dickies from Gunton: Canadian Brothers in Two World*

*Wars*. Visit her website at LizKatynski.ca.

**LIZ KATYNSKI** est l'auteur de *Dickies from Gunton: Canadian Brothers in Two World Wars*. Voir LizKatynski.ca.

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**LAURA MCKAY** (she, her, hers) is a speculative fiction writer living on Treaty 1 Territory in rural Manitoba. She is the managing editor at Portage & Main Press/HighWater Press. Find her online at writerlauramckay.ca.

**MELANIE J. MURRAY** is a cycle-breaker who leads action toward improving circumstances through writing, art, community engagement, philanthropy and nuancing policies.

**KYLA NEUFELD** is a poet and editor. She lives in Winnipeg, Treaty 1 Territory.

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**KATRYNE PARVAIS-DION** est une écrivaine, graphiste et artiste bilingue. Elle réside à Winnipeg, sur le territoire du Traité no 1. Elle a grandi sur une ferme laitière dans une communauté francophone.

**BROCK PETERS** is a Winnipeg-based editor and author. Alongside his wife, graphic designer Sarah Peters, he runs a small freelancing company called Galley Creative Co.

**LUIS REIS** is a former high school teacher and principal, and college instructor. He directs community theatre and acts as chairperson of Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre.

**AMANDA SANDERS** lives with her husband and two sons, aged 7 and 2, in Edmonton.

**SARAH SEROY** is currently completing a Master's degree in Communication and Journalism at the University of New Mexico. She is originally from Winnipeg/Treaty 1.

**KIM UDUMAN** is a writer based in Winnipeg. She loves creating through photography, videography, and writing. She uses these mediums for her creative content company, StarLight Media.

## BOOKENDS

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**On the Cover:** *He Who Would Walk the Earth Cover*, digital artwork (2025) by Polaris.

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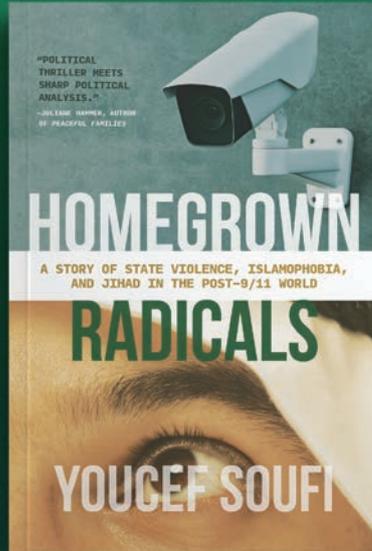
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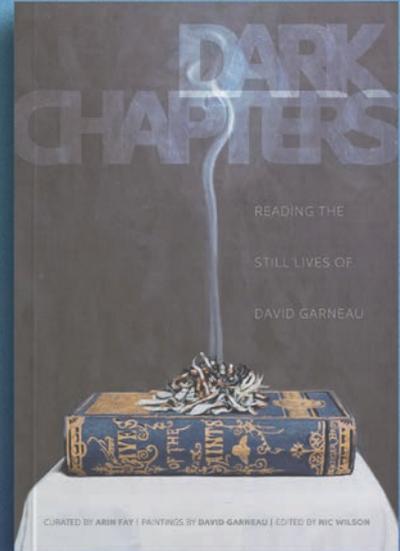


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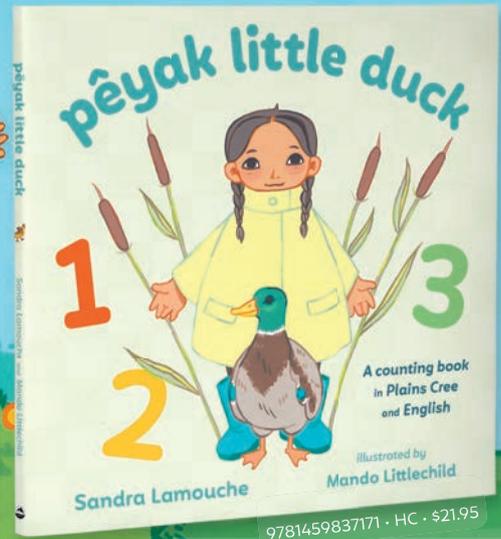


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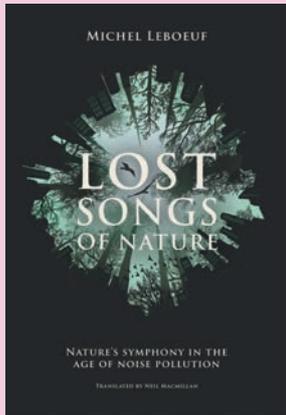
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# Spring 2025



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The City Project, Book 1  
**Michel Durand-Wood**  
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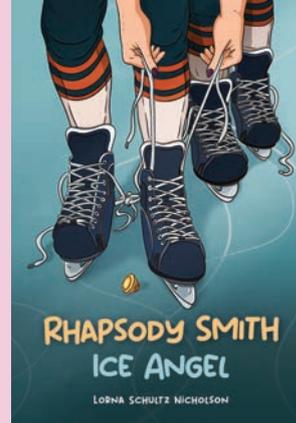
*The City Project* imagines what a happier, healthier, more just and more sustainable city could look like – and how we get there. *You'll Pay For This!* is an irreverent, easy-to-read guide on becoming part of the 1% (who actually understand city finance).



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